



## ORTHODOX OHRID ARCHBISHOPRIC

Protocol no.71 from 24 May 2003

### PUBLIC COMMUNIQUE

The Holy Assembly of the local Serbian Orthodox Church at its regular spring session at the building of the Patriarchate in Belgrade, besides other relevant issues concerning that local Church, discussed the life and activity of the Ohrid Archbishopric in order to enable it to operate fully autonomously.

The Assembly accepted and put into effect the decision no.125 from 7 August 1990, reached by the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, with which the Metropolitan of Polog and Kumanovo, Cyril, is prohibited to officiate. That decision is still valid and was never withdrawn even in the Macedonian Orthodox Church until today.

Supported by the grace of the Holy Spirit Who presides over the Assembly and in order to constitute a Synod of the autonomous Ohrid Archbishopric, which is to be recognized by all local Churches in the world, after the unsuccessful attempt even during this Assembly to reach liturgical and canonical unity with the MOC, the Holy Assembly, at the proposal of Metropolitan of Veles and Povardarje and exarch of Ohrid kyr John, appointed two new bishops from the clergy of his eparchy, the abbot (hegoumenos) Joachim (Jovchevski) from Skopje with a title Velicki, who was immediately appointed administrator of the eparchy of Polog and Kumanovo instead of the suspended Metropolitan Cyril, and the hierodeacon Marco (Kimev) from Stip, with the title Dremvitski.

With utmost humbleness and brotherly love, the Assembly decided to give the bishops of the Macedonian Orthodox Church a term until the first of September 2003, to accept the Nis Agreement from May 2002 and enter liturgical and canonical unity with the Patriarchate of Pec and through it with the entire orthodox ecumene. Unless they do this, all canonical measures will be undertaken.

The Assembly has concluded that with the choice and ordination of the new bishops all conditions for the constitution of the Holy Synod of the autonomous Ohrid Archbishopric will be fulfilled and accordingly the condition for receiving a tomos for an autonomous Church.

All the decisions regarding the Ohrid Archbishopric have been reached in the spirit of the orthodox ecclesiology, the centuries-long canonical order of the Church of God and brotherly love, with great respect for the national feelings of the Macedonian people and the state of Macedonia whose separateness and sovereignty are completely respected by this Assembly.

From the office of the Ohrid Archbishopric