

## Press Release

### **His All Holiness, Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome & Ecumenical Patriarch guest of honour at dinner to celebrate the British Hellenic Chamber of Commerce's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Members of the British Hellenic Chamber of Commerce welcomed His All Holiness, Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome & Ecumenical Patriarch to an event celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at the Athens Megaron Mousikis.

In his welcoming address, President British Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, Harilaos E. Goritsas, greeted His All Holiness pointing out the deep respect and love felt for the Ecumenical Throne and acknowledging Christian Orthodoxy's part in our identity with a spiritual presence of over 1700 years.

His All Holiness, blessed the Chamber with his presence and characterized the Chamber's contribution to the commercial development and economic cooperation between Greece and Britain, enhancing traditionally friendly relations between the two countries during the past 65 years.

The Ecumenical Patriarch, spoke of the spiritual and economic crisis of our way of life, especially during this significantly difficult period that we are experiencing. He stressed that the decision makers should consider the consequences of their actions and arrange their priorities in accordance with the word of God. The Patriarch emphasized the human type being projected - the egocentric one, the one that possesses and shows off, often provocatively, easy wealth; the desire to fulfill every whim, to buy everything from consciousness to political power and strength. To achieve success, conscience is ignored and we have the phenomena of the economic crisis, the "golden boys", disrespectful wealth; and the creation of new poverty. The Ecumenical Patriarch, the Church of Christ's Poor, stands alongside the poor and suffering.

Apart from Chamber members, the event was attended by H.E. The Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, Ieronimos, and further high ranking Church officials; Vice President of the Government, Theodoros Pangalos; together with Under Secretary of State for Economy, Philippos Sahinidis, and Under Secretary of State for Finance, Competitiveness & Shipping, Markos Bolaris; British Ambassador to Greece, Dr. David Landsman; Vice President of the Greek Parliament, Grigoris Niotis; Anastasios Yannitsis, President of ELPE and sponsor of the event; and Vasilios Rapanos, President, National Bank of Greece.