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Patriarch John X Meets the Governor of Mersin



Having arrived in Mersin yesterday evening, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, John X, met with the Governor Atilla Toros this morning. The Patriarch headed a delegation that included Metropolitan Athanasios Fahd of Latakia and its dependencies, Metropolitan Ephraim Maalouli of Aleppo and its dependencies, Archimandrite Paul Ordologlu (recently elected Bishop of Tarsus), Archimandrite Parthenios Al-Lati, Father Spiro Timor (parish priest of Mersin), and Mr. Munir Yazirli, President of the Mersin Association.

The Governor welcomed the patriarch, emphasizing “the values of tolerance and citizenship that build society and strengthen equality among all groups.” He stressed that Mersin represents a model of coexistence with its diverse social and religious components.

For his part, the Patriarch thanked the Governor for his efforts to shelter those affected by the 2023 earthquake. He highlighted the importance and deep roots of the Antiochian Christian presence, open to all communities. He noted the historic significance of Mersin and the ancient Antiochian presence there, observing that Metropolitan Alexandros Tahan was called Pastor over the Archdiocese of “Tarsus and Adana” in the early 20th century, before he sat on the Patriarchal throne of

Antioch.

This presence has continued to the present day as a witness to the authentic faith.

His Beatitude also expressed gratitude, through the governor of Mersin, to the Turkish authorities — headed by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan — for the facilities provided to ensure the success of the visit and to support the faithful of the Antiochian Church in Antioch, its surroundings, İskenderun, and Mersin. He stressed that this region is the historical heart of the Church of Antioch, present in the Levant, with deep faith and a pioneering role for its people.

Antioch Patriarchate بطريركية أنطاكية و سائر المشرق للروم الأرثوذكس