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## **“Let us preserve unity, in concord and unanimity, with the guiding and First-Throned Church”**



His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and All Greece praised the multifaceted peace-making ministry of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem during a period of intense geopolitical crises in the Middle East, during a meeting held on Monday morning at the Holy Archdiocese of Athens with His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem. At the same time, he conveyed clear messages regarding the need for Pan-Orthodox unity.

“The sister Orthodox Churches throughout the world, in concord and unanimity with the venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate, the guiding and First-Throned Church, in accordance with the canonical tradition and the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils of Orthodoxy, are called to serve and preserve the unity of the local Churches, to facilitate dialogue, and to contribute to the common witness of the Orthodox Church in addressing the great issues of our time,” the Archbishop noted.

He further emphasised: “The recent legislative initiative of the Greek Government, undertaken in cooperation with the Church of Greece, concerning clergy who minister in diaspora communities, constitutes a particularly significant development. It is a measure that practically recognises the decisive contribution of parish clergy to the preservation of the spiritual life of overseas communities, the cultivation of Orthodox consciousness, and the safeguarding of the unbreakable bonds of Hellenism throughout the world with its homeland and traditions.”



For his part, Patriarch Theophilos thanked Archbishop Ieronymos for the warm welcome and underlined that the Church of Greece constitutes a vital force for the entirety of Orthodoxy. He noted that it has been, is, and will continue to be a nourisher not only of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, but of all Orthodox Churches and Patriarchates.

He also thanked the Archbishop for his concern for the Holy Sepulchre and the Holy Shrines through the provision of scholarships.

“For us, the Church of Greece is the nourisher of the Orthodox Churches and Patriarchates, because from her bosom have emerged Patriarchs, Hierarchs, theologians, and spiritual fathers who have supported, and continue to support, the witness of Orthodoxy to the ends of the earth. During the years of Your Beatitude’s primate ministry, you have demonstrated ecclesiastical discernment, prudence, and steadfast concern for the rightly understood interests of the Church, bearing the burden of responsibility with discretion, meekness, and devotion to her mission,” the Patriarch stated.

He added: “Permit us also to express our heartfelt gratitude for the concern shown towards the Holy Sepulchre, that is, the Holy Shrines and our Arab-speaking Christian flock, through the granting of scholarships, as well as for the support







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