

PASTORAL ACTIVITY OF HIS BEATITUDE IN RWANDA

On Friday, October 28, 2022, His Beatitude Theodoros II Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, visited the 1994 Genocide memorial in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, accompanied by Their Eminences the Metropolitans Innocent of Burundi and Rwanda, Ieronymos of Kampala, Kananga Hariton and Their Graces the Provincial Bishops Neophytos of Nyeri, Sylvester of Jinja and Nektarios of Gulu. His Beatitude was given a guided tour of the memorial grounds and informed about the history and causes that led the country to its hundred most gruesome days, which resulted in the death of approximately two million people and many more who took refuge in neighboring states. At the end, His Beatitude sent a prayer to the place where the mass graves of the victims are located and appealed for the cessation of wars all over the world.

Together with his escort he then headed to the village of Gisari in Rwanda, where he was welcomed with songs and dances by the more than three hundred inhabitants. During his stay there, His Beatitude performed the baptisms of 50 indigenous people, among them young children and the elderly. Also, on a plot of land recently purchased by the local Metropolis, he laid the foundation stone for the construction of a church, dedicated to Saint Catherine the Great Martyr. Lastly, he attended an event of traditional dances that the residents had prepared in his honor. His Beatitude thanked the people and the provost of the community and prayed that God would protect them.

On Saturday 29 October 2002, His Beatitude had successive meetings with the Hierarchs of the Throne, during which they discussed issues concerning their provinces.

At noon, accompanied by Her Excellency the Ambassador of

Egypt, Ms. Rania El Banna, Metropolitan Innocent of Burundi and Rwanda, Metropolitan Ieronymos of Kampala, Metropolitan Hariton of Kananga and His Grace Neophytos of Bishop of Nyeri, was received by His Excellency Mr. Edouard Enzirad Prime Minister of Rwanda. The Prime Minister thanked His Beatitude for his cordial and first visit and assured him of the state's full support for the Orthodox Church operating in the country, under the guidance of the Patriarchate of Alexandria. His Beatitude briefed the Prime Minister about the historical course of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa as well as the work that is carried out daily in the 54 States of the African Continent. Finally, he thanked His Excellency the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Paul Kagame, for the support and assistance he provided to the local Orthodox Church of the Patriarchate of Alexandria.

In the afternoon His Beatitude had a meeting with the Priests of the Burundi and Rwanda Metropolis, who spoke to them and gave them paternal advice. The Priests thanked His Beatitude for his paternal love and promised full devotion to the Alexandrian church.