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**LETTER DATED 27 SEPTEMBER 1965 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF GREECE ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

By letter of 20 April 1964 (document S/5665) this Mission brought to the attention of the Security Council measures taken by the Turkish authorities against the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the obvious intent to intimidate the Patriarch and the bishops and priests of his Church.

In reply, the Permanent Representative of Turkey stated (document S/5677) that "The Patriarchate and the person of the Ecumenical Patriarch and other personnel will enjoy the traditional reverence and the protection of the law accorded to all citizens".

It must be pointed out that when the Turkish Government is bent on eroding the position and the ecumenical character of the Christian Orthodox Patriarchate, as a matter of long-standing policy periodically reactivated according to international conjectures, and uses to this effect the police and administrative machinery of the state "the protection of the law accorded to all citizens" affords scant comfort indeed.

The campaign against the Ecumenical Patriarchate seems to have been intensified ever since the meeting of the Patriarch and His Holiness Pope Paul VI in Jerusalem, in January 1964, and was aimed precisely at the ecumenical, i.e. universal, character of the institution, which was enhanced by this historical event. Statements to that effect by Turkish spokesmen in April last raised a wave of

Note: This letter is circulated as a Security Council document at the oral request of the representative of Greece on 28 September 1965.

indignant rebuttal from churches and religious leaders all over the world.* Thereupon, the pressure has been turned against the immediate rights and authority of the Patriarch in his diocese of Istanbul. The Patriarchate itself, for obvious reasons, is reluctant to raise its voice in public protest.

In the pursuit of its unholy ends, the Turkish Government has used a self-ordained priest, self-styled head of the so-called Turkish-Orthodox Church. Lacking a congregation outside his immediate family but enjoying subsidies and support of the Turkish Government, Papaefthym Eronol - as the impostor was named - on his deathbed ordained his son, Turgut, as "bishop of the Turkish-Orthodox". This man and his brother Seljuk, laid claim to several churches which since time immemorial have been under undisputed jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. On 1 September 1965, they bodily forced their way into the churches of St. Nicholas and St. John of Galata. When the deacons of the churches and the Patriarchate protested and sought the protection of the authorities, the latter ordered the churches closed and prohibited the celebration of Mass. Later in the month, police protection was withdrawn from the churches and agents of the Eronol brothers were allowed to enter the premises, whereupon police protection was restored, this time against the Patriarchate and the lawful owners.

The story of Papaefthym is well known to those who have any knowledge of the affairs of the Greek community in Turkey and government policy toward it. His son now calls himself Papaefthym II, Archbishop of the Turkish-Orthodox and Ecumenical Patriarch and publicly threatens the real Ecumenical Patriarch with excommunication!

* On 27 April 1965, the Turkish Ambassador in Paris declared that "The Patriarchate may stay in Turkey as long as it remains a national religious institution whose activities are strictly and modestly confined within the frontiers of the country". This statement, implying a threat to expel the Patriarchate if it persists in exercising its ecumenical functions, completely disregards history, tradition and international and common law. It was refuted in a scholarly article by the Dominican theologian Father Dumont, published in Paris' "Le Monde" on 28 April 1965.

Protests and demarches have been to no avail. Petitioners are told to apply to the courts. But with the usurpers in occupancy and legal titles being granted on recommendations of administrative authorities, the outcome is a foregone conclusion, unless the Turkish Government comes to realize how damaging to its prestige such high-handed, strong-arm tactics, against a venerable church enjoying world-wide respect, are bound to be.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Alexis S. LIATIS
Permanent Representative of Greece
to the United Nations
