



## **Primates of Orthodox Churches in the Middle East meet in Nicosia**

On 27 March 2012, Primates of the Local Orthodox Churches in the Middle East met in Nicosia.

Discussed at the meeting, chaired by His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, was the situation of Christians in the region.

Taking part in the meeting were His Beatitude Ignatios IV, Patriarch of the Great Antioch and All the East; His Beatitude Theophilos III, Pope of the Holy City of Jerusalem; and His Beatitude Chrysostomos, Archbishop of Cyprus.

The communiqué issued on the results of the meeting assesses political and socio-economic situation in the Middle East and sets forward certain measures to protect Christians in Syria and Lebanon. The Primates spoke in support of the strengthening of relations among the Orthodox Churches in the Middle East, of closer cooperation with all Christians in the regions, and of the development of harmonious and friendly relations among the Monotheistic religions.

The Primates underscored the necessity of peaceful settlement of all conflicts through constructive dialogue and decided to initiate Mission of the Primates, which would inform the world political public of the situation of Christians in the Middle East.

The Primates highlighted that Syria is a land in which the Christian Churches have existed since the dawn of Christianity and coexisted with the Moslem communities with mutual respect. The Primates confirmed their commitment to support all the efforts to restore peace and achieve the aspirations of all citizens of Syria.

Also discussed was cooperation in certain youth programmes planned for the near future. The Primates expressed condolences to the Coptic Church over the demise of Patriarch Shenouda III.