

Orthodox clerics to Minister Gavroglu: “Clerics never blackmail anyone!”



Negative reactions against a provocative statement by Education and Religious Affairs Minister Kostas Gavroglu, who on Monday claimed that a portion of clerics in the country were “blackmailing” the government ahead of general elections in 2019, continued unabated on Tuesday.

The association representing Orthodox clerics in Greece emphasized that “clerics never blackmail anyone ... if the minister wants to ascertain who respects society and whom society respects, let us walk side-by-side in the places where our ministries take place.”

The Church of Crete’s reaction was equally stern. In a statement, the Church’s Holy Provincial Synod insisted on its position of maintaining the current payroll regime for clerics in the country, while warning of the repercussions, as it said, that introduction of the concept of “religious neutrality” will have on Greek society.

According to information collected by the Orthodoxia news agency, clerics on several border islands are also organizing opposition to the government's initiative.