



DECLARATION OF MINISTERS OF CULTURE

We, the undersigning this declaration, in the context of the anniversary congress of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (I.A.O.), Ministers of Culture of the Governments of countries whose parliaments are members of the I.A.O., address every citizen, every Orthodox Christian, throughout the world, every colleague MP of Orthodox religion.

We wish to underline the following:

- The objectives stated in the I.A.O. statutory texts of 1994 and 1995, in Athens and Moscow, as supplemented by decisions of the annual General Assemblies, always remain topical and make a decisive contribution in religious mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence among peoples, in cooperation among their religious institutions, as well as their religious life in general.
- The operation of the I.A.O., the cooperation agreements concluded with political – cultural areas of different cultural and religious beliefs, is evidently essential and beneficial for the worldwide cultural reality and supportive of democracy, mutual understanding and rapprochement among peoples and individuals from across the world.

We state that:

- We recognize Orthodoxy as a major prerequisite for the safeguarding of the cultural identity of our peoples.
- We highly value the historical significance and the contemporary work of the Orthodox Church, we consider it to be a factor of stability, preservation of peace and conciliation in Europe and throughout the world.

We consider that:

- The preservation of the Orthodox Christian civilization, the display of Christian values, enrich the cultural self-awareness of all citizens in the world.
- The destruction of monuments and places of worship of the Orthodox Christians, as well as of other religions, is an act of barbarism.

We are expressing our intention to further contribute to the preservation and display of the historical monuments of Christianity and Orthodoxy in our countries.

We are declaring that, in the conditions of the multi-form crisis affecting peoples and societal institutions:

- We seek to bring closer together the forces that contribute to the preservation of Europe's unity, based on the principles of tolerance, respect for diversity, solidarity, loyalty to Christian values and beliefs, which are essential components of coexistence among our peoples.
- We express our solidarity to the peoples and regions of the world inflicted by poverty, starvation and natural disasters, to any person persecuted or suffering because of their religious views and beliefs. We are particularly standing on the side of Christians in the broader region of the Middle East and urging the international community to protect their life and property.

Moscow, 28 June 2014

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