

José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission

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Your Eminence,

Thank you for your letter sharing the analyses of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece regarding the crisis, its causes, possible remedies and impact on the Greek population.

Allow me first to warmly welcome your reference to the dialogue foreseen by Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty. Indeed, the spirit and purpose of this dialogue is to create opportunities for a frank and fruitful exchange of views between Churches and European Institutions on subjects of concern to European citizens. The questions you raise are indeed those that matter most now to the majority of our people across the European Union.

You underline correctly that the present crisis raises broader issues beyond the economy. It also entails an increasing challenge to the legitimacy of political institutions, since the trust that citizens invest in their political representatives is being put to the test. As you are no doubt aware, European leaders and the European Commission in particular, are taking decisive action to contain the sovereign debt crisis and to strengthen the Euro-zone to reinforce its defences. Today more than ever before, it is of paramount importance that all political institutions, including at European level, send a clear message of trust and hope to their fellow citizens. Democracy could otherwise be endangered and only populist movements will benefit, as a result.

In this context, the European Union's continued support to Greece offers a tangible proof of our determination to stand by one of our own currently in need. I wish to reiterate my appreciation for the tremendous effort already undertaken by the Greek people and express my belief that the adjustment process will continue with the unwavering commitment of all institutional actors, including the Church.

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The Holy Synod of the Church of Greece
Hellenic Republic

I strongly believe that Europe is capable of turning this challenge into a new beginning and am convinced that the European project can emerge from the crisis much stronger and reinvigorated.

I fully share your view that deepening the values upon which the EU is founded is more appropriate now than ever before. As you rightly point out, this financial crisis is in the end, a moral crisis and we need to re-examine the ethical foundations of our economic and political undertakings.

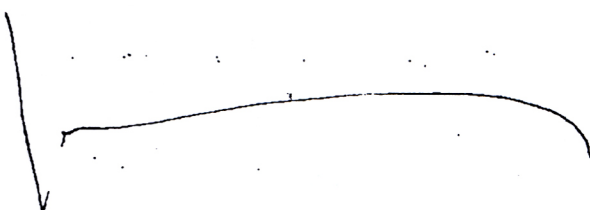
At the beginning of my mandate, ahead of my re-election by the European Parliament, I had the opportunity to highlight the same fundamental view in my political guidelines, that Europe and Europeans need to revisit the structure of fundamental values upon which our European model rests: "Europe has managed to develop a social market economy and a model of society that surpasses the destructive dichotomy of unregulated markets or over-powerful states. Answers must come from society so that they can respond to people's needs. We must put human dignity at the heart of our endeavours. "

This view has been a major inspiration to me throughout my public life. We have witnessed the end of certain ideologies that framed the political culture of the 20th century; both "radical capitalism" of uncontrolled markets, as well as extreme collectivism which were inhuman. Their purpose was not to promote the dignity of the citizen and I am determined to ensure that this historical wrong is not repeated. It is also the inspiration that will lead us out of this crisis.

Thank you again for your kind and inspiring words at this critical juncture, and for the social sensitivity and the impressive work undertaken by the Church of Greece in the field of social services to care for the most vulnerable.

I look forward to continue working with you personally and your Representation Office in Brussels to move forward with our common endeavours in these challenging times.

Yours faithfully,



José Manuel BARROSO