

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN THE CAMEROON

A significant event for the local Church of the Cameroon took place during the official visit of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa. On 12th February 2009, His Excellency the President of the Cameroon Dr Paul Biya issued a Decree, in which he officially recognizes the Orthodox Church in this great country of Africa .

The issue, which has great importance for the ancient Patriarchate and the Holy Metropolis of the Cameroon , as well as the strengthening of the relations of the Greeks with the country, was mentioned in the press together with the many referrals to the visit of the Alexandrian Primate to the country.

His Beatitude expressed his great gratification regarding the official recognition, mentioning the significant news during his visit on 13th February to the newly established parish of St John the Baptist in the seaside city of Douala , together with His Eminence Gregory. In this city, which is deemed to be larger than the capital Yaoundé, His beatitude was warmly welcomed and applauded loudly when told of the official recognition.

Among those present were the few Greeks remaining in Douala . Among them was the businessman and office bearer of the Patriarchal Throne, Mr Anestis Arnopoulos, who built the Church of St John the Baptist and who received fervent gratitude from His Beatitude, who emphasized the love of the immigrant Greeks for the Church and the Patriarchate.

It is to be noted that in the city of Douala there is also the Church of St Konstantine , where His Beatitude conducted the Divine Liturgy, which was attended by His Excellency the Greek Ambassador to the Cameroon Mr. Dionysios Sourvanos, the Honourable Consul General of Greece Mr. John Kambanis, the Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Yaoundé, Mr. Eleftherios Pappas, the Chairman of the Brotherhood of Orthodox Missions Thessaloniki Mr. Vaios Prantzios, the Office Bearers of the Alexandrian Church Mr Anestis Arnopoulos and Theodoros Pittaras, state officials, as well as the Imam of the area, giving His Beatitude the opportunity to speak of the harmonious coexistence of Christians and Muslims in the Cameroon, as well as in Egypt, the See of the Patriarchate of Alexandria.

Immediately following the official dinner hosted by the Hellenic Community of Douala in honour of the Patriarch, His Beatitude departed for Yaoundé, where the functions for the fiftieth anniversary of the Holy Metropolis of the Cameroon will take place.