



**Doc. 12505**

27 January 2011

## **Interruption of the Christmas mass in the northern occupied part of Cyprus by Turkish troops and restrictions to the right to freedom of religion and worship**

**Written declaration No. 467**

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This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

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On 25 December, the Christmas mass celebrated in the villages of Rizokarpaso and Ayia Triada, in the occupied part of Cyprus, was interrupted by Turkish troops, who forced the priest to remove his vestments, ordered all people present to leave the church and then sealed the doors.

Following that, Church masses, from New Year's Eve up until Epiphany day, were not allowed. Additionally, a new "procedure" is now established by the occupation regime, whereby prior authorization should be sought, 30 days in advance, for all other religious celebrations, except on Sundays.

These events and restrictions, constitute a flagrant violation of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, [Resolution 1333](#) (2003 of the Parliamentary Assembly, on the rights and fundamental freedoms of Greek Cypriots and Maronites living in the northern part of Cyprus and the recent Declaration by the Committee of Ministers, on religious freedom.

We, the undersigned, strongly condemn these acts, and call upon Turkey to urgently inform the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers, of the measures it intends to undertake, to ensure that such acts, against the approximately 300 enclaved Greek Cypriots, will not be repeated and that any restrictions to their alienable right to freedom of religion and worship will immediately be withdrawn.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

POURGOURIDES Christos, Cyprus, EPP/CD  
ALIGRUDIĆ Miloš, Serbia, EPP/CD  
BADRÉ Denis, France, ALDE  
BECK Marieluise, Germany, ALDE  
BEMELMANS-VIDEC Marie-Louise, Netherlands, EPP/CD  
BÉTEILLE Laurent, France, EPP/CD  
BODEN Fernand, Luxembourg, EPP/CD  
BONDARENKO Olena, Ukraine, EPP/CD  
BRASSEUR Anne, Luxembourg, ALDE  
BRAUN Márton, Hungary, EPP/CD  
CHARALAMBOPOULOS Georges, Greece, SOC  
ČIGĀNE Lolita, Latvia, EPP/CD  
CIRCENE Ingrida, Latvia, EPP/CD  
COLOMBIER Georges, France, EPP/CD  
DENDIAS Nikolaos, Greece, EPP/CD  
DONABAUER Karl, Austria, EPP/CD  
ELZINGA Tuur, Netherlands, UEL  
FRITZ Erich Georg, Germany, EPP/CD  
GALATI Giuseppe, Italy, EPP/CD  
GARDETTO Jean-Charles, Monaco, EPP/CD  
GAUTIER Gisèle, France, EPP/CD  
GHILETCHI Valeriu, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD  
GREFF Claude, France, EPP/CD  
GROSS Andreas, Switzerland, SOC  
HAIBACH Holger, Germany, EPP/CD  
HAUPERT Norbert, Luxembourg, EPP/CD  
HERKEL Andres, Estonia, EPP/CD  
HOLOVATY Serhiy, Ukraine, ALDE  
HÜBINGER Anette, Germany, EPP/CD  
HUNKO Andrej, Germany, UEL  
KANELLI Liana, Greece, UEL  
KARAMANLI Marietta, France, SOC  
KATRINIS Michail, Greece, SOC  
KEFALIDOU Charoula, Greece, SOC  
KOVÁCS Elvira, Serbia, EPP/CD  
KOX Tiny, Netherlands, UEL  
KÜHNEL Franz Eduard, Austria, EPP/CD  
LAAKSO Jaakko, Finland, UEL  
LIPÍŃSKI Dariusz, Poland, EPP/CD  
MARCENARO Pietro, Italy, SOC  
MARIN Christine, France, EPP/CD  
MARLAND-MILITELLO Muriel, France, EPP/CD  
MARTY Dick, Switzerland, ALDE  
MATUŠIĆ Frano, Croatia, EPP/CD  
MEALE Alan, United Kingdom, SOC  
MEIMARAKIS Evangelos, Greece, EPP/CD  
MENDES BOTA José, Portugal, EPP/CD  
MIGNON Jean-Claude, France, EPP/CD  
MOTA AMARAL João Bosco, Portugal, EPP/CD  
NESSA Pasquale, Italy, EPP/CD  
OMTZIGT Pieter, Netherlands, EPP/CD  
PAPADIMITRIOU Elsa, Greece, EPP/CD  
POSTANJYAN Zaruhi, Armenia, EPP/CD  
PRESCOTT John, United Kingdom, SOC

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialist Group  
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left

ROCHEBLOINE François, France, EPP/CD  
SALLES Rudy, France, EPP/CD  
SCHUSTER Marina, Germany, ALDE  
SOBOLEV Serhiy, Ukraine, EPP/CD  
SZÉKYNÉ SZTRÉMI Melinda, Hungary, EPP/CD  
TOSHEV Latchezar, Bulgaria, EPP/CD  
VAREIKIS Egidijus, Lithuania, EPP/CD  
VRETTOS Konstantinos, Greece, SOC  
WACH Piotr, Poland, EPP/CD  
WERNER Katrin, Germany, UEL  
WOHLWEND Renate, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD  
ZINGERIS Emanuelis, Lithuania, EPP/CD

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Total = 66