

## **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew opens Conference on the 1964 Expulsions of the Greeks of Constantinople**



On Wednesday, 20 November 2024, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew inaugurated the conference titled “The 60th Anniversary of the Expulsion of 1964 and the Greeks of Constantinople,” organised by the Hrant Dink Foundation and Istos Publications. The event honored the memory of the recently deceased Greek-American historian and diplomat Alexis Alexandris.

In his address, the Patriarch described the 1964 expulsions as an unhealed wound, recounting the forced displacement of thousands of ethnic Greeks who were stripped of their rights and livelihoods. Many deportees, despite being born and raised in Constantinople, were expelled under the pretext of their Greek nationality. This tragic event led to profound pain within the Hellenic community and a sharp decline in its population, significantly impacting the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Among those deported were Hierarchs, while the closures of diaspora

schools reflected the rapid and devastating consequences of the expulsions.

The Patriarch spoke of the deep nostalgia felt by those who were forced to leave their homeland and the enduring love for Constantinople among those who remain. He emphasised the Patriarchate's steadfast commitment to dialogue and reconciliation, expressing gratitude to the organisers, particularly İlay Romain Örs, university professor and Archon of the Great Church of Christ, and Panteleimon Vigas, a leading member of the Greek Diaspora.



Special acknowledgment was given to journalist and author Ridvan Akar, whose book “20 Dollars, 20 Kilos” shed light on the 1964 expulsions for a wider audience in Turkey. The Patriarch also praised Nikos Ouzounoglou, President of the Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans, for his tireless efforts to advocate for the rights and memory of the deportees. Additionally, he expressed satisfaction that the conference was dedicated to Alexis Alexandris, who had deeply examined the deportations in his academic work.

Concluding his remarks, Patriarch Bartholomew drew parallels between the 1964 expulsions and contemporary conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, which have driven countless people into exile. “Sadly, despite the passage of years, the world insists on not changing,” he lamented, underscoring the persistent plight of refugees.

**60. YILINDA**  
**1964 SÜRGÜNLERİ**  
**VE İSTANBULLU RUMLAR**

*Alexis Alexandris anısına*

20 Kasım 2024  
Maraşlı Okulu, Fener, İstanbul



20 Νοεμβρίου 2024  
Μαράσλειος Σχολή, Φανάρι, Πόλη

**Η 60<sup>η</sup> ΕΠΕΤΕΙΟΣ ΤΩΝ**  
**ΑΠΕΛΑΣΕΩΝ ΤΟΥ 1964**  
**ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΡΩΜΙΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΛΗΣ**

στη μνήμη του Αλέξη Αλεξανδρή



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