

SYNAXIS OF THE PRIMATES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES OF THE MIDDLE EAST IN CYPRUS

The bloodshed in Syria and the need for protection of the Christians in the country as well as in Lebanon, was the theme which concerned today's Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Church in the Middle East, which took place today, 27th March 2012 in Cyprus. "It is the second time that I am meeting with His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem His Beatitude Ignatios Patriarch of Antioch and His Beatitude Chrysostomos Archbishop of New Justinia and All Cyprus", said His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, who chaired the meeting at which His Excellency the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in charge of issues regarding Hellenes abroad, Mr Dimitris Dollis also spoke.

On behalf of the Primates His Beatitude expressed the wish and the strong will that they all support the Church of Antioch, His Beatitude Ignatios and all the flock of this suffering country which continues to count its dead. "We are with His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios, with love and respect", he stressed as Chairman of the Synaxis.

On his behalf, emotionally, the venerable Patriarch Ignatios of Antioch spoke of the serious problems which the Christians of Lebanon and Syria are facing, stressing the necessity of support from the international community.

In his turn Mr Dollis stressed that Greece is the only European country which has officially undertaken efforts to support the ancient Patriarchate of Antioch as well as the Christian communities in the area, saying that today's gathering of Primates contributes to the promotion of the

problem both to the European and international forums.

“The issue of the protection of the Patriarchate of Antioch is not only an issue of faith but one of the existence of Greek Orthodox history of Christianity in the area”, added Mr Dollis.

In conclusion, His Beatitude Chrysostomos, Archbishop of Cyprus suggested that there should be a representation of Orthodox Churches of the Middle East which should be sent to Brussels and the United States, to let the international political world know about the significant problem of the protection of the Patriarchate of Antioch and of Christians in Syria. He was then interviewed by the Media.