

## APPENDIX D: PRECONCILIAR PAPERS

The following Preparatory Commission texts are published in French, Greek and Russian by the Secretariat for the Great and Holy Council, and have been translated by SYNDESMOS.

### I. THE ORTHODOX DIASPORA: INTRODUCTION

Interorthodox Preparatory Commission Document  
Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,  
Chambésy Switzerland, November 10-17, 1990

The Interorthodox Preparatory Commission met at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy from November 10-17 1990 under the Presidency of His Eminence Metropolitan Bartholomew of Chalcedon and with the representatives of all the Orthodox Churches and their advisers, with the aim of determining an Orthodox consensus on the theme of the "Orthodox diaspora."

After the opening address of the President and the reading of the report of the Secretary for the preparation for the Great and Holy Council, His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, the Commission discussed in detail the whole question of the "Orthodox diaspora", based on the contributions of the Holy Orthodox Churches, and arrived at the decision to submit its proposal on the question to the forthcoming Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference.

1. a) The Commission stated that all the Orthodox Churches are unanimous in their desire that the problem of the Orthodox diaspora be resolved as quickly as possible and that it be organized in a way that is in accordance with Orthodox ecclesiological tradition and with the canonical praxis of the Orthodox Church.

b) The Commission also stated that during the current phase, for historical and pastoral reasons, it is not possible to move immediately to the Church's strict canonical order in this matter. For this reason, the Commission arrived at the conclusion to propose the creation of a transitional situation that would prepare the groundwork for a strictly canonical solution to the problem and that will be based on principles and directives defined below. This preparatory phase should not go beyond the date of convocation of the future Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church, so that the Great Council might proceed to a canonical solution to the problem.

2. a) The Commission proposes that during the period of transition in which a canonical solution to the question shall be prepared, "Episcopal Assemblies" be created in each of the regions defined below bringing together all the canonically recognised bishops of that region, who will continue to be under the same canonical jurisdictions as today.

b) The Assemblies will be comprised of all the bishops of each region, who are in canonical communion with all the Holy Orthodox Churches. They will have as their president the primate of the jurisdiction of the Church of Constantinople, and in his absence, the president will be according to the order of the diptychs. The Assemblies will have an executive committee consisting of the chief hierarchs of the various jurisdictions that exist in the region.

c) The work and responsibility of these Episcopal Assemblies will be to bear witness to the unity of Orthodoxy, and to develop a common activity of all Orthodox living in the region in order to satisfy the pastoral needs of all the Orthodox in the region; to represent all the Orthodox in contact with other confessions, as well as in the society at large in the region; to cultivate theological and ecclesiastical education, etc. Decisions on these matters will be made by majority vote.

## 2. THE ORTHODOX DIASPORA: COMMUNIQUÉ

Interorthodox Preparatory Commission Document  
Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,  
Chambésy, Switzerland, November 7-13, 1993

The Interorthodox Preparatory Commission for the Great and Holy Council met from November 7-13, 1993, at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva. Its work opened with a pan-Orthodox celebration of the Divine Liturgy and continued with participation of delegations from the most holy Orthodox local Churches. The Commission was presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Ephesus, delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Secretary was His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, Secretary for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council. The Commission's task was to supplement the consensus of the Orthodox local Churches on the question of the Orthodox diaspora, and also to determine their consensus on the questions of autocephaly and the way in which it is to be proclaimed and autonomy and the way in which it is to be proclaimed. Following the opening address of the President and the reading of the supplementary report of the Secretary concerning aspects of the question of the Orthodox diaspora which remained outstanding, as well as the reading of a detailed report on the question of autocephaly and the way in which it is to be proclaimed, the Commission discussed these questions in detail. Due to a lack of time, the question of autonomy and the way in which it is to be proclaimed was referred to the next Interorthodox Preparatory Commission.

After having examined these two questions, the Interorthodox Commission formulated the unanimous consensus of the local Churches on them:

a) In a concise and detailed document, it defined the re-

gions where Episcopal Assemblies will be created, on the one hand, and on the other, the procedure for the transitional arrangement of the organization of the Orthodox diaspora by region until the convocation of the Great and Holy Council.

b) It asked the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council to prepare draft Regulations for the functioning of the Episcopal Assemblies, effective for the transitional period of the organization of the Orthodox diaspora; this would be added to the relevant dossier that will be submitted to the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference. To that end the Commission also asked the Secretariat to organize interorthodox conferences to study certain aspects of this question.

c) In a concise and detailed document it indicated the consensus of the Orthodox Churches on the question of autocephaly and the way in which it is to be proclaimed, describing also the procedure to be followed in this area, and it referred certain aspects of this procedure to the next Interorthodox Preparatory Commission for supplementary elaboration.

d) It expressed the desire that the next Interorthodox Preparatory Commission be convoked by His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch at the earliest opportunity.

### 3. THE ORTHODOX DIASPORA: ADOPTED TEXT

Interorthodox Preparatory Commission Document  
Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,  
Chambésy, Switzerland, November 7-13, 1993

1. The regions in which Episcopal Assemblies will be created in a first stage will be defined as follows:
  - i. North America & Central America
  - ii. South America
  - iii. Australia
  - iv. Great Britain
  - v. France
  - vi. Belgium and Holland
  - vii. Austria and Italy
  - viii. Germany

The bishops of the diaspora who reside in the diaspora and have parishes in several regions will be members of the Episcopal Assemblies of these regions and will continue to exercise their jurisdiction over already the existing parishes which are not included in one of the above-mentioned regions.

2. The draft Regulations (*projet de règlement*), which will be prepared by the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council according to the procedure approved by the plenum, will be drawn up on the basis of the text approved by the third Interorthodox Preparatory Commission (para. 2c), and using already-existing models of Episcopal Assemblies and in the framework of the Orthodox canonical tradition; it is the forthcoming Fourth Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference which will decide on this.

3. These Assemblies, which will be constituted following the decision of the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference, will have the responsibility of adding the details of the operation of the draft Regulations and of the implemen-

tation before the convocation of the Great and Holy Council. During this stage of implementation, it would be preferable that proposals before the Episcopal Assemblies express if possible the unanimity of its members; in the absence of unanimity, proposals will be approved according to the principle of majority.

4. The presidents of the Episcopal Assemblies convoke and preside over all the gatherings of the bishops of their region (liturgical, pastoral, administrative, etc.). As for the questions of common interest which, according to the decision of the Episcopal Assembly, require being examined at the pan-Orthodox level, the president of the Assembly refers to the Ecumenical Patriarch for follow-up according to pan-Orthodox practice.

5. The Orthodox Churches pledge not to proceed to acts which might impede the above-mentioned process for regulating the question of the diaspora in a canonical way, including the creation of new dioceses in the diaspora beyond those already in existence. On the contrary, these Churches, in their capacity as mother Churches, will do everything within their power to facilitate the work of the Episcopal Assemblies and to restore normality of canonical order in the diaspora.

## 4. AUTOCEPHALY & THE WAY IN WHICH IT IS TO BE PROCLAIMED

Interorthodox Preparatory Commission Document:  
ADOPTED TEXT  
Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,  
Chambésy, Switzerland, November 7-13, 1993

The Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission, after having worked on the basis of contributions from the most holy Orthodox Churches and the report of the Secretary for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church on the question of autocephaly and the way in which it is to be proclaimed, examined the ecclesiological, canonical, pastoral and practical dimensions of the institution of autocephaly in the Orthodox Church and reached the following conclusions:

1. The institution of autocephaly expresses in an authentic way one of the fundamental aspects of the Orthodox ecclesiological tradition concerning relations between the local Church and the universal Church of God. The profound connection between the canonical institution of ecclesiastical autocephaly and Orthodox ecclesiological teaching concerning the local Church justifies the concern of the autocephalous local Orthodox Churches to solve existing problems with regard to the correct functioning of the institution, as much as it does their willingness to participate, through their detailed contributions, in the enhancement of this institution for the advancement of the unity of the Orthodox Church.

2. The *perichoresis* between locality and universality, faithful to Orthodox ecclesiology, determines the functional relationship between the administrative organization and the unity of the Church. Because of this, complete agreement was established with regard to the place of the institution of autocephaly in the life of the Orthodox Church.

3. Complete agreement was established concerning the canonical conditions which the proclamation of the autocephaly of a local Church requires, namely the consent and action of the mother Church, the obtaining of a pan-Orthodox consensus, and the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the other autocephalous Churches in the procedure of the proclamation of the autocephaly. According to this agreement:

a) The mother Church which receives a request for autocephaly from an ecclesiastical region which depends on it evaluates whether the ecclesiological, canonical and pastoral conditions are satisfied for the granting of autocephaly. In the case where the local synod of the mother Church, as its supreme ecclesiastical body, gives its consent to the request, it submits the proposal on this subject to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in order to seek a pan-Orthodox consensus. The mother Church informs the other local autocephalous Churches of this.

b) The Ecumenical Patriarchate, according to pan-Orthodox practice, communicates by patriarchal letter all the details concerning the said request and seeks the expression of a pan-Orthodox consensus. Pan-Orthodox consensus is expressed by the unanimous decision of the synods of the autocephalous Churches.

c) In expressing the consent of the mother Church and the pan-Orthodox consensus, the Ecumenical Patriarchate officially proclaims the autocephaly of the applying Church by the publication of a patriarchal *Tomos*. The *Tomos* is signed by the Ecumenical Patriarch. It is desirable that it be co-signed by the primates of the autocephalous Churches, but in any case it must be by the primate of the mother Church.

4. The local Church proclaimed autocephalous is integrated into the communion of the autocephalous Churches as a full member and enjoys all the canonical privileges hallowed by pan-Orthodox practice (diptychs, commemoration, interorthodox relations, etc.).

Note: The content of paragraph 3c was referred for further

scrutiny to the coming Interorthodox Preparatory Commission, which will seek the consensus of the Orthodox local Churches on this question, thus completing its work on this theme.