Heads of Christian Churches in Syria meet to discuss the situation of Christians in the country

DECR Communication Service, 30/03/2026

On 29th March 2026, a meeting took place at the residence of the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Antioch in Damascus. Taking part in it were His Beatitude Patriarch John X of the Great Antioch and All the East; His Holiness Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East and Supreme Head of the Universal Syriac Orthodox Church; and His Beatitude Youssef Absi, Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarch of Antioch and All the East. They discussed the recent developments, in particular, **the incident in Al-Suqaylabiyah**, as well as the situation in Syria in general and the plight of Christians across the country.

With deep concern and a sense of responsibility, the Patriarchs addressed the challenges that face Syria and endanger coexistence of Muslims and Christians in the country and emphasized the urgent need to stop the uncontrolled spread of weapons, maintain security and stability and safeguard the dignity of all citizens without exception. As the heads of the Christian Churches pointed out, that must be done based on the principles of citizenship, equal rights and duties, and respect for both personal and public freedoms.

On the occasion of the upcoming feasts, the Patriarchs extended their blessings and greetings to the faithful, while directing that celebrations be limited exclusively to prayers within the churches.

They concluded by offering prayers for peace in Syria, Lebanon and throughout the world.

The day before, His Beatitude Patriarch John X of the Great Antioch and All the East had addressed Orthodox Christians in Syria, pointing out that the Patriarchate of Antioch expressed protest and indignation in relation to the incidents affecting the Christian community which “are often justified by being labeled as ‘individual acts,’” although that is not always true. The Primate of the Church of Antioch called on “the relevant authorities to deal firmly with anyone who undermines civil peace and not to overlook the recurring events that are repeatedly described as ‘individual acts,’ though this is not necessarily the case.”

The statement issued by the Patriarchate of Antioch on 28th March says:

“The Patriarchate calls for the opening of an official investigation leading to the arrest and prosecution

of those involved and for the Patriarchate to be formally informed of the results of this investigation. This comes in response to incidents that are intended to stir sectarian tensions, tensions from which Syria has historically been spared. It also calls for compensation for those who have suffered material damages. It also calls for the implementation of measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents, with the State, through its official institutions alone, assuming full responsibility for maintaining civil peace, including the control of unlicensed weapons.

"The Patriarchate expresses its appreciation for the support and solidarity shown by its faithful, and for their sympathy and engagement with all that affects the Christian presence in Syria. It also values their concern for the shared life of the Syrian people in all its diversity, whether Muslim or Christian. It affirms that Syrian dignity and Syrian society are founded on the principles of citizenship and integration among all components, rather than on a majority–minority logic.

"The Patriarchate affirms, before its Christian faithful spread across the world and before all, the necessity of moving from words to actions. It reiterates, in the words of its Patriarch John X: 'Enough bloodshed in Syria.' Amid all that has happened and continues to unfold, and on the threshold of the Holy Passion of Christ, it prays to the Lord of Peace and the God of all consolation to protect this country. It affirms its full confidence, echoing the words of Holy Scripture that dispel all fear: 'God is in Her midst; She shall not be shaken.'"

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/94142/