

# **Toast by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew**

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TOAST  
BY HIS ALL-HOLINESS  
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW  
CHAIRMAN OF THE HOLY AND GREAT COUNCIL OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH  
AT THE OFFICIAL Luncheon HOSTED IN HIS HONOR  
AND IN HONOR OF THEIR BEATITUDES THE PRIMATES  
OF THE ORTHODOX AUTOCEPHALOUS CHURCHES  
BY HIS EXCELLENCY PROKOPIOS PAVLOPOULOS  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GREECE



Crete, June 19, 2016)

Your Excellency, President of the Hellenic

Republic,

Your Beatitudes, Eminences and Friends,

Beloved Mr. President of the Hellenic Republic, we express our joy for the presence of our Modesty and all the brother Beatitudes the Primates of the Most Holy Orthodox Autocephalous Churches at this luncheon that Your Excellency has graciously offered. It is a well-known fact that the relations between Church and State have gone through many phases, but regardless of the different ways we

may characterize these relations, it is true, as a matter of fact, that both the State and the Church are concerned about man and improving the condition of his life. The State focuses her concern on the secular welfare of her citizens and the Church, while concerned about the earthly life, *is also holding promise both for the present life and the life to come*, to use ecclesial language.

Your Excellency is certainly aware of all this for you are an expert in the field of law and political science and you are someone who knows very well our education and history since you also were raised in an Orthodox environment. You fully understand the importance of the **collaboration** of these two great institutions and continue this good and blessed tradition of affable relations of cooperation and non-interference between the two.

Orthodoxy constitutes a real and permanent **home** of peaceful co-existence and stability within the modern conflict-ridden world, a true **spring** of peace for all people.

The **word** of the Orthodox Church is necessary, because it proclaims the necessity of charity, love, unity of mankind and the need for the peaceful collaboration among the people of the world irrespective of their religious beliefs.

The Most Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal Throne, in the person of our Modesty, together with His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece as well as His Holiness Pope Francis of Rome, among other things, met recently on the island of Lesbos and expressed our pain and agony regarding the ongoing refugee crisis, for we have had similar **experiences**.

I'm also glad that the honorable Hellenic State understands this necessity and the importance of Christians in the Middle East and throughout the world and does what they can to offer relief to the refugees.

We are convinced that the spiritual rebirth of the people shall overcome the various crises by way of the supportive ministry of the Church. Without this rebirth, any unilateral effort aiming solely at economic development shall be condemned to failure. The return to the **Orthodox Tradition** that has always been identified with the **values** of our People shall give life and meaning to the suffering contemporary man.

With these thoughts, Your Excellency Mr. President, we thank through your person the honorable Greek State and the beloved Greek people for their prayerful presence and support of the work of our Synod and we promise that Orthodoxy shall fulfill Her historic **duty** and **responsibility** that has been assigned to her by

the Lord and the illumination of the Comforting Holy Spirit.

Thus, we raise this cup to Your health, the highest Officer of the land, to the health of the Primates of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches and the beloved here tonight, and to the spiritual and material well-being of the Greek people and all the people of the world, upon which we invoke the Grace and the Mercy of God who loves mankind. Amen.