03/02/2026

Thessaloniki: The Ecumenical Patriarch visits the Voluntary Ministry to the Homeless



On Sunday afternoon, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visited the headquarters of a “very important philanthropic and social association of Thessaloniki,” which distributes food to the homeless and supports them “both spiritually and materially.”

His All-Holiness met with the President, Ms Kyriaki Fragkou, and members of the association “Voluntary Ministry to the Homeless” at their offices in the area of Agios Pavlos, Thessaloniki. He was accompanied by His Eminence Metropolitan Philotheos of Thessaloniki, His Eminence Metropolitan Barnabas of Neapolis and Stavroupolis, His Eminence Metropolitan Ioustinos of Kalamaria and Nea Krini, the Abbot of the Monastery of Vatopaidi, Elder Ephraim, and he greeted the invited clergy and laypeople, among whom were many professionals who support the association’s work through their sponsorships.

“In our present age,” His All-Holiness remarked, “when face-to-face human relationships are giving way to impersonal digital friendships, your voluntary offering serves as a reminder in every direction of the importance of a culture of help and solidarity, which lies at the very core of our faith and preserved our people through difficult times.”

His All-Holiness noted that the association was mobilised during “the profound economic crisis that shook Greece and tested, in one way or another, its devout and conscientious people,” and that it has since continued its charitable work both in Greece and beyond its borders.



He also referred to an earlier interview he had given to the magazine of the homeless, Schedia, in which he had said that “our Lord was, in a sense, the first homeless God, who experienced refugeedom and exile, being forced to leave the land where He was born and to go with His parents to Egypt.”

He added that “the Saviour Christ placed at the centre of His teaching care for the poor and for every afflicted person, the poor, the hungry, the socially marginalised and excluded… For this reason, our Church stands close to those whom circumstances have placed on the margins of life, to those who suffer.

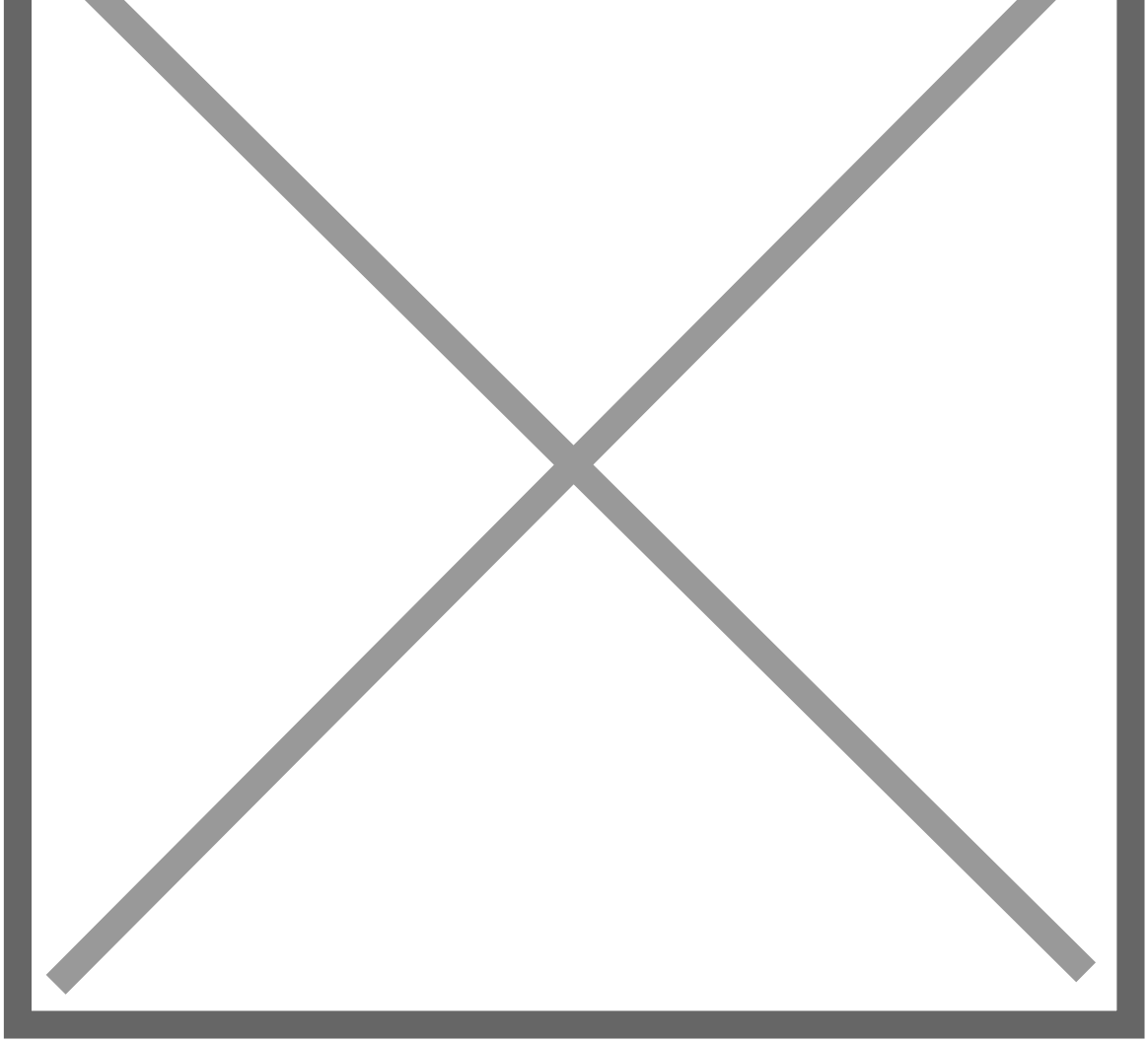
The Voluntary Ministry to the Homeless, following this commandment of Christ, serves our fellow human being in need, the homeless, the poor, the sick, the

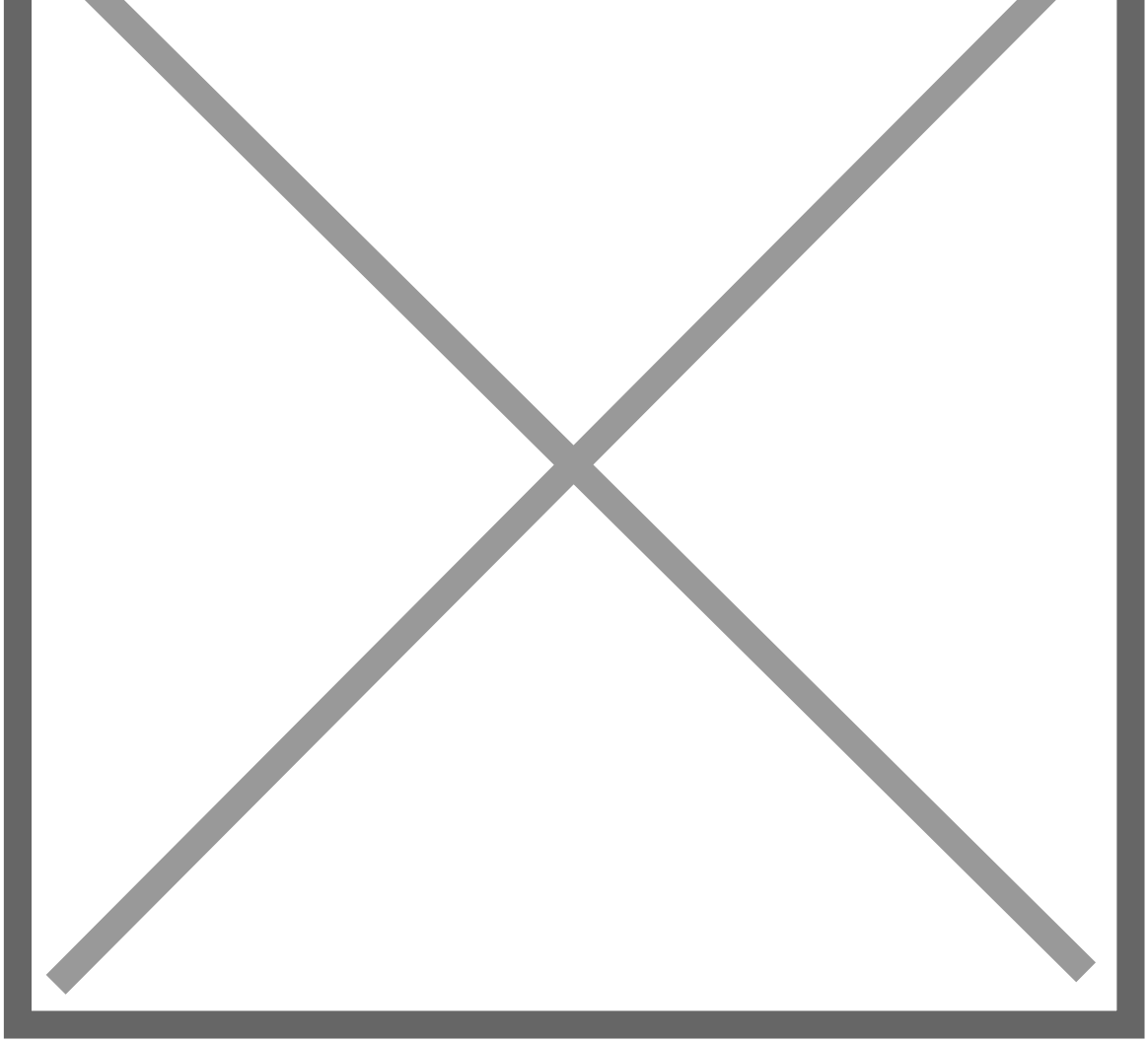
orphaned, the elderly, the lonely, the hungry and the thirsty, without making any distinction. It also provides assistance and support, among other things, to the social, charitable, and spiritual work of many Holy Metropolises in Greece, as well as to Orthodox missionary work in Africa.”

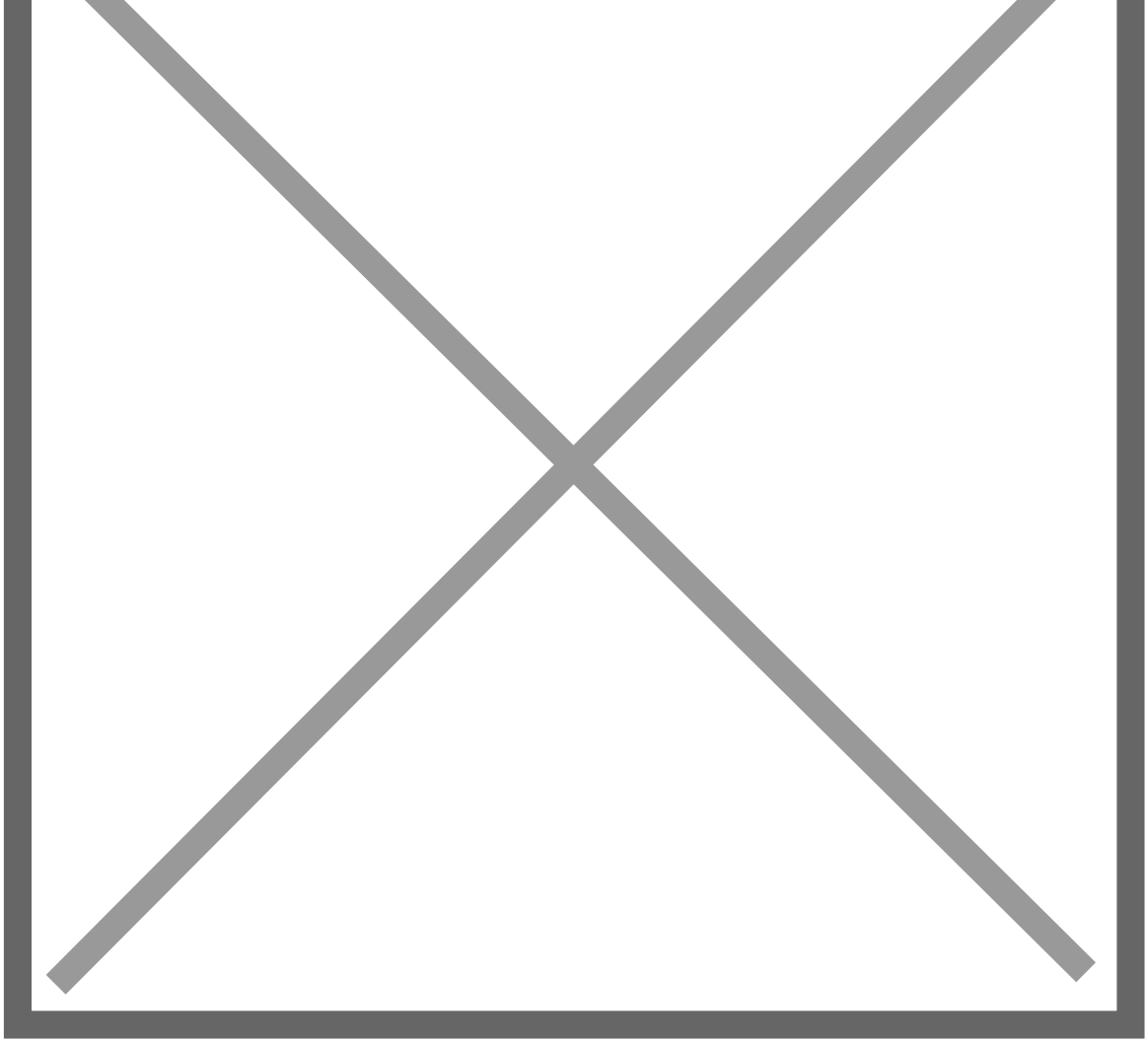


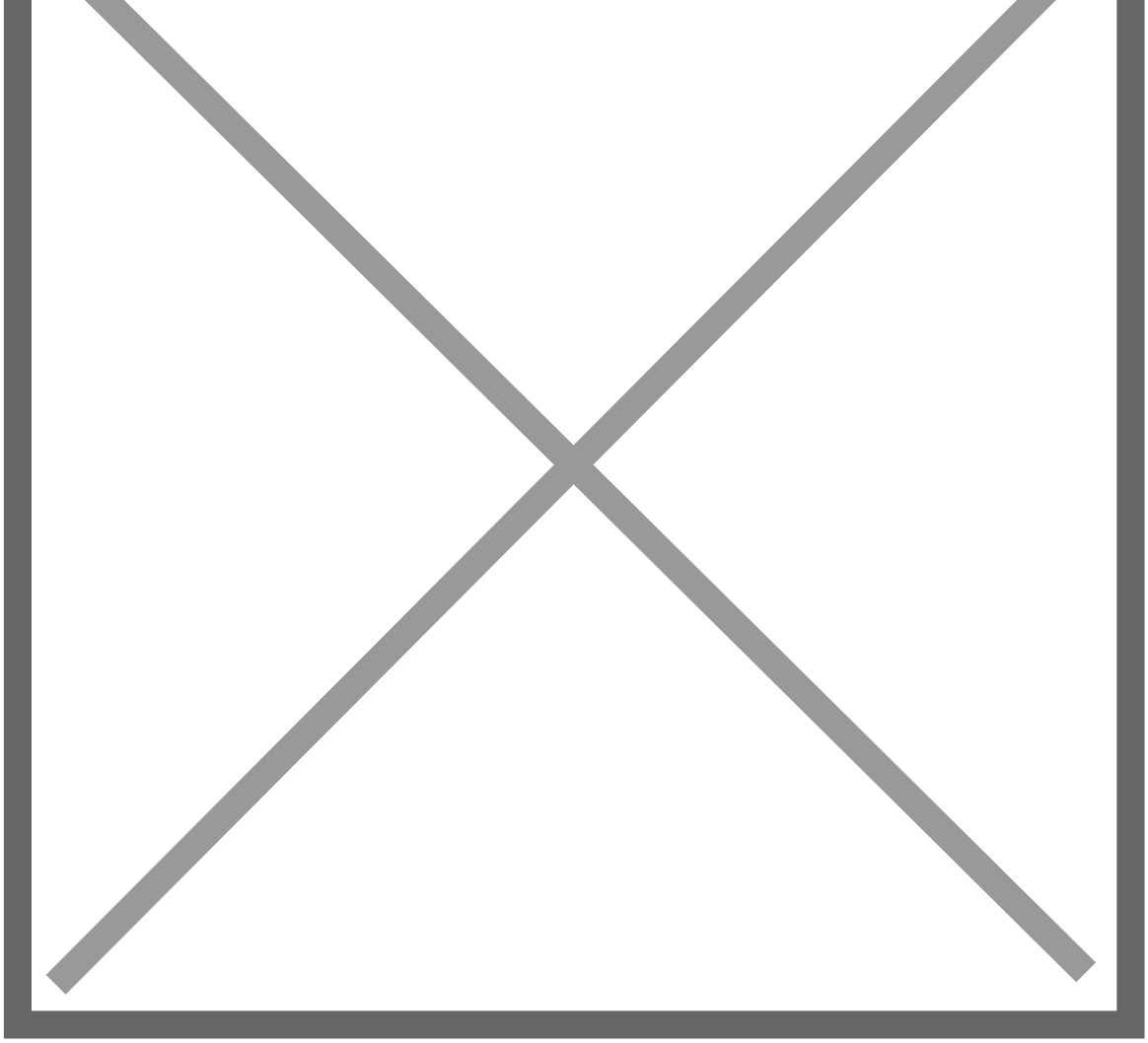
The Ecumenical Patriarch thanked those present for their offering, wished them the continued success of their work with the same zeal, and wrote in the visitors’ book: “[illegible] you receive, you fill your pocket, when you give, you fill your heart,’ someone once said… The most noble and beloved by all Ms Fragko, together with her distinguished collaborators, give and continue to give to those in need… and thus fill their hearts.”

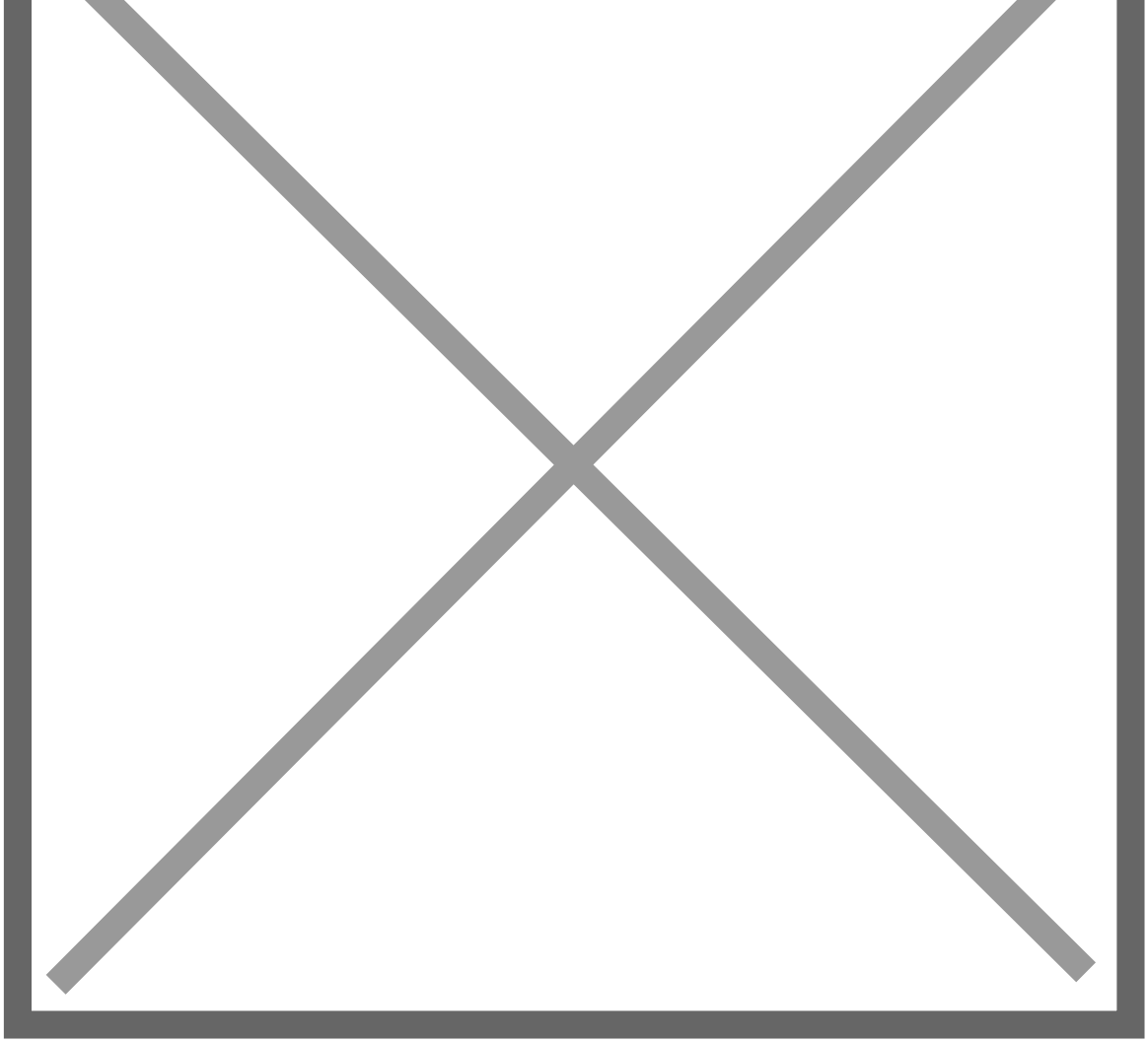
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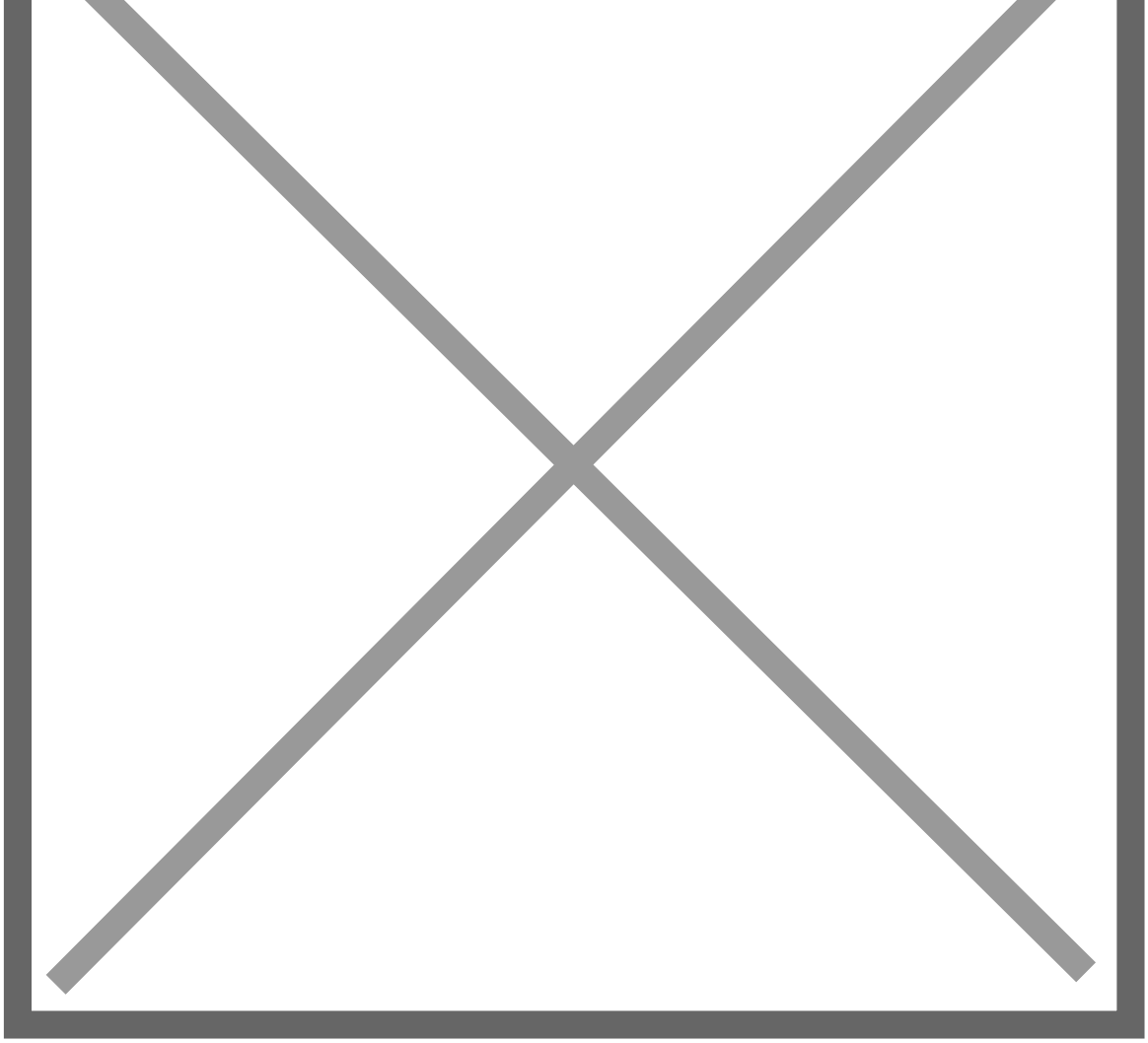


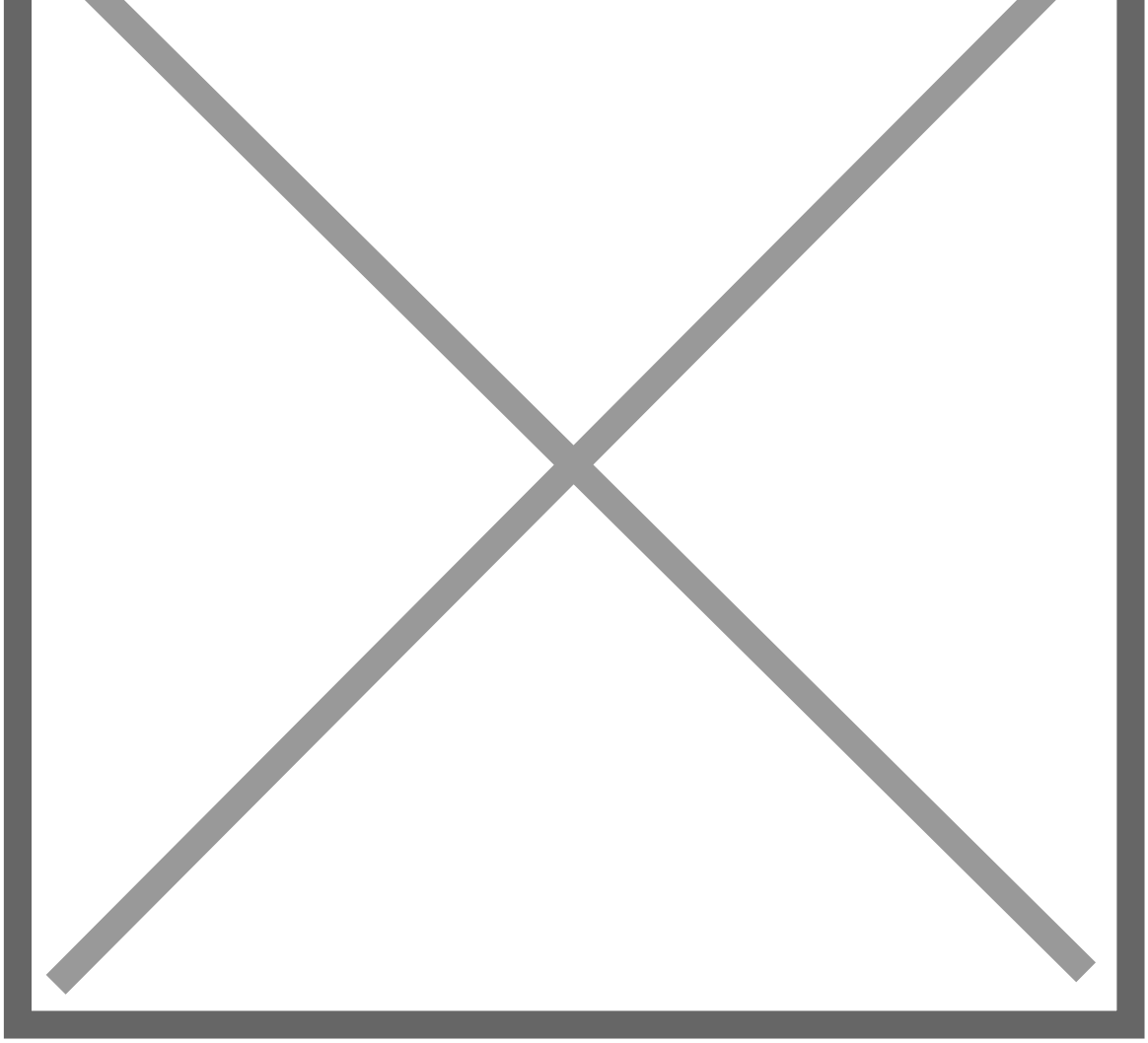


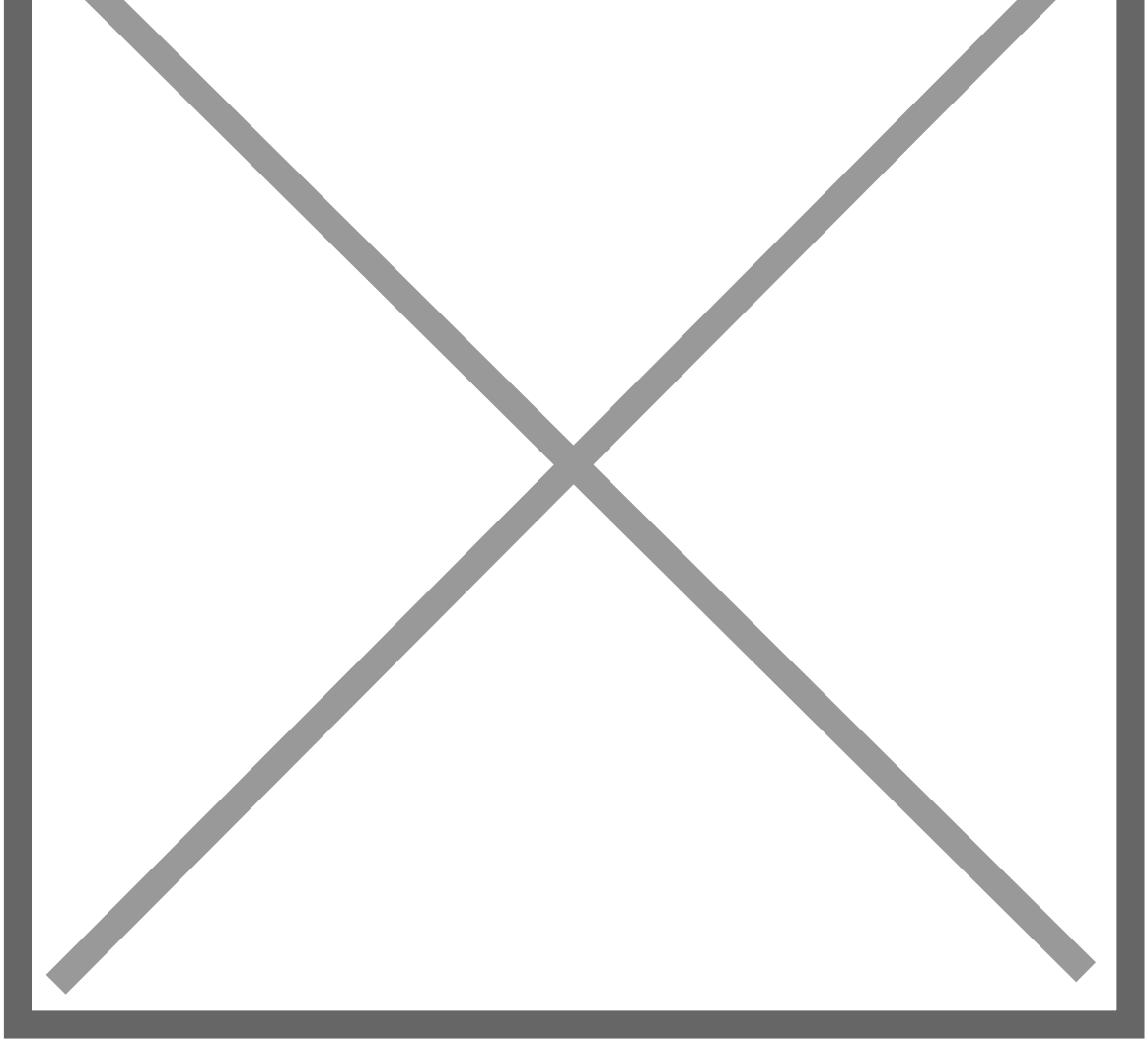


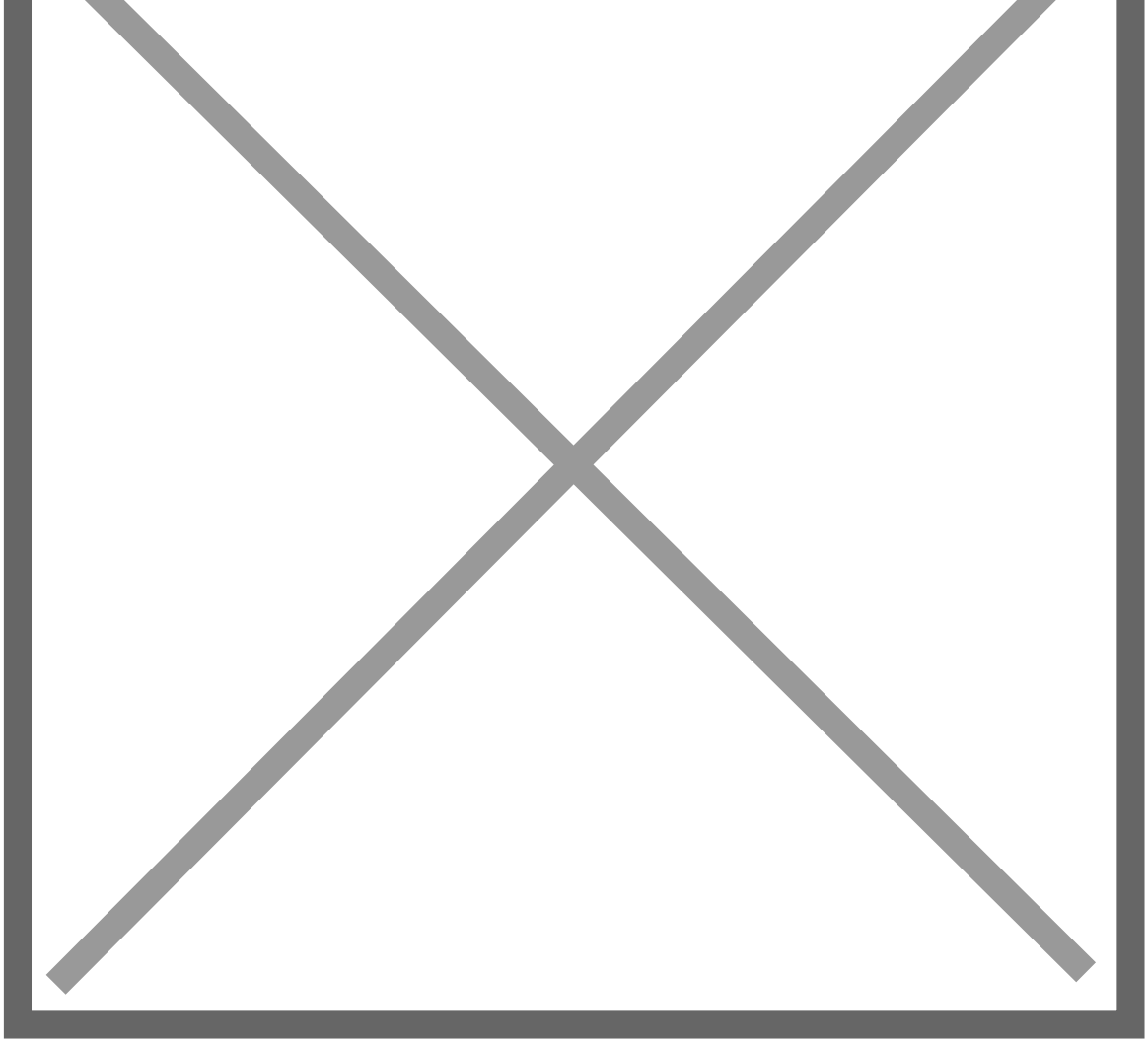


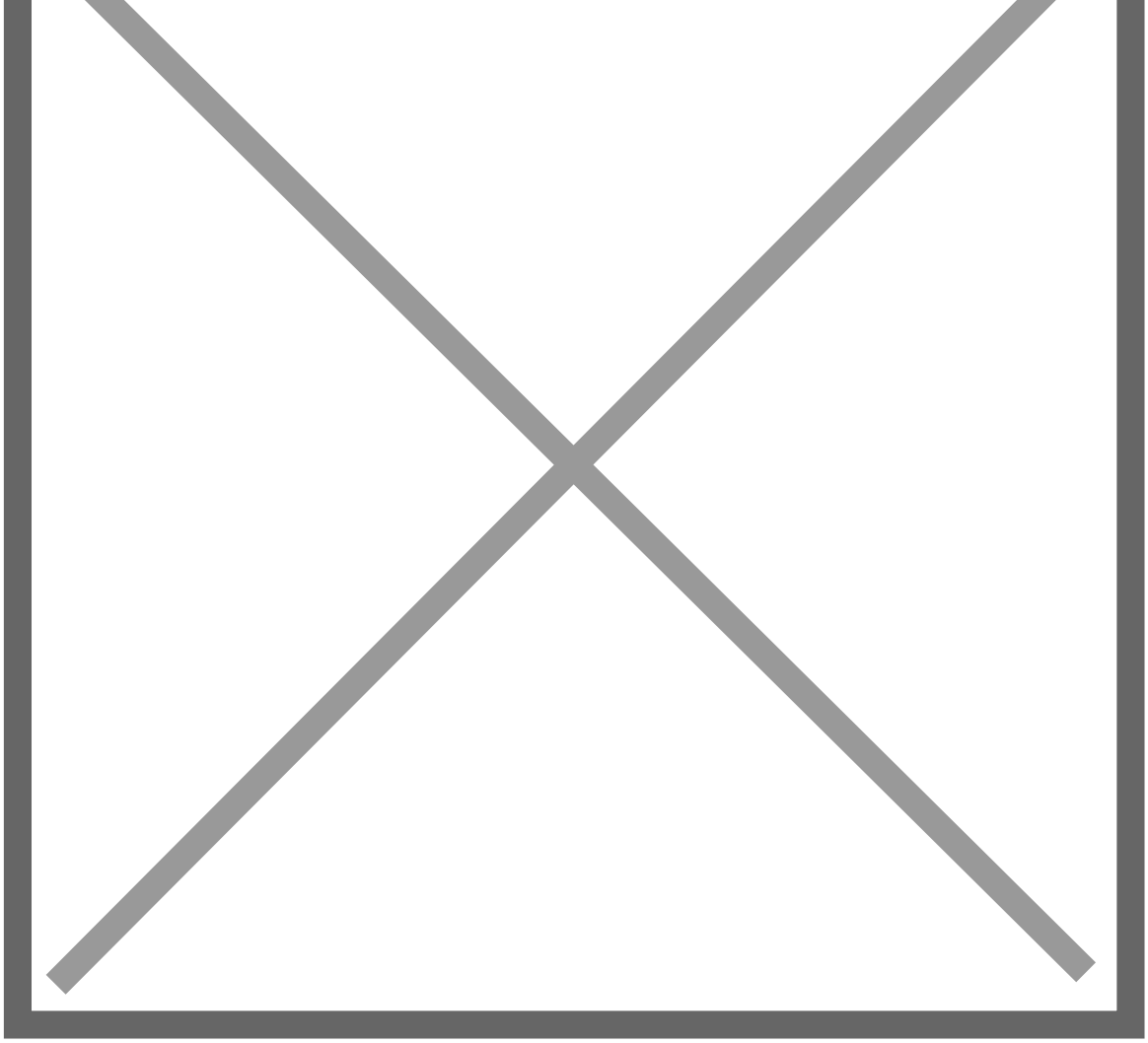












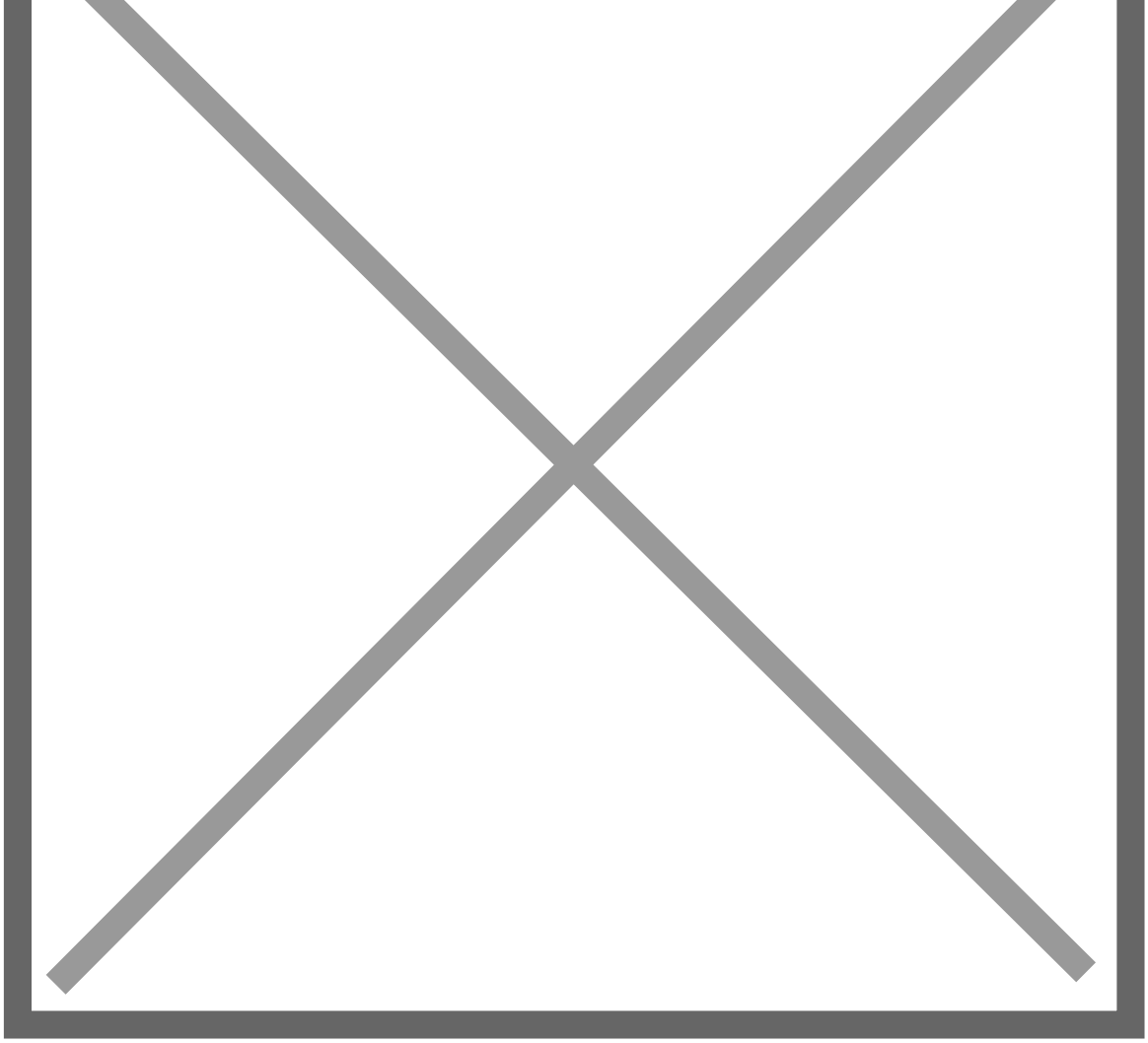
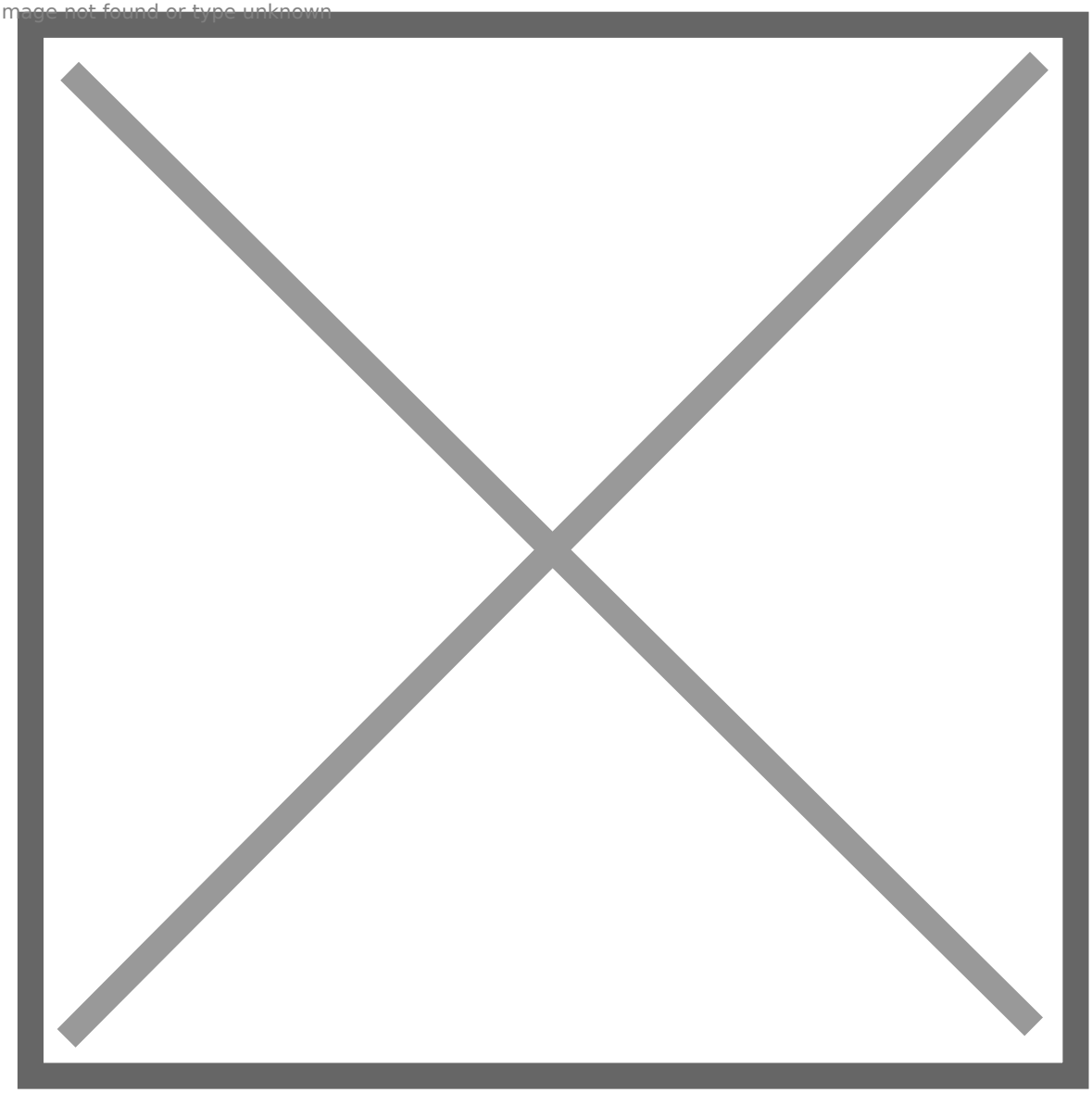


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