

Information bulletin about the social position of the Syriacs in and outside the Middle East. It appears periodically, published by the European Syriac Union (ESU) in Brussels-Belgium.

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Austria

ESU is scrutinized.

The ESU, with this campaign, aims to enlighten the Syriacs in these two areas and to inform them about the institution of ESU. This campaign is supervised by the members of the Executive Board Mr. Fikri Aygur (the Vice Chairman) and Mr. Evgil Turker. Each of the two subjects is covered in a session of five hours; and at the end of these sessions in order to further enlighten the attendees their questions are answered.

The first sessions of the campaign were held in Brussels. Nearly, 80 people attended the courses given in Brussels. Thereafter, the educational programs were held in Wiesbaden, Giessen, Tauberbischofsheim, Göppingen, Bietighelm, Heilbron and Augsburg towns of Germany. Also, each of these sessions was attended by 45-60 people.



FIRST APRIL FESTIVAL IN ISTANBUL

This year it was for the first time that the festivity of the First April was being organized by the ESU and MEZODER and was being viewed around the world when it was broadcasted live from the Suroyo TV. As this event was being celebrated for the first time new life is celebrated by the Syriacs, who are its native inventors, in various countries and places every year. The spring festival that we inherited from the Sumarian, Acadian, Assyrian and Babylonian civilization has been celebrated by the Syriacs sometimes discreetly and sometimes with small commemorations, for thousands of years.

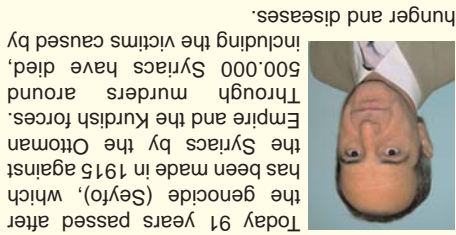
The changes that took place around the world and especially in the Middle East have contributed to that have seen some of these changes is Turkey. Therefore, the Syriacs have had an opportunity to celebrate their national festival Akitu that was celebrated for the first time in Turabdin, this year was celebrated in the multicultural city Istanbul.

The First April festival that had been celebrated by the civil organizations, in the last two years has been celebrated by the Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church, with conveyance of the celebrating messages of his Holiness. By doing so, it was shown that not only the civil institutions should participate in the event that started in the afternoon hours with a life music program, the Association of Diyarbakir and many people attended to show their support and collaboration. Singers from Europe as well as other singers from Turkey participated and supported the festival.



The event that was held in the Floya Council Facility Halls was attended as a guest by the Vice President of the Association of the Human Rights Mr. Akın Birdal. The Secretary of the President of the Republic of Turkey, the Interior Minister, and the towns officially appointed and elected Mayors send their celebrating messages to the First April Spring Festival.

The first message that was read in the event came from the Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church. It was then followed by other messages of the Archbishops of Turabdin and Mardin as well as by hundreds of messages that came from other Syriac institutions and people. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of Syriacs around the world rejoiced together by watching the event being live broadcasted.



Chairman's message

Today 91 years passed after the genocide (Seyfo), which has been made in 1915 against the Syriacs by the Ottoman Empire and the Kurdish forces. Though murders around 500,000 Syriacs have died, including the victims caused by hunger and diseases.

During the last 15 years the Syriacs became active in the struggle for the political and social issues of their people. Also the genocide issue appears on the international agenda of the Syriacs. Through the last 10 years protests and hunger strikes took place in different metropolises of Europe, thus the Syriac people recognize the meaning of Seyfo and at the same time they could draw the attention of the West on themselves. Today the Syriac people carry out their identity.

The Syriacs reached a professional approach for their issue, as well as the Seyfo case. This year with the guidance of ESU in Switzerland, in Sweden and in Germany 3 conferences have been held about the Seyfo, where academics and scientists of our people and the Europeans participated, i.e. Martin Tamcke, Gabriela Yonan, etc. Altogether about 1000 Syriacs have participated to these conferences. This proof that the Syriac people notice their duty for the Seyfo.

To strengthen this fact and reinforce the Seyfo's status, today a new Academic Institution has to be established by the Syriacs together with the Europeans, to serve that aim.

Another topic, that is of importance for the Syriac people, is the 1st April, the National and cultural New Year celebration. This has been celebrated in different places. For the first time, Syriac, Arabic, Turkish and English. It was also mentioned that it previously made a special interview with the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Turkish Republic Mr. Abdullah Gül. Further, it was stated that the Syriacs see themselves as part of the multicultural mosaic of Turkey, that they have never harmed their states, neither under the Ottomans rule nor under the Turkish Republic. That they are pleased with the process of undergoing reforms in Turkey, thus, they have turned their faces again to Turkey and they are seeking suitable conditions for their return. However, there are some difficulties in doing so. The stated difficulties were:

Iskender Alpekin,
ESU Chairman

ESU MEETS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT



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The Voice of the Syriacs
Newsletter
European Syriac Union
Assyria's Voice

On 9th May 2006, the Syriac delegation, comprising the ESU, Suroyo TV representatives and the Swedish MP Yilmaz Kerimo met the Chairman of the Turkish Parliament Mr. Bulent Arinc, who was accompanied by a Turkish delegation on an official visit to Sweden, in Stockholm.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the Turkish Parliament Mr. Bulent Arinc was informed about the institutions of the European Syriac Union (ESU), Suroyo TV and their activities. It was emphasized that the ESU is a Union that was founded two years ago, following the initiative of many Syriac institutions and that it currently has regular meetings with the European Union. It was stated that one of the main issues of these meetings is the relations of the Turkish Republic with the EU and that the ESU annually participates to these conferences. This proof that the Syriac people notice their duty for the Seyfo.

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Difficulties arising from the adverse possession of the properties of the Syriacs by the local people, and that sometimes the Syriacs are subjected to violence and threats.

