

Statement on the amendment redefining the building plat for constructing a Mosque in Athens

May 7, 2015

Political issues with regard to constructing a public place of praying for Muslims (Greek citizens, visitors, students from Arabic countries, immigrants etc) have been resolved by Law 3512/2006 “Construction of mosque in Athens and other provisions” and by article 29 of Law 4014/2011 voted by all members of the Parliament of all political parties represented at the time with the exception of the party “Popular Orthodox Rally” (LAOS). The Council of State decision 2399/2014 issued on June 30, 2014, held that the law is in full compliance with the Constitution. As is the case with all public works, there may be delays, unforeseen difficulties and human errors, due to which the construction is delayed. The amendment tabled by the Ministry of Reconstruction of Production, Environment and Energy aims at correcting a human error. This does not constitute a change to an existing policy agreed by all governments since 2006. It is noteworthy that for many years all reports by international organizations on human rights in Greece have stated that there is no public place of praying for Muslims in Athens. For a number of years Greece has been defamed on this issue by certain parties within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the second largest organization of international cooperation after the United Nations. Greece has absolutely nothing to fear from a public place of praying for Muslims which will be State-owned and will operate under the authority of the State. On the contrary, there is much to gain in terms of internal security and international standing.