

## **THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE OF GREECE VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA**

On Tuesday, 19th December 2023, His Excellency Nikolaos Dendias, the Minister of National Defense of Greece, paid a visit to the Patriarchal See in Alexandria.

Welcoming the Minister, His Beatitude expressed his joy for this visit, underlining the harmonious relations between Greece and Egypt, "which, working together harmoniously and constructively, also support the multifaceted work of the Supreme Patriarchate on the continent of the future, while setting the strong example, that the peoples can live peacefully under the protection of the All-Merciful God particularly in the unifying area of the Mediterranean", as he characteristically mentioned.

At the same time, he expressed once again the gratitude of the Alexandrian Church to the Greek and Egyptian States for their unceasing understanding towards its humanitarian and social work in general. In conclusion, His Beatitude awarded the Minister the highest honor of the Throne, the Grand Cross of Saint Mark with a star.

In his reply, the Minister thanked the His Beatitude for the warm welcome and the awarding of the honorary distinction and expressed the undiminished support of the Greek Government to the Ancient Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa, underlining its role as a great link between our country and all African states, as a bearer of the Apostolic legacy of Saint Mark, Illuminator of the Second Throne Church and as a passionate supporter of peaceful creativity, progress and fraternity among peoples without discrimination.

This was followed by an exchange of commemorative gifts, a private meeting between His Beatitude and the Minister at the Patriarchal Office and a tour of the grounds of the Patriarchal Mansion, home of the Patriarchal Library, the Reliquary and the antiquities exhibition in the "Antonios Papadimitriou" hall.

Present at the meeting were His Eminence Panteleimon, Chief Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, His Eminence Narcissus Metropolitan of Pelusium, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria, His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece to Cairo Mr. Nikolaos Papageorgiou, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Mr. Eleftherios Angelopoulos, Director of the Diplomatic Office of the Ministry of National Defense, Mr. George Arnaoutis, Diplomatic Advisor of the Minister of National Defense, the Honourable Consul General of Greece in the Great City Mr. Ioannis Pyrgakis, the Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria Mr. Andreas Vafiades, Naval Captain Mr. Konstantinos Varouxis, liaison of the Hellenic Navy with the corresponding Egyptian Navy and Priests of the Patriarchal Court.