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THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST:
DIOCESES OF WESTERN USA, CALIFORNIA AND EASTERN USA



**STATEMENT OF THE HIERARCHS OF THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST
 IN THE UNITED STATES ON THE CONFLICT IN ARTSAKH**

Beloved in Christ:

The present hostilities and military aggression in the autonomous Republic of Artsakh (Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh) has caused much alarm and concern for the suffering of the innocent civilian Armenian population of that region. The recent military aggression of the Republic of Azerbaijan against the ethnic Armenians who have historically populated this area violates the moral standards of humanity, international laws, and the right of a people to self-determination. The oversight of ceasing and correcting such an action ought to be carried out by the United Nations Organization without delay, in an objective manner, and without the interference of outside entities and interest groups. The appropriate international agencies must call upon the aggressors to immediately halt any and all offensive military operations, without delay. In addition, it is incumbent upon the international community at large to condemn such acts of military aggression, and to make concrete attempts at mediating an immediate cease-fire and the promotion of dialogue between the two republics. Violence and military action cannot, and should not, be accepted in our modern age as a way of resolving disputes between countries. Rather, both sides must engage in a sincere and unbiased dialogue, aided by the UN and the international community.

It is an undeniable fact of history that the Assyrians and Armenians have shared millennia of a common history, and have lived side-by-side for countless centuries. In fact, Assyrians have been living in the Republic of Armenia since at least the beginning of the 19th century, as our present-day churches and Assyrian community in that country demonstrate. What's more, our two Churches—the Assyrian

Church of the East and the Armenian Apostolic Church—enjoy very ancient Christian traditions and foundations that go back to the very blessed apostles of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, our Christian obligation compels us to speak out against violence and aggression by Armenia’s neighboring state, particularly when they are unjustifiable and unwarranted. As Christians, we are always called by Christ our Lord to peacemakers, for such shall be called the ‘children of God’ (cf. Mt. 5:9). By the same token, defense of the fatherland, and especially of the innocent and helpless civilian population is the right of a nation. Therefore, we pray earnestly for all of the displaced, and the suffering civilian population of Artsakh, especially those who have already lost their life in this conflict. May the Lord protect them, and guide them back safely to their homes in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

In closing, we extend our prayers and thoughts to all of our Armenian brothers and sisters in Artsakh itself, and in the Republic of Armenia who are defending their brothers and sisters in the conflict zone. During this time of suffering, we express our Christian solidarity with and our solicitude to our brother prelates of the Armenian Apostolic dioceses in the United States: Their Eminences Archbishop Havnon Derderian, Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Archbishop Anoushavan Tanielian and His Grace Bishop Daniel Fendikyan, and to all the clergy and faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the United States.

May the Lord’s enduring peace reign in Artsakh, and may healing and relief come quickly to its suffering population. We ask all of our faithful across the US to keep this intention in their daily prayers, both publicly and privately. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all; Amen+++

Issued on this 7th day of October, in the year of Our Lord 2020:-

✠Aprim Khamis
Bishop of Western USA



✠Awa Royel
Bishop of California



✠Paulus Benjamin
Bishop of Eastern USA

