

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday October 26/ November 8, 2018, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Markos Bolaris visited the Patriarchate, escorted by his associate Mr. George Psiahas and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs was received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers and was escorted to venerate the Holy Sepulchre and the Horrendous Golgotha. His Beatitude informed the Deputy Minister on the scheduled projects of the Patriarchate for the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for which there had been mention on His visit to the Deputy Minister's office in Athens two months ago.

In this visit of the Deputy Minister in Jerusalem, His Beatitude offered him the honorary distinction of the Grand Commander of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, in reinforcement and reward of his vivid interest and actions in favour of the Patriarchate, and also gave him an icon of the Theotokos of Jerusalem. The Deputy Minister offered His Beatitude a silver disk, copy of the exhibits of the National Museum of Athens.

After the lunch offered by His Beatitude in honour of the Deputy Minister, the latter visited the Holy Monastery of St. Savvas, escorted by His Beatitude, where he was warmly received by the Spiritual Father of the Monastery Archimandrite Eudokimos and the Fathers of the Monastery. The Deputy Minister was impressed by the history of the Monastery, the holiness of the incorrupt relic of St. Savvas, as it is

visible and can be venerated in the recently made new reliquary and of the manner of keeping the perfect monastic life by the Fathers of the Monastery.

The following day, Friday October 27/ November 9, 2018, the Deputy Minister visited the Theotokos' Tomb in Gethsemane, where he was welcomed by the Hegoumen Most Reverend Archbishop Dorotheos of Avyla, then the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, where he was welcomed by the Patriarchal Representative Most Reverend Archbishop Theophylactos of Jordan, and the Holy Monastery of the Sacred Cross. The Deputy Minister was informed by His Beatitude on the existing Status Quo and on the rights of our nation on the All-holy Shrines according to it.

The Deputy Minister expressed once again his vivid interest on the moral and material support of Greece for the renovation of the Cave of Bethlehem and of the Monastery of the Sacred Cross, and of the reopening of its historic School of Theology.

His Beatitude thanked the Deputy Minister warmly for his immediate response in His recent invitation to visit the Patriarchate and for his expression of lively and undivided interest as well as for his honest disposition and practical support.

From Secretariat-General