

# PROGRESS OF DELIBERATIONS AT GREEK FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PEACE CONFERENCE (PART IV)

His Beatitude Anastasios, Patriarch of Albania then spoke, suggesting there are two manners in which religious pluralism may be approached: that of the unconscious tolerance of people indifferent to it and that of sincere tolerance for purely religious reasons. The world, Patriarch Anastasios said, longs for the cultivation and establishment of world peace and for the prosperity of human beings. With the refugee problem becoming intensified, there is need for conscious religious education. Christians pray to God for peace, as humans have proven incapable of achieving it. Peace, he said, is linked to justice. In the absence of justice, poverty prevails and becomes a factor of violence by those who suffer. That is why peace must be sought along with justice. Egocentrism is the opposite of peace. Only the power of love can conquer love for power, Patriarch Anastasios concluded.

Sheikh Ali Hashemi then took the floor and said that Islam respects other religions, as proven by the Treaty of Umar, signed by Umar Khattab and Patriarch Sophronius, and the *Ahdname* signed by Mehmet II the Conqueror and Patriarch Gennadios Scholarios of Constantinople.

In the United Arab Emirates, he said, good neighbourly relations is of great importance for the life of human beings and that peaceful coexistence greatly contributes to the promotion of social peace, solidarity and love. He added that a law has been issued in the UAE that prohibits atrocities against other religions.

The representative of the United Nations' Secretary-General then spoke, pointing out that the Middle East had indeed been

a place of religious and cultural pluralism, and indicating the need for a religious dialogue and the cultivation of humanitarian education, so that men may be able to act on humanitarian values.

His Beatitude Demetrius, Archbishop of America then took the floor. He referred to the Middle East as a place plagued by fear, pain, expatriation, suspicions, exiles, chaos, destruction of monuments, genocides and, most importantly, the killing of memory that causes loss of identity. Archbishop Demetrius also referred to the work of the International Orthodox Christian Charities, an organization that has contributed 1.240.000 dollars for refugees and 500.000 dollars for other humanitarian causes. A dialogue amongst groups, societies and Churches, he said, will be the solution to this tragedy.

The representative of the Turkish Prime Minister then spoke. He pointed out that the Republic of Turkey is hosting today two million Syrian refugees and that, in the past few days, 70.000 refugees had arrived in Turkey. Turkey, he said, has so far spent six million dollars for refugees, as the country fights against terrorism and strives to put an end to terrorist attacks on behalf of Kurds too. He proposed tolerance and reconciliation for the prosperity of human beings. Religion, he said, must be ruled by humanitarian values. The religion of Islam talks of humanity's common roots. The Turkish representative also referred to the Pact of Umar that promoted tolerance against other religions – the Abyssinians, the Armenians, and Christians of all denominations. The Ottoman Empire, he said, has created an empire of peace. As for the statement made by Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus, a great effort is required, the Turkish representative said, towards resolving this problem. Fascism must be fought and an alliance for civilization must take form within the United Nations. He closed by praising the Greek Foreign Ministry for inviting a total of 127 countries

to participate in the Conference.

**From the Secretariat-General**