



## Ecumenical Conference in Thessaloniki

Opening Greetings by H.E. Mgr. Mariano Crociata - President of COMECE

As President of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE), I am very grateful and honoured of the possibility of participating in this International Political Conference and I greet you all, organisers and participants. The theme that will be at the centre of our common reflection in these days is particularly relevant for Churches and for society today.

Its significance is related to the role of values in our societies and among the peoples of the European Union. Both are experiencing the need for a coherent set of values without which no community can survive. Our societies dwell in a paradoxical cultural and moral situation. On the one hand, they seem not entitled to recognise the transcendent roots of the values that are at the basis of our living together; on the other hand, they need a common *ethos* to maintain some kind of unity and coherence.

Our Churches have the opportunity and the responsibility of giving our societies the hope of not losing the memory of the roots that bring life to the values which hold our communities together.

I am convinced that our Conference will give an important contribution to pursue this aim. This is also my wish. Thank you very much!