



**The text of the joint declaration signed on April 26 in Baku by Kyrill I., Garegin II., and Sheikh ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade in full:**

*In the name of Almighty God, and for the fulfillment of the cherished dreams of peace, welfare and happiness of our peoples, we, the spiritual leaders of the Azerbaijani and Armenian peoples, met in Baku through the high mediation of His Holiness Kirill I, Pontiff of the Russian Orthodox Church, to testify to our mutual respect and discuss urgent measures necessary to secure a true peace and an agreement for our peoples and governments.*

*Viewing this meeting as part of the peace-making dialogue between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Committee of the Muslims of the Caucasus, begun through the mediation of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1988, and faithful to the spirit of previous communiqués, we are hopeful that in the future as well, we can assist the progress of the principles of peaceful coexistence for our peoples and the cultivation of mutually acceptable decisions, exclusively through the path of dialogue. It is pleasing to witness that meetings of similar formats have significantly contributed to the cessation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani armed conflict founded on the issue of Karabagh. Undoubtedly, these meetings have helped to prevent the conflict from taking on an inter-religious nature.*

*Today especially, we place importance on the adherence to the spiritual aspects of collaboration, to overcome the present alienation between our peoples. The power of religion, which is a calling to goodness, peace, sympathy and patience, shall become a factor of reconciliation. We believe that our common efforts will benefit the defeat of inter-ethnic enmity. It is fundamentally essential to not permit the resumption of military options as a means to solve the disputed issues. Through our peace-making efforts, we must support men in their hope to eliminate divisions, barriers and hostility, since war – if it continues – has no end.*

*We support international efforts aimed at resolving the conflict. To attain peace and good neighborly relations, it is necessary to expand lines of communication, with the goal of reinforcing trust. A lasting peace is possible only in the presence of good will and honest intentions. By supporting the efforts of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia, we intend to assist them in their aspirations. In this regard, we consider the continuation of direct dialogue between the religious leaders important, with the goal of benefiting the resolution of the conflict, which will provide the opportunity for people to return to those places from where they were driven out by war. We welcome the good will on both sides to release prisoners of war, and call upon political as well as religious workers to increase their efforts in this noble and humanitarian work. Each of us must demonstrate that good works, service to kindness, and dedication to peace and justice, can achieve far more than military conflict. We condemn acts of vandalism and deem important the preservation of our peoples' religious monuments and holy sites.*

*The path to reach peace and consensus is not an easy one – it requires great efforts and a mighty will. However we have sincere hopes to attain success, and by joining efforts, we hope to triumph over alienation and prejudices. The responsibility and the debt we have before the Most High and before our peoples, impels us, religious leaders, to implement efforts for the sake of peace, the long-awaited triumph of the ideals of goodness and the just resolution of present issues. May a strong and just peace be established on the bountiful land of the Caucasus, and may our peoples inherit goodness and prosperity.*

<http://www.armenianchurch.org/index.jsp?sid=3&nid=1518&y=2010&m=3&d=27>