

# **PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE VENERABLE PRIMATES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES OF THE MIDDLE EAST IN CYPRUS**

On the morning of Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012, the Venerable Primates of the Churches in the Middle East, namely His Beatitude Theodoros Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, His Beatitude Theophilos Patriarch of Jerusalem and all Palestine and His Beatitude Chrysostomos Archbishop New Justinia and All Cyprus, hosted a Press Conference at the Holy Archdiocese of Cyprus, in order to explain the vision, aims and expectations of "Orthodox Initiative", within the spectrum of political and socio-economic changes developing today in the broader region of the Middle East.

**His Beatitude Patriarch Theodoros II**, among other things said: "The social and moral responsibility of the Church is heavy, particularly at this time when we, as humans as well as a society, is experiencing a crisis, with a tension never before felt. A crisis that has shattered the myth that man has the ability to reach completeness through the reckless acquisition of material goods. A crisis that has shattered the myth that man can attain happiness through unlimited consumption.

And now that the artificial security of material goods has dissipated and consumer dreams have collapsed, the knowledge that man has been left vulnerable is overwhelming. Vulnerable in a global environment which is often cynical, since he exists in a world where there is global economy but not a just global government and welfare for the weak..... In the

Middle East. In the Middle East, the place where the seed of the rebirth of man in the Theandric person of Jesus was placed, it is not only the inability of politicians to control the standalone and unchecked economic trend. The weakness of people, citizens and politicians, to build a culture of coexistence based on the mutual respect of individual and collective cultural and religious references, devastates and intimidates morale even more”.

He concluded by saying: “As Spiritual Fathers and Leaders, ‘standing in type and place of Christ’, we once again take this opportunity to express our deep concern over the continuing bloodshed in troubled Syria, the tension that continues to prevail in the broader region of the Middle East, and the ever-increasing violence and religious intolerance prevalent globally.

We proclaim our faith in the self-awareness of the Orthodox Church that man, as the image of God, has heavenly roots, incomparably superior to inferior instincts which trigger irrational violence.

We vigorously raise our voice in support of the prevalence of peace and fraternity which lead to mutual understanding and mutual respect between peoples, and we pray that love and forgiveness, reason and justice, will prevail”.