



Australian Hellenic Council NSW Inc.

A coordinating body for the Australian Hellenic community

Αυστραλιανό Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο NNO
PO BOX 433 EARLWOOD NSW 2206

MEDIA RELEASE

NSW PREMIER JOINS PARTHENON SCULPTURES CAMPAIGN

Sydney 20 December 2010: Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Kristina Keneally MP, has become the latest Australian parliamentarian to call for the Parthenon Sculptures to be returned home.

“Returning the Parthenon Sculptures to Greece would be an important step in preserving Greek history and culture for future generations”, the Member for Heffron in Sydney’s south-eastern suburbs stated. “These are ancient artefacts that are incredibly important to the Greek people and like many others around the world, the NSW Government believes they should be returned to their rightful home”.

Premier Keneally recently became an honorary member of the Australians for the Return of the Parthenon Sculptures committee at The University of Sydney.

Ms Keneally has therefore joined former Prime Ministers Gough Whitlam, Malcolm Fraser and John Howard, former Premier of Victoria Jeff Kennett, and her predecessor as NSW Premier, Bob Carr, in adding her voice to the international campaign in support of the sculptures’ return to Greece.

“The Australian Hellenic Council (NSW) thanks the Premier for her support of this important issue of restitution of cultural property”, said AHC (NSW) Coordinator, George Vellis.

“Australia has long campaigned for British institutions to return indigenous Australian human remains and artefacts. It is proper that Australian political leaders also support the return of unique cultural treasures such as the Parthenon Sculptures”.

The Australian Hellenic Council (NSW) also expressed its thanks to the Australians for the Return of the Parthenon Sculptures, and especially its Chair, David Hill.

For their efforts for the campaign to reunite the sculptures in the British Museum with the ones in their place of creation, the AHC has honoured former PMs Whitlam, Fraser and Howard, as well as former Premiers Kennett and Carr, and Mr Hill with NIKE AWARDS for service to the Australian Hellenic community.

The Parthenon Sculptures, also known as the Parthenon Marbles or the Elgin Marbles, were illegally removed from the Parthenon temple in Athens on the orders of Lord Elgin, then British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in the early 1800s.

Lord Elgin’s collection has been at the British Museum since the 1830s, when he sold them. Persistent calls by Hellenic governments ever since have been ignored by the British Museum.