



Statement Issued by the Fathers of the Holy Synod of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch

February 10, 2017

A statement was issued by six archbishops of our Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch (four of whom are members in the Holy Synod and two are not) in which they attacked His Holiness our Patriarch, “the Supreme Head of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, the defender of its faith, doctrine, and apostolic traditions, the symbol of its unity, its representative and spokesman everywhere, the general supervisor of all its affairs, and the spiritual father of all Syrian Orthodox people worldwide.” (Article 7 of the Church Constitution) and questioned, in particular, the faith of His Holiness and his adherence to the Orthodox Christian dogma, and permitted themselves to speak on behalf of the Holy Synod declaring their rebellion against Church leadership and Constitution, considering His Holiness an alien to the rank of Patriarch.

We confirm in this statement that carries our names, the following:

1. Our utter condemnation and absolute rejection of everything that appeared in the referenced statement in the form of accusations against our Patriarch, which are hereby declared totally false and hostile positions that incite discord and sow the seeds of division among our people.
2. Our clear declaration that these six archbishops do not, in any way, represent our Holy Synod nor do they speak for any of us.
3. We consider invalid and illegal every and any action that these archbishops conduct in the form of ordinations and any other episcopal services that, contrary to the Constitution of the Church, are carried out without securing the approval of His Holiness the Patriarch (Article 50 – Section H, which states: “All of his [the Metropolitan] activities are subject to the supervision of H.H the Patriarch”, and Article 56, which states: “The Metropolitan will be vigilant in choosing the best priests whom he ordains, according to church rules and traditions after obtaining approval from H.H. the Patriarch”). By



their actions, in disobedience of these laws, they are separating themselves from the Church.

4. Our clear call to these six archbishops to follow the path of repentance and for their return from their deviation, subject to the Church canon law in accordance with the Constitution of our Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch.

The fathers of the Synod confirm their standing by the side of the lawful successor of St. Peter, His Holiness Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, who was chosen by the Holy Spirit through his election by the Holy Synod in these difficult circumstances that we are currently witnessing. We value his clear fatherly conduct through his constant presence among his people, particularly during at critical times, and we call upon all Church members, clergy and laity, to pray fervently for the sake of the Holy Church and her shepherds and to rally around the their spiritual leadership.

We ask the Lord God to protect His Church from all evil and to bless her people throughout the world; by the prayers of the Virgin St. Mary, St. Peter, the head of the Apostles and all saints and martyrs.

The names of their eminences the metropolitans:

Mor Gregorios Saliba Chamoun, Patriarchal Advisor

Mor Severius Hawa, Metropolitan of Baghdad and Basra

Mor Theophilos George Saliba, Metropolitan of Mount Lebanon and Tripoli

Mor Timotheos Samuel Aktas, Metropolitan of Tur Abdin and Abbot of Mor Gabriel Monastery

Mor Philoxenus Yusuf Cetin, Patriarchal Vicar in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir

Mor Julius Abdelahad Shabo, Metropolitan of Sweden and Scandinavia

Mor Dioscorus Benjamin Atas, Patriarchal Vicar in Sweden

Mor Dionysius Issa Gurbuz, Patriarchal Vicar in Switzerland and Austria

Mor Selwanos Petros Al-Nemeh, Metropolitan of Homs and Hama

Mor Athanasius Elia Bahi, Patriarchal Vicar in Canada

Mor Philoxenus Saliba Ozmen, Metropolitan of Mardin and Diyarbakir

Mor Theethose Yeldo, Metropolitan of the Malankara Archdiocese of North America

Mor Nicolaos Matta Abdelahad, Patriarchal Vicar in Spain

Mor Justinos Paulos Safar, Patriarchal Vicar in Zahla and Bekaa



Mor Timotheos Moussa Al-Shamani, Metropolitan of the Archdiocese of Mor Mattai Monastery
Mor Athanasius Touma Dakkama, Patriarchal Vicar in the United Kingdom
Mor Gregorius Malke Urek, Patriarchal Vicar in Adiyaman and its Environs
Mor Philoxenus Mattias Nayis, Patriarchal Vicar in Germany
Mor Julius Hanna Aydin, Head of Foreign Relations in Germany
Mor Clemis Daniel Kourieh, Metropolitan of Beirut
Mor Polycarpus Augin Aydin, Patriarchal Vicar in Holland
Mor Chrysostomos Mikhael Chamoun, Patriarchal Vicar and Director of the Patriarchal Benevolent Institutions in Atchaneh
Mor Dionysius Jean Kawak, Patriarchal Vicar for the Archdiocese of Eastern United States
Mor Nicodemus Daoud Sharaf, Metropolitan of Mosul, Kurdistan and their Environs
Mor Titus Boulos Touza, Apostolic Nuncio to the Evangelical Churches in Brazil
Mor Timotheos Matta Al-Khoury, Patriarchal Vicar for the Patriarchal Archdiocese of Damascus
Mor Chrysostomos Youhanna Ghassaly, Patriarchal Vicar in Argentina
Mor Yacoub Eduardo Aguirre, Patriarchal Vicar in Central America

Also, in support of this statement:

- His Eminence Mor Georges Kourieh, Patriarchal Vicar of Belgium, France and Luxemburg.
- His Grace Bishop Mor Maurice Amsih, Patriarchal Delegate for the Archdiocese of Jazirah and Euphrates.