On Thursday 2nd April, a conference was held in the French Senate about the future of the Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrians in Iraq.

The conference was organized by the Assyrian-Chaldean-Syriac Institute in Paris with the active collaboration of European Syriac Union and thanks to the help of the Senator Mrs. Christianne Kammerman. Guests from different fields attended to the conference: The Iraqi Ambassador in France, French Senators and journalists.

The conference was split in 2 sessions where in the first session academics and authors made a speech about the Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrians people’s history and presence in the Middle-East. The Professor Herman Teule President of Institute for Eastern Christendom at the Nijmegen University (NL) and others were the mains speakers during that session.

After a short break a video was shown related to the situation of the Iraqi refugees in Jordan and stating the alarming situation of the Iraqi refugees and mentioning that more than 60% of them are Christians.

You can see the video here:

And a second session was related to political arena and the Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrians political organizations in the Middle-East and Europe. Aziz Al-Zebari from the Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Council of Iraq explained the current situation of the Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrians in Iraq, their tragedy and therefore the need for autonomy.

In his speech, on behalf of European Syriac Union, Suleyman Gultekin talked further about the request for autonomy for the Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Christians in Iraq. He explained that this request is not to divide Iraq, not against Iraqi people, nor to contain themselves into a ghetto but on the contrary to build a multicultural and more equitable society in Iraq for all Iraqi people and minorities living in Iraq. Suleyman Gultekin also insisted that the request for autonomy doesn’t go against Iraqi Constitution and made a reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Some of the articles read during the conference show that our request is in line with International Institutions.

**Article 3**
Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

**Article 4**
Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.

**Article 5**
Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

**Article 6**
Every indigenous individual has the right to a nationality.


Furthermore Suleyman Gultekin explained the different events and meetings organized/hold by European Syriac Union about the request for autonomy in Iraq during the last 2 years.

Please see the link below for a detailed conference program:
http://www.esu.cc/Events/Programme%20Conference-Debat.pdf
Attacks continue against Mor Gabriel Monastery

Last year the cadastral survey was started at the Mor Gabriel Monastery and villages of the vicinity. During these works three of the muslims villages menaced Mor Gabriel Monastery inhabitants to seize the properties of the Monastery. With the objective to seize all the properties, the representatives of these villages with the religious and national declarations and statements that they do they tried to show the Monastery as the occupant and as the missionary habitation. As a final of these accusations from the first degree Turkey government tried to make the Monastery as the occupant in the southeast of Turkey otherly in the Turabdin. Also there is a second reason which afraid Turkey from the registration of the Monastery lands. South east of Anatolia is full with the destroyed and already occupied Syriac churches and monasteries. Such a trial that will be gain with the Monastery part, this will be first example to the rest of the Syriacs to protecting their cultural richness.

Mor Gabriel Monastery is one the most important and milestone for the Syriacs to protecting their cultural richness. The purpose of these meetings was to seek support for the Syriacs to protecting their cultural richness and already occupied Syriac churches and monasteries. Such a trial that will be gain with the Monastery part, this will be first example to the rest of the Syriacs to protecting their cultural richness.

If really Turkey wants to be a democratic country in the future, then must shows more respect to the historical, religious and social rights of the Syriacs and other non muslim minorities which lives for the thousands of years in Turkey.

At the result of these investigation Ministry of the Forest and Environment had sued Mor Gabriel Monastery with the hypothesis that Monastery occupied the woodland. Answer to this act Monastery also sued Ministry of Forest and Cadastral Directorate to protect their land that they are using before arrival of the Turks to the Anatolia.

The first trial started at the November 2008. The trial was postponed. The next one was at the December also this one was postponed. The trials continue at the January, February and Mars and like precedents these also was postponed. New trials will continue at the 22 April and 06 Mai 2009.

To monitor these trials and giving support to the Mor Gabriel Monastery hundreds of Syriac and European representatives were present at the precedent trials. At the Europe Syriac people for many times with the head of the Bishops they organized huge street demonstrations in Sweden, Deutschland, Switzerland, Austria and Belgium. 25 January 2009 at the demonstration of Berlin more than 20 thousands of Syriac people were present. This number was quarter of the Syriacs of Germany. This activity was supported firstly with the Syriac Orthodox Church, European Syriac Union and different Syriac party and institutions.

At the time when Syriacs planning to return back from Diaspora, the method of Turkish government to seize and oppress 1600 years old Mor Gabriel Monastery, mainly is a policy of intimidation to prevent returning back of Syriac to their ancestral homeland. Also there is a second reason which afraid Turkey from the registration of the Monastery lands. South east of Anatolia is full with the destroyed and already occupied Syriac churches and monasteries. Such a trial that will be gain with the Monastery part, this will be first example to the rest of the Syriacs to protecting their cultural richness.

ESU Diplomacy Meetings

European Syriac Union, Iraq Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Popular Congress, Iraq Bethnahrin Patriotic Union (HBA) and French Assyrian-Chaldean-Syriac Institute represented made a serial of meetings between 26-27 January 2009 at the European Union institutions. The main objective of these meetings was to seek support for autonomy safe region on the north Iraq for the Iraqi Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Christians.

From ESU Fikri Aygur (ESU Vice Chairman), Suleyman Guftekin (ESU Belgium Representative), Ilyas Demir (Nederland Representative), Simon Oguz (Sweden Representative), on behalf of Iraq Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Popular Congress Aziz El Zebari (External Relations) and for the same institution Gabriel Malko (European Responsible) for the HBA Cak Sen and French Assyrian-Chaldean-Syriac Institute Agnes Ide were present during these meetings.

The first meeting was realized with the Sophie Kisling secretary of the European Council President Javier Solana and Karin Gatt-Rutter chief of the European Commission Iraq Desk. At this meeting the discussion was about situations that faced Iraqi Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Christians. Also the help was requested for the security and aide for the realization of the autonomy project.

Other meetings were done partly with the European Parliament Iraqi Committee. These meetings were realized with the European Parliament Iraqi Committee Chairman Baroness Emma Nicholson of Winterbourne and Nicholay Mladenov and from the same committee Tunne Kelam.

At the 28 January 2009 ESU and Iraq Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian Popular Congress representatives made a meeting with Nederland representatives. Nederland government Middle East and Africa representatives and Turkey representatives were present at this meeting. With this meeting also the aim was to seek support for the autonomy project and finding solution for the Mor Gabriel Monastery problem which situated at the southeastern of Turkey otherly in the Turabdin.


One of the main objectives of ESU is to seek support for the autonomy safe region in Iraq for the Assyrian-Chaldean-Syriac people.
New Patriarch for the Syriac Catholic Church

Mar Ignace Youssef III Younan had been consecrated new patriarch for the Syriac Catholic Church and religious ceremony took place in Our Lady of the Annunciation Cathedral in Beirut.

The new Patriarch Mar Ignace Youssef III Younan was elected at the beginning of the year as new patriarch because of the resignation of the precedent patriarch. The ceremony unfolded in the presence of many authors from among our people and foreign authors participated in the book fair. This year's authors award was given to Mr. Besim Aydin. Around 500 people attended the book-fair. This year's authors award was given to Mr. Besim Aydin. Around 500 people attended the book-fair.

ESU Sweden Book Fair

On 8th March 2009, the European Syriac Union ESU and the Mor Fetrus church of Hallonberg in Stockholm jointly organized the 3rd Bethnahrin book fair.

Cadastral Survey in Turabdin

Since cadastral survey had started in Turabdin region Syriacs face great problems and for many times there is no answer for the questions. Syriacs are at the phase to demand their own and fundamental rights.

In June of 1991, Father Younan was elevated to the rank of "Corbishop" by the Patriarch, Mar Ignatius Antoun II Hayek. The ceremony took place at Our Lady of Deliverance Mission in Newark, New Jersey.

On November 6, 1995, Pope John Paul II appointed him first Bishop (Eparch) of the newly established Diocese (Eparchy) Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic Diocese for Syriac Catholics in the United States and Canada. He was consecrated Bishop on January 7, 1996 at Saint Peter and Paul's Church in Kamishly, Syria by His Beatitude, the Patriarch Hayek.

He fluently speaks Arabic, French, Aramaic, Italian, German and English.

News: various sources.

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Women Conference

On the occasion of the 8th of March, the international day of the women, the Bethnahrin Frauen Union Germany has organised an international Women's conference.

The goal of the international women's conference was to establish a step towards an intercultural exchange and to promote the linguistic and social integration of the women in Europe. Through the contribution of the assembled advisers, Mrs. Antje Blumenthal, MdD/CDU delegate; Mrs. Martina Severin-Kaiser, ecumenical reverend of the Bethnahrin Frauen Union, it was possible to jointly analyse and discuss special points of interest.

The first adviser, Mrs Antje Blumenthal talked in her speech about the difficulty of a female politician to be elected and recognised. She also showed that women are paid lower wages than men and expounded on a proposal to combat the causes of wage differences between men and women.

Reverend and designated person for ecumenism of the Nordelbischen church, Mrs. Rima Tüzün, representative of the Bethnahrin Frauen Union, explained to the listeners that the 8th of March now also is World Prayer Day. Mrs Severin-Kaiser explained, based on many examples from the Bible, that the woman is an integral part of Christianity and that man and woman are both the image of God.

Mrs Rima Tüzün talked about the situation and the position of the Suryoye women in society and mentioned in view of this the causes of the bad development in the range of education and integration of Suryoye women.

After the advisers held their speeches in the first block of the women conference, a podium discussion was introduced after a 30 minute break by the leader of the conference, Mrs. Meryem Sass. The possibility was offered to the more than 140 participants to ask questions to the advisers.

Local Elections in Turkey

At the last week of the mars Turkish voters went to the polling booth to give new names for the next period.

As is well known Turkey passed difficult times and turmoil because of the political arena. According ro some of the specialists the winner of the elections is the government party, AKP and to others is the main opposition party CHP.

Prime Minister Recep Tayip Erdogan with the speech that delivered to the journalists he highlighted the unsatisfaction of the election results and he addad alson that was surprised. Erdogan declared that they will analyze very deeply the message of the voters and they will try to take some lessons from these results.

Accordingly AKP gathered 38.78%, CHP 23.12, MHP 16.04 % and DTP 5.68 %. On the other hand the AKP for the first time is loos- ing the votes. According to some experts and election specialists the reason of this decline could be the economic crisis results, going far rom the European Union promises and lastly the internal politic atmosphere.

AKP won 10 of the big metrops and other parties also gain few cities. The main objective of AKP was to gain some of the southern cities, Izmir and Antalya but this did not happen.

The elections also in Turabdin change the atmosphere of the region. The Syriac attendance and interest was high as the last years.

At the Turabdin the important point was that three villages had turn to the Syriac means Anhil, Ciwardo and Marbobo.

On the other hand for the first time Syriac were pre- sented to the local representatives. At the different cities three Syriac won their places for the new duties. At the Mardin Subhi Uysal from the AKP, at the Midyat Jacob Gabriel from DTP and from Bakirkoy, Istanbul Selim Algaz from CHP won their places at the municipal council.

Lastly at the the Midyat, densely populated with the syriac, Sehmus Nasiroglu from Democratic Party won the municipality for the third time.

The participation to the local elections was at the high degree also the interest of the Syriac to the election was important point to highlight.