



ԱՐԱՋՆՈՐԴՈՒԹԻՒՆ ՀԱՅՈՑ ՄԵԾԻ ՊՐԻԴԱՆՈՅ ԵՒ ԻՈՒԱՆՏԵԱՅԻ  
DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH  
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND  
25 Cheniston Gardens • Kensington • London W8 6TG

Գերազնորհ Տ. Վահան Եպս. Յովհաննէսեան, Առաջնորդ եւ Հայրապետական Պատուիրակ  
*His Grace Bishop Vahan Hovhanessian, Ph.D., Primate and Pontifical Legate*

A Message by Bishop Vahan Hovhanessian, Primate,  
Diocese of the Armenian Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom  
and the Republic of Ireland and President of the  
“Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches in the United Kingdom and Ireland”  
on the Recent Kidnapping of the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo  
and the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo and Iskanadrin

It is with deep sadness and much pain that we received the news of the kidnapping of our two brothers in Christ, the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo, Mar Gregorios Y. Ibrahim, and the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo and Iskandarun, Bishop Boulos Yazigi. The two prominent clergymen were kidnapped on Monday, 22 April, 2013 on their way back from the Turkish borders. Since then conflicting reports have circulated about their possible release, but the diocesan offices have confirmed as of today that the Syrian Bishops’ remain missing and their whereabouts unclear.

Both clergy are very well known, respected and eminent Christian leaders. Archbishop Boulos is the brother of the newly installed Patriarch of Antioch while Mar Gregorios is a worldwide known proponent of Ecumenism and Interreligious dialogue.

Such acts of terrorism further destroy the fabric of the community in the Middle East which for centuries has been used to having the adherers of the three monotheistic religions living harmoniously and peacefully with each other.

We call on our brothers and sisters of all peace-promoting religions to denounce this act of terrorism and pray for the safety of the kidnapped Bishops. We ask the leaders of the democratic countries around the world to condemn this act of terrorism and pursue the perpetrators, securing the harmless homecoming of these two clergymen.

The Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches (COOC) in Great Britain and Ireland prays with its sister Syrian Orthodox Church today beseeching our Lord to be with Archbishop Boulos and Mar Gregorios, protecting them from evil and harm and securing their safe return home.

*“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; [and] them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body” (Hebrew 13:3)*

+Bishop Vahan Hovhanessian  
Kensington, London  
25 April 2013