25/09/2020

Perth discussion on the reunification of the Parthenon Marbles

On Sunday, 20 September 2020 in Perth WA, the Australian Hellenic council together with SAE (Council of Greeks Abroad), presented a discussion on “The Return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece”.

The guest speakers were Simon Millman (MLA) and Evan Kakulas, a legal personality and the National President of the Australian Hellenic Council.

Mr Millman addressed the assembly with support of the Greek claim for the repatriation of the Parthenon Marbles.

“As we prepare to open the new museum in Perth, it is a good time to think about what museum collections say about our past relationships, and our relationship to the past.

“More and more European museums are repatriating back to Australia objects of significance to Aboriginal Australians.

“This is because they recognise that these objects were taken without consent and

belong to the people from whom they were taken.

“The petition we are launching today calls on the British Museum to recognise that the Parthenon Marbles were taken without the consent of the Greek people and should be returned to them.”

Present at this function were Bishop Elpidios, Father John Athanasiou, Savvas Papasavvas and Theo Sarris, representing SAE. There were also 150 guests at the function.

Mr Kakulas presented an overview of the collaboration between the AHC (WA) and SAE, concentrating on the following:

He made a resquest of the Australian Government to put pressure on the British Museum for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece.

- The Cypriot situation regarding the illegal occupation of Cyprus by Turkish forces in 1974 until the present day, not withstanding the fact that Cyprus was a sovereign nation that had been invaded by Turkey.
- To maintain and foster the Greek language, heritage and culture.
- To maintain pressure on Turkey to reopen the Theological School at Halki.
- To put pressure on the WA and Australian government to recognise that the Ottoman empire together with the Turkish National Movement have committed genocides from 1914-1922 against two million Christian minorities.
- A memorial service (MNIMOSINO) was held at the church of St Nektarios in Perth on 31 May 2020 in remembrance of the victims of the pogrom.
- A second memorial service (MNIMOSINO) was held on 30 August 2020 at the church of St Nektarios to remember all those who had fallen, been dispossessed, tortured, imprisoned and forced to convert to Islam. An inspiring sermon was delivered by Father John Athanasiou..

Mr Kakulas also referred to the initiatives undertaken by his Board under his leadership. “On 5 August 2020, the Australian Hellenic Council (WA) sent letters to various members of parliament both in Australia and Greece as well as the European Union, condemning Turkeys recent breaches of international law by drilling and invading areas referred to as Internationally recognised economic zones,” he said. Furthermore the AHC highlighted in their letter the fact of the continuous Turkish illegal occupation of Cyprus,” he said.

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