



**Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches**

JOINT STATEMENT OF  
THE ERITREAN ORTHODOX TEWAHDO CHURCH DIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA &  
ITS AFFILIATED CHURCHES  
THE ERITREAN ORTHODOX TEWAHDO DIOCESE OF THE  
UNION OF CHURCHES ABROAD  
AND  
THE STANDING CONFERENCE OF ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Be it known that:

- I. For the past several years the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches (The Standing Conference) has been facilitating dialogue between the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Church Diocese of North America and its Affiliated Churches in Europe and the Middle East (Diocese of North America) overseen by His Grace Bishop MAKARIOS and the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Diocese of the Union of Churches Abroad (Diocese of the Union) overseen by His Grace Bishop SINODA.
- II. The Standing Conference was invited to mediate between the Diocese of North America and the Diocese of the Union by the representatives of those bodies.
- III. The Standing Conference appointed His Grace Bishop DAVID of the Coptic Orthodox Church and His Eminence Archbishop VICKEN of the Armenian Apostolic Church to mediate between the two bodies because of the former's many years of experience with and service to the Orthodox Christians of the Eritrean Diaspora and the latter's many years of experience on the World Council of Churches and related bodies and in helping to resolve disputes between various ecclesial factions.
- IV. We glorify God to report that after many months of fruitful dialogue between committees representing the Diocese of North America and the Diocese of the Union – as mediated by the Standing Conference – that an accord has been reached. All outstanding issues have been resolved and the representatives of both Dioceses have agreed to move forward in full unity.



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- V. We further glorify God to report that we consider the union of the two Dioceses to be accomplished as of this date and the signing of this document and that unity will be sealed on Saturday, April 29 via the concelebration of the Divine Liturgy by His Grace Bishop MAKARIOS and His Grace Bishop SINODA along with His Grace Bishop DAVID, His Eminence Archbishop VICKEN, other Bishops of the Standing Conference and their representatives, and the clergy of the two Dioceses.
- VI. Once the Liturgy has been prayed the newly united Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Diocese will be represented on the Standing Conference by His Grace Bishop MAKARIOS, His Grace Bishop SINODA, and their appointed representatives.
- VII. Moving forward, every parish of the newly-united Diocese will pray for both bishops (Bishop MAKARIOS and Bishop SINODA) by name in every celebration of the Divine Liturgy.
- VIII. The name of the newly-united Diocese will be determined by a committee made up of representatives of the heretofore separated Dioceses once unity has been accomplished.
- IX. The Standing Conference and the newly-united Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Diocese remain committed to upholding the canon law common to all Orthodox Churches as well as the traditional teachings, faith, and dogma that is the patrimony of the Orthodox Church. As St. Athanasios the Great declared, Orthodoxy is “what Christ gave, the disciples preached, and the Fathers kept”. This is the Faith that we uphold in opposition to interference in the affairs of the Church by any secular authority.
- X. It is the wish and prayer of all of the undersigned hierarchs, of the newly-united Eritrean Diocese overseen by Bishop MAKARIOS and Bishop SINODA, and of the Standing Conference to see full unity and reconciliation accomplished in the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Church – inclusive of the church in Eritrea and the church abroad – united under a single Holy Synod. If need be, the Standing Conference is willing to play a facilitating role in achieving this unity, even as its representatives facilitated the unity of the above-mentioned Dioceses.



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**MAKARIOS, BISHOP**  
Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo  
Church Diocese of North America

**SINODA, BISHOP**  
Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo  
Diocese of the Union of Churches Abroad

**DAVID, BISHOP**  
President of the Standing Conference  
of Oriental Orthodox Churches and  
Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese  
of New York & New England

**VICKEN, ARCHBISHOP**  
Member of the Standing Conference of  
Oriental Orthodox Churches and  
Diocesan Legate & Ecumenical Director  
of the Diocese of the Armenian Church  
(Eastern)

18 April 2023 Anno Domini  
10 Meyazya 2015 Ge'ez Calendar  
10 Paramoude 1739 Anno Martyri

Feast of the Holy Fifty Days

Deacon Gebre Kristos Nicholas Siniari, Secretary  
Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches