

Greek PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis: Agreement Between Sinai Monastery and Egypt “A Development of Historic Significance”



The Prime Minister of Greece, Mr Kyriakos Mitsotakis, in his weekly social media post, described the agreement between the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine and Egypt as “a development of historic significance”, noting that, for the first time, a special, legally binding document permanently safeguards the religious character and monastic way of life of the Monastery, as well as the exclusive use and possession of its places of worship by the monastic brotherhood, with guarantees from the Egyptian side and without any possibility of altering the places of worship.

As he stated, the agreement resolves an institutional issue that has remained outstanding for 1,500 years. He emphasised that the Greek Government worked “with persistence and discretion”, in cooperation with Egypt and with respect for the autonomy of the Monastery.

He made particular reference to the consent of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem, and the Archbishops of Athens and Cyprus, describing it as “a powerful message of unity and responsibility from the Greek Orthodox world”.

Mr Mitsotakis congratulated the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education and Religious Affairs, personally thanked the Minister of Foreign Affairs for coordinating the effort, and referred to his communication with Archbishop Symeon, to whom he expressed the support of the Greek people for the decisions of the Monastery.

The following is the excerpt from the Greek Prime Minister's post concerning the agreement on the Monastery of Sinai:

"I begin with a development of historic significance: the agreement between the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine of Sinai and Egypt, which provides a secure legal foundation for the continued existence of a living Orthodox pilgrimage site with a history spanning fifteen centuries.

"For the first time, through a special, legally binding document, the religious character and monastic way of life of the Monastery are permanently safeguarded, as is the exclusive use and possession of its places of worship by its brotherhood, with the guarantee of Egypt and without any possibility whatsoever of altering these sacred places.

"This resolves an institutional issue that has remained outstanding for 1,500 years and which had left the very existence of the Holy Monastery vulnerable.

"The Greek Government supported this effort with persistence and discretion, in cooperation with our friend Egypt and with respect for the autonomy of the Monastery.

"Of particular significance is the consent of the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem, and the Archbishops of Athens and Cyprus: a powerful message of unity and responsibility from the Greek Orthodox world.

"I wish to congratulate both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs for the persistence and systematic approach with which they worked until we achieved this national success.

"I also wish to personally thank the Minister of Foreign Affairs for coordinating this entire effort, as well as Archbishop Symeon, with whom I communicated personally, expressing to him the support of the Greek people for the decisions of the Monastery, for his substantial contribution to its successful outcome.

"There are legacies that transcend the horizon of every government and every generation. It is our duty to pass them on securely to those who come after us."

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