

## European Parliamentarians Call on Turkey to Protect Assyrian Monastery

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(AINA) -- Last week the Parliamentary Assembly of the council of Europe held its plenary session. MP's from 47 countries (including all EU countries, Russia and Turkey) debated the state of Human Rights in Europe. During this session Dutch MP Pieter Omtzigt took the initiative to raise the question of the St. Gabriel Assyrian Monastery in Turkey.

In conjunction with 23 other MPs, Mr. Omtzigt made a motion for a resolution which "calls on Turkish authorities not to take away ownership of grounds with wrong pretexts and with potential irreparable consequences for this world's cultural heritage and on one of the foremost places of religious worship in Turkey. The Assembly sees this as a test for the exercise of freedom of religion in Turkey and decides to follow this issue carefully."

The full text of the motion, and a list of signatories can be see [here](#).

The St. Gabriel monastery has come under legal attack from surrounding Muslim villages, who assert the monastery has encroached upon their lands. The monastery denies this and says it is the legal owner of the lands and has paid taxes on them.

Click [here](#) for background information on the case.



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