

Warm welcome to the Chief of the General Staff of National Defense Konstantinos Floros by the Patriarch of Alexandria

On Wednesday, January 20, 2021, the Chief of the General Staff of the National Defense of Greece, **General Konstantinos Floros**, was warmly welcomed by **His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa**.

'How happy I am, how much my heart is full of thanks to God, that in the new year, in 2021, you are the first visitor from my homeland, Greece, to come to us, in this blessed Greek Orthodox Patriarchate with its history and contribution, either in the blessed country of Egypt or in Africa', stressed the Alexandrian Primate, welcoming Mr. Floros, in the presence of the Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria, Metropolitan Narcissus of Naucratis, and the Consul General of Greece in Alexandria, Mr. Athanasios Kotsionis.

'In your strong hands, of the glorious blessed army, you keep the gates impregnable', stressed Patriarch Theodoros, pointing out that *"when you want peace, you must always be ready and prepared for war. And I pray to the Mother of Generals, to the Virgin Mary for your glorious enlisted children and for you personally '.*

At the same time, the Patriarch of Alexandria made special reference to the Egyptian community, noting: *'Egypt has always been and is an hospitable country, where 300,000 Greeks came. And here our Patriarchate has lived, ours, yours, for 2,000 years... And next its throne, as a strong support, the President*

of the country, Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, who has served in the army and knows that a country is strong when it has a strong army. And the President is with us. And I want to thank you, for coming to Egypt to show this love between the two countries that the Mediterranean crowns and cools and Cyprus next door. In the stars that adorn your shoulders, is the hope of the Greek nation. I ask that the Mother of Generals, Our Lady, bless her enlisted children, Greece, Egypt, Cyprus and Africa in which I pastor 54 countries '.

For his part, The Chief of the General Staff of National Defense, Mr. Konstantin Floros stressed that *'his visit to Egypt is not a simple ceremonial visit to just any country in the world. It comes after a long period of cooperation we have with this state, this sister state, which is a factor of stability and peace and we have deep and strong relations both in the Armed Forces and at the level of governments. The role that Egypt plays in the Mediterranean is crucial and we are constantly upgrading our relations. For several years now, we have been carrying out activities together, which show and demonstrate our will and our common will, to stabilize the region as much as possible. As you know, there are some cracks and some shocks in the region because of a particular state. We do not identify anyone as an enemy unless he first identifies us. 'Whoever identifies us as an enemy, we in turn identify him.'*

Particularly regarding Egypt, the Chief of the General Staff of National Defense stressed: *'A good and strong partner for security and stability in the region is Egypt. The deepening of the very good cooperation we have with the Egyptian Armed Forces, the deepening of relations and the planning of other activities in the region that aim at stability, security and peace in the region with the aim of the progress and prosperity of our states and of the states of all the peoples'.*

There was a most moving moment when the Patriarch of

Alexandria gave the Chief of the General Staff of National Defense, Konstantinos Floros a large icon of Saints Constantine and Helen, the Saint whose name he bears, while he in turn gave the Primate of Alexandria commemorative gifts, thanking him for the warm reception during this visit.