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Constitutional revision debate continues in Greek Parliament; issue of Church-state relations broached



Debate continued in Greece's Parliament this week over articles eligible for constitutional revision, more than a week after the center-right government declined to include, in a relevant draft law, a provision re-instituting the offense of insult to religion in the country's penal code.

The decision generated negative reactions on the part of several Orthodox Church Metropolitans in the country, with the Metropolitan of Mani, His Eminence Chrysostomos, the latest hierarch to express his criticism.

In written statement, His Eminence, noted that "...in the globalized and turbulent world we live in, it is utterly imperative for this chapter of the penal code to exist, because it contributes, in the face of barbarity, to the primacy of civilized states, of which we belong."

Speaking before the plenum on Wednesday, the rapporteur for ruling New Democracy (ND) party, Costas Tzavaras, rejected proposals by the main opposition SYRIZA party concerning a separation of Church and state, saying that the civil liberties cited by the leftist party are fully covered by the current Constitution.