

Statement Issued by the Holy Antiochian Synod

Balamand, February 23, 2023

The Holy Antiochian Synod, presided by His Beatitude Patriarch John X (Yazigi), held its fifteenth extraordinary session, on February 22 and 23, 2023, in Balamand, in the presence of Their Eminences, the Most Reverend Metropolitans:

Elias (Archdiocese of Beirut and Dependencies); Elias (Archdiocese of Tyre, Sidon and Dependencies); Saba (Archdiocese of Bosra Houran and Jabal Al-Arab); George (Archdiocese of Homs and Dependencies); Silouan (Archdiocese of Jbeil and Batroun and Dependencies); Baslios (Archdiocese of Akkar and Dependencies); Ephrem (Archdiocese of Tripoli, Koura and Dependencies); Ignatius (Archdiocese of France, Western and Southern Europe); Isaac (Archdiocese of Germany and Central Europe); Ghattas (Archdiocese of Baghdad, Kuwait and Dependencies); Silouan (Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland); Antonios (Archdiocese of Zahleh, Baalbek and Dependencies); Nicolas (Archdiocese of Hama and Dependencies); Baslios (Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines); Ignatius (Archdiocese of Mexico, Venezuela, Central America and the Caribbean Islands); Athanasius (Archdiocese of Lattakia and Dependencies); Jacques (Archdiocese of Buenos Aires and All Argentina); Ephrem (Archdiocese of Aleppo, Alexandretta, and Dependencies); and Nifon Saikali Metropolitan of Philippopolis and Representative of the Patriarch of Antioch to the Patriarch of Moscow. Also in attendance was His Grace Bishop Gregorios Khoury, Secretary of the Holy Synod.

Their Eminences Metropolitans: Sergio (Archdiocese of Santiago and Chile) and Damaskinos (Archdiocese of São Paulo and All Brazil), apologized for not being able to attend. His Eminence Metropolitan Boulos Yazigi was also present in the prayers and invocations of the Synod Fathers, despite his physical absence caused by abduction.

After invoking the Holy Spirit, and begging for divine mercy, His Beatitude discussed with the Synod Fathers the terrible earthquake that hit the region. The Fathers begged for divine mercies upon the victims who reposed in the Lord, comfort for the wounded and afflicted, and consolation for all those who are grieving for the loss of their loved ones after this disaster. They reviewed the situation of the Archdioceses afflicted by the earthquake, especially, the region of Alexandretta and the Archdioceses of Aleppo, Lattakia, and Hama. They affirmed that the Church, in cooperation with many, is making utmost efforts to stand by everyone in this calamity. The Fathers reviewed the work of the relief efforts in all the afflicted Archdioceses and appreciated the quick

response of their faithful and all people of goodwill to the Earthquake Appeal made by His Beatitude, by sending financial and in-kind help.

The Synod Fathers reviewed the situation of the Archdiocese of New York and All North America and listened to a report presented by the Archdiocese's Patriarchal Vicar, His Eminence Antonios (Al Souri), Metropolitan of Zahleh, Baalbek, and Dependencies, who was appointed upon the vacancy of the Metropolitan See.

The Fathers elected from among the list of nominees sent by the Archdiocese after her Special Convention held on January 13, 2023, His Eminence Saba (Ispier) Metropolitan of Bosra Houran and Jabal Al-Arab, as Metropolitan of the Archdiocese of New York and All North America, and decided to transfer Metropolitan Saba (Ispier) from his Archdiocese to the Archdiocese of New York and All North America.

Lastly, the Synod Fathers send their blessings upon their faithful of the Antiochian Church at home and abroad, and especially upon their faithful in the Archdiocese of New York and All North America, praying for prosperity, peace and stability to the whole world.