

Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations

Your Excellency,

It is with deep worry that I inform you that on April 22, Metropolitan Boulos (Yazigi) of Aleppo, a hierarch of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, was abducted in Syria. His car was attacked, and the deacon, who was driving the car, was killed. Metropolitan Boulos is a brother of His Beatitude Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East. Kidnapped with His Eminence was also the Syrian Jacobite Archbishop of Aleppo, Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim (Syrian Orthodox Church). They were outside Aleppo, monitoring the distribution of humanitarian aid. As some mass media report, the abducted hierarchs were transferred to Turkey.

The Russian Orthodox Church, which knows of the price of human pain and sufferings from her own experience, stands firm on the position of inviolability of the sacred gift of life and inadmissibility of actions aimed to intimidate and use violence against civilians, including religious figures.

With regard to this tragic incident, I appeal to the United Nations to exert every effort for the Syrian hierarchs to be released as soon as possible.

I would like to use this opportunity and wish you peace, sound health and God's help in your important ministry.

Yours faithfully,

+Kirill
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia