



The Primate of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia, His Grace Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan attended the 6th Armenian Church Representative Assembly in the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

It attendance also were Very Rev. Fr. Babken Salbayan, the Prelate of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Tsalka's General Prelacy of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia; a member of the Board of Trustees for the Armenian Diocese in Georgia, Aram Sanosyan; and the Head of the Hayartun Center and the Cultural Department Director in the Armenian Diocese in Georgia, Levon Chidilyan.

The member of the Supreme Spiritual Council (Synod), the Primate of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia, His Grace Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan was re-elected for another term.

On June 6-8, 2017, under the presidency of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians; the 6th Armenian Church Representative Assembly commenced a meeting in the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. The meeting was attended by Bishops of the Mother See and the Hierarchal Sees; Primates of the Dioceses of Armenia and Diaspora; Locum Tenens; Pontifical Delegations; members of the Supreme Spiritual Council; elected clergy and lay representatives from the Hierarchal Sees, Pontifical Delegations and Dioceses around the world.

Led by the Catholicos of All Armenians, the delegates attended the Sunrise Service in the Mother Cathedral prior to the meeting.

His Holiness Karekin II conveyed his blessings and message to the participants, presented the agenda for the day. Speaking about the creation of the Guidelines for Diocesan By-laws, which in 2009 was directed by the Diocesan Representative Assembly to be implemented in the Dioceses, the By-laws of the Diocesan Representative Assembly unanimously ratified in 2014, and the draft of the modified Constitution for the National-Ecclesiastical Assembly presented for discussion, the Supreme Patriarch emphasized their importance in the regulation of the ecclesiastical-spiritual life.

Referring to the mission of the Armenian Church in the preservation of the national identity, His Holiness mentioned that within that framework the Armenian Church would continue its service in the field of education of the new generation, so that the Sahak-Mesropian school might always live in the life of the Armenian people through faith, through the mother tongue and tradition.

Following the Pontifical message, His Eminence Archbishop Karekin Bekchian, Locum Tenens of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, made remarks.

On the first day, the participants reviewed the modified draft of the statute of the National-Ecclesiastical Assembly enforced in 1945. Member of the Standing Committee on Statutes, Doctor of Legal Sciences, Professor Gevorg Danielyan presented a report on this.

After two days' discussion, amendments were proposed. The document will be submitted for consideration by the Council, the draft will be finally approved by the Armenian Church

Representative Assembly.

At the working session on June 7, a report was submitted by His Grace Bishop Arshak Khachatryan, Chancellor of Mother See on the election process of the Supreme Spiritual Council members. The Bishop presented new approved number of members of the Supreme Spiritual Council - Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and 21 council members. One-third of the members shall be appointed by the Catholicos of All Armenians, and two-thirds of the members are elected by the National Ecclesiastical Assembly. Due to their position Chancellor of Mother See and the Vicar of Ararat Pontifical Diocese are the members of the Supreme Spiritual Council.

As a result of the discussion, following clergymen and lay officials from around the world became the members of the Supreme Spiritual Council:

1. Primate of the Diocese of Artsakh, His Eminence Archbishop Parkev Martirosian;
2. Primate of the Diocese of Gougark, His Eminence Archbishop Sebouh Chouldjian;
3. Primate of the Eastern Diocese of North America, His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamanian;
4. Primate of the Western Diocese of North America, His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian;
5. Primate of the Diocese of New Nakhichevan and Russia, His Eminence Archbishop Yezras Nersissian;
6. Primate of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia, His Grace Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan;
7. Primate of the Armenian Diocese of France and Pontifical Legate of Western Europe, His Grace Bishop Vahan Hovhannisyan;
8. Doctor of Legal Sciences, Professor Gevorg Danielyan (Armenia);
9. Vahan Ter-Ghevondyan - PhD in Historical Sciences (The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Matenadaran, Armenia);
10. Mr. Tagvor Boyajyan (the Armenian Diocese of Damascus);
11. Doctor of Legal Sciences, Professor Joseph Kanimian (Western Diocese of North America);
12. Doctor Alexander Alaverdyan (Diocese of New Nakhichevan and Russia).

The Catholicos of All Armenians and the delegates of the Armenian Church Representative Assembly congratulated the newly appointed members, wishing them productive work as a member of the Supreme Spiritual Council.

During the meeting, the attendees discussed the results of the implementation of the Guidelines for Diocesan By-laws. A report was submitted by the Primate of the Diocese of Shirak, His Grace Bishop Michael Ajapahyan, in this regard.

His Eminence, Archbishop Hovnan Terteryan, the Chairman of the Pan-Armenian Church Youth Organization, presented a report on the programs associated with the celebrations of the 2018 Youth Year. Archbishop Hovnan Terteryan informed the attendees that diocesan, inter-diocesan and regional youth gatherings are planned in 2018. With the participation of youth from the dioceses, a pilgrimage will be organized to Armenia and the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. The events will conclude with a Divine Liturgy and youth gathering under the motto “Towards the Homeland, towards the Holy Etchmiadzin”.

Following the report, the attendees made proposals on the planned events.

The topics of discussion also were the events planned by the Armenian Church for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Sardarapat and the proclamation of the First Republic of Armenia.

On June 8th during the morning session of the 6th Armenian Church Representative Assembly, President Serzh Sargsyan of the Republic of Armenia, attended the meeting at the invitation of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

Following the Lord’s Prayer, the session was opened with the remarks of His Holiness. The Armenian Pontiff welcomed the presence of the President at the meeting, and also noted with satisfaction the constant support displayed by the local authorities towards the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church.

President Sargsyan greeted the members of the Assembly, stressing the importance of convening the 6th Armenian Church Representative Assembly in the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. He wished the Assembly members productive work.

Director of Republic Institute of Reproductive Health, Perinatology, Obstetrics and Gynecology,

member of the National Academy of Sciences Razmik Abrahamyan, gave a report on the birth rate of Armenia. The attendees listened to the report and highlighted the role of childbirth as a way to strengthen marriage and Armenian family, and urged the clergy to organize campaign to promote the childbirth.

Armenian Church Representative Assembly listened to the report about the ongoing activities of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, the dioceses and Pontifical delegations.

At the end of session, the Catholicos of All Armenians offered his blessing remarks. His Holiness expressed satisfaction at the work that had been completed, expressed his appreciation to the elected clergy and lay representatives from around the world for their zealous dedication. The Catholicos of All Armenians offered a prayer to God to strengthen the clergy of the Armenian Church and the lay employees of the church institutions, who through their dedicated service contribute to the vibrancy of the Armenian Church and the well-being of Armenian people.

The 6th Armenian Church Representative Assembly was concluded with the blessings of His Holiness Karekin II and the “Guard Us” prayer.



