

# ECUMENICAL FEDERATION OF CONSTANTINOPOLITANS (EFC)

Newsletter  
August-September 2015

*The international federative union of the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul which was forced to expatriation after the consequent anti-minority measures implemented by the Government of Republic of Turkey during the period 1923-2003.*

## **The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of 6-7 September 1955 and the Demand for Remedy and Reparation towards the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul**

During the months September-October 2015 the EFC intensified its efforts to raise the issue of the imperative necessity of remedy and reparations towards the Greek-Orthodox Community of Istanbul by the government of the Republic of Turkey. In this framework the EFC has organized the following events in various cities:

- Istanbul September 5, 2015 : The events were organized by EFC in cooperation with the NGO "Say Stop to Racism". A press declaration was organized condemning the Pogrom in the district Pera (Beyoglu) in the gate of Galatasary School. After this a Conference was held in Cezayir House where the film "The Cruel Night" was shown and a round table discussion was held with the participation of Mr. Ridvan Akar (Journalist), Prof. Samim Akgonul (Univ. Strasbourg) and Prof. Nikolaos Ouzounoglou (President of EFC). The Conference was attended by many youngsters of Istanbul. EFC has also cooperated with the Istanbul based NGO "Contra Art" to organize an exhibition presenting the photographs of 6-7 September 1955 where for the first time the massive scale destruction of the Orthodox Churches, cemeteries, schools and Greek shops and houses were presented. These photographs were taken by late Dimitrios Kaloumenos whose life was under threat and for this reason he was deported from Turkey in 1957.
- On Sunday September 6, 2015 for the first time after 60 years a religious memory ceremony was held at the St. George Church Neochori – Bosphorus with the participation of all representatives of non-Muslim minorities and the President of EFC.
- On Monday September 7, a similar event took place at the island of Prinkipo with the participation of many local inhabitants.

In addition an exhibition was organized at the entrance of at Panagia Eisodion in Pera exhibiting photos of the Pogrom.



Press declaration in front of  
Galatasary School-Istanbul



Memorial Ceremony in Neochori-Bosphorus

- During the week September 2-9, the EFC in cooperation with the EFC association-member of Machrochorion of Constantinople and the Municipality of Athens organized a series of events including the showing the film “The Cruel Night” (Η Φρικτή Νύχτα). Conferences and the events also took place in Smyrna concerning the physiological dimensions and effects related to Pogrom and the present developments in Turkey. All the events were attended by many Constantinopolitans and Athenians. On Sunday 6 September a religious memorial service was held in the Church of St. Spyridon of the Naval Hospital of Athens.
- On October 3, a Conference was held in Thessaloniki at the Union of Constantinopolitans of Northern Greece. The speakers were Dr. B. Karakostanoglou and Dr. N. Ouzounoglou.



Opening Ceremony and the Exhibition in Athens Sept.2-9,2015



Brussels Conference

- On October 12, 2015 EFC in cooperation with Member of the European Parliament Prof. K. Chrysogonos EFC organized a conference with the participation of N. Ouzounoglou and N. Anagnostopoulos (President and Gen. Secretary respectively) at the European Parliament during which the documentary film “The Cruel Night” was shown. The actual presentations given by the representatives of the EFC can be found at the [www.conpolis.eu](http://www.conpolis.eu) . The visit of the EFC presidency to Brussels gave the opportunity to have meetings with the all representatives of political groups of the European Parliament, the General Directorate of Enlargement carrying out the candidateship negotiations with Rep. of Turkey and the Cabinet members of the European Parliament, Mr. Martin Schulz. In all the meetings the efforts of EFC to achieve the Remedy and Reparations towards the Greek-Orthodox Community were presented in detail. The Conference was attended by the representatives of Turkey and Greece.
- Consciousness Trial to be held on November 28, 2015 for the Pogrom of September 6-7, 1955 at the Bilgi University of Istanbul. Following a thorough preparation a trial is being planned to be held on the principles of Bertrand Russel Tribunals established in 1960s. Essentially there has been no fair trial to investigate the Pogrom of Septembriana until now. The trial held after the Military Takeover of May 27,1960 at the Plati (Yassiada) island of the government of A. Menderes was considered to lack the fundamental legal standards since the real perpetrators were acquitted and the organization structure of the Pogrom was hidden. In this context we invite our compatriots living in USA or other western countries that have lived closely the attacks of the mobs to join the trial as witnesses through internet-skype communication. Interested compatriots are kindly asked to contact by email: [nnap@otenet.gr](mailto:nnap@otenet.gr)

## **SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF EFC – PLEASE VISIT THE SITE**

<http://www.giveandfund.com/giveandfund/project/372qek1ph3>

### **The Educational Visit of Young Generation Members of the Expatriate Greek-Orthodox Community of Polis (9-30 August 2015)**

The initiatives to repatriate members of the expatriate Community of Constantinopolitans has been one of the priority issues raised openly towards the Government of the Republic of Turkey. Following the discussions held last April in Ankara with the Directorate of Citizens Abroad and Relative Communities, the EFC was encouraged to submit a proposal to organize an Educational Visit of members of the young generation of Constantinopolitans to the lands their parents were born and lived. The Project was titled “RETURN TO ISTANBUL” (Istanbul’a Donus) placing emphasis on how the Greek Community was banished because of the state policies in Turkey during the period after 1950s. After approval of the project an open call was proclaimed and many applications were received. A steering committee reviewed these applications and the most suitable candidates were selected (18) to participate to the implementation of the project. The selected candidates followed intensive seminars on the history and culture of the Constantinopolitan Hellenism and Turkish language prior to travel to Istanbul. The educational visit took place during the period 9-30 August 2015 which was spent for a week on visiting Byzantine monuments and museums while the rest of the days were devoted for intensive Turkish language courses and seminars on business initiatives organized by the Directorate of SME development of the Ministry of Industry. On August 11 the participants were accepted by His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch. All the preplanned activities were carried out successfully and in general terms all the participants expressed their happiness of joining the project. The generous support of the Greek-Orthodox Welfare Foundations and in particular of Mr. G. Papaliaris was extremely useful for the successful implementation of project activities. The success of the project showed the existing potential of youngsters wanted to repatriate to the city of their parents. Finally it should be stressed out this is the first project which Government of Turkey provided financial support to EFC with a modest budget being 10.000 Euro.



Participants going to Christos Monastery in the island Antigoni (with the only available motor vehicle)



Classes at SME Incubator center in Pantichi

## The continuing uncertainty in the largest Greek-Orthodox Foundation Balikli and the prohibition of elections in the Minority Welfare Foundation

The prohibition to carry out elections at the minority welfare foundations has been a common practice during the Republican era such as the periods 1936-48, 1969-1991 and 1991-2006. The prohibition of elections has been one of the serious violations of the Lausanne Treaty, since according to this fundamental Treaty, the administration and management of minority welfare foundations is recognized as a right of the minority communities. The unadmitted governmental aim of this prohibition was instrumental in the foundations' lack of able administrators which resulted in the government declaring them unattended which is equivalent to their confiscations of their real estate properties by the State of Turkey. As generally recognized the 1991 elections were a facade. In 2004 the new elected Government of Justice and Progress Party (AKP) reinstated the elections in the minority welfare foundations. According to this in all, except few, foundations elections carried out which made possible the election of young age administrators which have very positive effect to the management of the foundations. Among the Foundations denying to carry elections, under the tolerance of the state authorities has been the late Dimitri Karayianni who administered the Balikli Foundation alone for almost 35 years. Three years ago the General Directorate of Welfare Foundations residing in Ankara with an unexpected move prohibited the elections which is still continuing. Many times the EFC in cooperation with the Greek minority leadership protested for this attitude of the Turkish authorities without any result. Four expatriated Constantinopolitans appealed to Court in Turkey asking the tribunal to order elections. The trial ruling is expected in December 2015. It should be emphasized that no financial reporting has been published in the last decades by the Balikli Foundations. The number of real estate properties of the Foundation are hundreds in the area of Istanbul.

Numerous times, during the last 6 years, the Administrative Board of the EFC issued statements on the necessity of holding elections and first of all in the Balikli Foundations which is the most important foundation of Istanbul. After the passing away of D. Karayianni last June, the remaining members of the administrative board of Balikli are continuing the policy of not carrying out elections. Serious developments are expected soon on this very serious issue. EFC has done and will continue to do whatever is necessary to guarantee the future of Balikli Foundations whose existence is at stake.



View of the Entrance of Baloukli Hospital near Belgrade Gate of Theodosian Walls



Taksim – Stavrodromio Square. All the shops belongs to Baloukli Foundation. The Church shown is Agia Triada (1881)

## **The continuing efforts of EFC on social solidarity & in Greece to those in need**

We already wrote in our previous newsletter of June-July 2015 the prolonged economic and social crisis in Greece had deleterious effects on the new-refugee communities in Greece such of the Greeks of Northern Epirus, ex USSR came to Greece after 1991 and Constantinopolitans which came earlier. The sudden cut of pensions (350 Euro) of about 22.000 of these groups drove them into very difficult situations. In addition to this the very high rate of unemployment and severe cut of medical care services created many problems to compatriots living in Greece. The Administrative Board understanding the serious condition of this extreme humanitarian crisis has been carrying out a social solidarity program the last 24 months, The program consists of the following activities:

- **Provision to 100 families support with means of basic needs.**
- **Mobilization of voluntary groups of M. Doctors, Pharmacists and Social Workers to support the unable to have access to medical services.**
- **Coping with bureaucratic difficulties related to public administration.**
- **Accompanying patients to hospitals.**
- **Finding houses to homeless.**
- **Providing basic accessories to the incapacitated (chairs, electric vehicles etc.).**

The existing Kosmeteio Foundation with capacity of 32 single/double room flats is providing housing to 60 families.

The social solidarity program of EFC is being supported partially by Philanthropic Foundations such as of Stavros Niarchos and TIMA. The Foundation of "We Can- Mporoume" access to available surplus food proved to be a very valuable help.

EFC in order to raise much needed funds, seeks funding by submitting proposals to various organizations.

### **Declaration On the Deadly Terrorist Attack in Ankara (11 October 2015)**

The Ecumenical Federation of Constantinopolitans express its utmost anguish after the deadly terrorist attack taken place today in Ankara adding another act of violence continuing the last months in Turkey. We strongly condemn, as always, all terrorist attacks and those carrying out these inhumane and cruel acts which escalate into violence. We express our sincere condolences to the families of the victims, the people and the government of Turkey. In these hours, it is not allowed to say anything more than to ask from everybody to do everything possible, to stop the violence on the holy land of Anatolia.

# The Escalating Humanitarian Refugee Crisis in Eastern Mediterranean

After 93 years the same tragedy is going on because of the acts of the same culprits for land issues

1922

2015



Humanity is missing American heroes such as :



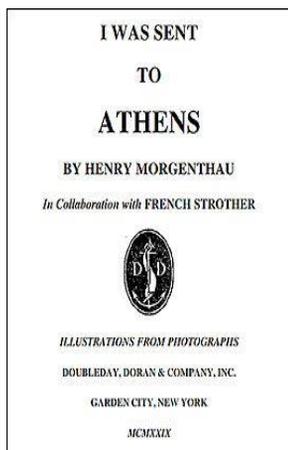
### DOUBLY HONORED BY GREECE

Two Decorations for A. K. Jennings of Utica for Services in Asia Minor.

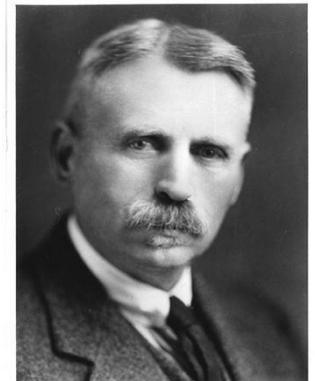
Copyright, 1922, by The Chicago Tribune Co. ATHENS, Dec. 27.—The Greek Government has awarded its highest civilian honor, the Golden Cross of Saint Xavier and the highest war honor, the Medal of Military Merit, to Asa K. Jennings of Utica, N. Y., for his work with the Near East Relief in directing the evacuation of 500,000 refugees from Asia Minor.

This was the first time in history that both medals were awarded to the same person simultaneously. The Greek Government also has asked the United States to permit it to award the Medal of Military Merit to the commanding officers of the twelve American destroyers which assisted in the evacuation of the Greek refugees.

Asa Jennings a pastor was able to organize the saving operations of hundred thousand children and women from the Smyrna shore in September 1922



Henry Morgenthau organized with his personal efforts the Greek Refugees Relief Program (1923-30) which still is the largest and most successful humanitarian project in mankind history



George Horton Consul of USA in Smyrna defended humanity when all the western states closed their eyes in view of Smyrna Holocaust, since their economic interests were prevailing.