

## **Changes to Greece's penal code and the code of criminal procedure to be tabled in Parliament's plenum; Church of Greece's Holy Synod expresses its opposition**



**A draft bill that includes numerous changes to Greece's penal code and the code of criminal procedure, is set to be tabled in Parliament's plenum on Thursday, days before the legislature closes ahead of a snap election on July 7 — and despite the fact that practically all opposition deputies are abstaining from the sessions.**

Opposition parties in Greece have underlined that the outgoing Tsipras government lacks the political mandate to pass such changes.

Beyond opposition parties, stepped up criticism has been expressed by an association representing the country's prosecutors, retired jurists, civic groups, the Church of Greece and even Amnesty International, which voiced its concerns over the prospect of certain definitions of rape, for instance, being prosecuted as misdemeanors.

Even members of the ruling SYRIZA party, namely, female members of Parliament, expressed opposition to certain radical changes in the penal code.

The **Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece's Holy Synod** has already discussed the issue of penal code amendments, expressing, among others, its opposition to the **abolition of articles against blasphemy of religion and insulting the deceased**.