

05/06/2019

Greece: The outgoing Tsipras government is pressing ahead with proposed changes to the penal code and the Code of Criminal Procedure; Changes have generated opposition by the Church of Greece



Days before the Greek prime minister is set to meet with the country's president in order to tender his resignation and to request early elections on July 7, the now outgoing Tsipras government is nevertheless pressing ahead with proposed changes to the country's penal code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

A draft bill was tabled in Parliament late Monday evening, along with numerous amendments. The draft legislation includes provisions for the abolition of current articles against the defamation of religion and insulting the deceased.

The proposed changes have generated heightened opposition by the Church of Greece, with the issue also discussed during sessions of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church over recent weeks.

If the proposed legislation and related amendments are passed by the current Parliament, then implementation is set for July 1, a week before the election, according to the relevant justice ministry.

In related development, the Metropolitan of Piraeus, His Eminence Seraphim, reiterated on Tuesday that the proposed changes in the penal code are "... a crime".

Seraphim called on members of the slim pro-government majority to vote against the changes, while referring to a "...mania" by the ruling SYRIZA party to demolish Greece's legal culture. Otherwise, he said, it falls upon the next government to overturn this "crime".