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US expresses support for reopening of Halki seminary



The United States' Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback has expressed Washington's support for the reopening of the Halki Theological School, the Athens-Macedonian News Agency said on Friday.

Responding to a question from the ANA-MPA, Brownback reportedly said that the US has "always supported" the school's reopening and while he cannot say that progress has been made in this direction, the US will continue to support it.

Brownback's comments came after Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras's trip to Turkey, where he also visited the training school for Greek Orthodox priests and called for its reopening.

The Halki Theological Seminary, on the Istanbul islet of Marmara, was operated by the Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarchate until a Turkish court ordered the school shut in 1971 under a law curbing non-state religious education.

The European Union has in the past pressed Turkey to reopen the historic seminary, saying its closure undermines freedom of religion.

(Source: ekathimerini.com)