

PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH (COC) AND THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX TEWAHIDO CHURCH (EOTC)

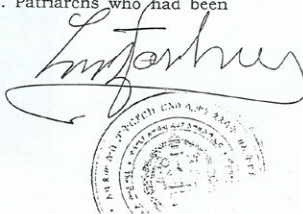
INTRODUCTION

The two Churches are linked by very intimate relations since the early Centuries of Christianity, as both are sons of St. Mark the Apostle. Such link was realized when St. Athanasius the Apostolic, the 20th Pope of Alexandria, consecrated Fromentious in the year 329 A.D. to be the first bishop of Ethiopia, on the request of the two Ethiopian Christian kings Abraha and Atsbeha. He was given the name of Abba Salama and started his bishopric in Ethiopia in the Year 330 A.D., and is venerated as a Saint.

Through the consecration of Abba Salama, the Church of Alexandria established the bishop's seat for the Church of Ethiopia, which then became part of the SEE of SAINT MARK, the APOSTLE.

The Church of Alexandria continued to consecrate and send a bishop to the seat of Ethiopia . With the expansion of the pastoral duties in Ethiopia and by the request of the Ethiopian Church, the Church of Alexandria started to consecrate several bishops for the Ethiopian dioceses besides sending the metropolitan. At the request of the EOTC, the Alexandrian Church, in appreciation of the Church's growth, enthroned Abune Basilios in 1959 as the first head of the EOTC.

Through the period from the fourth century till the middle of the twentieth century, the Church of Alexandria was considered the mother church of the EOTC. Patriarchs who had been



enthroned as heirs of the throne of the SEE of SAINT MARK, from the fourth century until 1959, had been spiritual fathers of the EOTC as well .

Caring for the relations between the two Churches and the growth and continuity of the closer links, the two Churches agreed to form a joint committee to solve the current problems between them and to negotiate laying down the terms of relations between the two Churches at present and in the future.

After many initiatives and meetings, this joint committee met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 1994 and laid down a proposed protocol which, after the final amendment of one article, was approved by the Holy Synods of both Churches in March, 1994.

The joint committee was formed of the following nine members:

The Coptic delegation:

1. H.G. Metropolitan Bishoy
2. H.G. Bishop Antonious-Marcos
3. H.G. Bishop Moussa
4. H.G. Bishop Serapion

The Ethiopian delegation:

1. H.G. Archbishop Mekarios
2. H.G. Archbishop Nathaniel
3. H.G. Archbishop Gabriel
4. H.G. Archbishop Timotheos
5. H.G. Archbishop Gerima

Article I :

For the sake of recognition of the hierarchical succession of the EOTC, and in accordance with this protocol, the Church of Alexandria recognizes the autocephally (independence) of the EOTC.

Shenouda III



[Signature]



Article II:

His Holiness, the Pope of Alexandria, being the successor of St. Mark the Apostle, has the first position of honour, in accordance with the Church traditions, and the resolutions of the canonical ecumenical councils confessed by the two Churches and also due to the historical links between the two Churches, in a manner that does not belittle the independent status of the EOTC.

Article III :

The two Churches belong to the SEE of SAINT MARK and confess one Orthodox Doctrine and each of them has her own independence.

Article IV :

In order to manifest and affirm the spiritual relations between the two Churches, H.H. the Pope of Alexandria and H.H. the Patriarch of Ethiopia should be mentioned in the liturgical prayers in the following occasions:

- 1- Whenever the heads of the two Churches meet
- 2- Whenever the head of one of the two Churches is celebrating the liturgy.
- 3- Whenever a bishop or a priest celebrates a liturgical prayer in the other Church, or during concelebrations .
- 4- Major feasts such as: Easter, Christmas, Epiphany, Holy Cross.

The name of the Alexandrian Pope to be mentioned first in these occasions

Shenouda III



[Signature]



Article V :

Each Church has her own Holy Synod to care for her affairs. The resolutions of the two Synods should be exchanged regularly.

Article VI :

To assure the oneness in the Apostolic Orthodox faith and Tradition, a general Holy Synod of both Churches should convene together every three years, and whenever the need arises. The place of meeting will rotate between Alexandria and Addis Ababa starting with Alexandria.

Article VII :

Each Church has the liberty to choose its own Patriarch; the other Church should send a delegation of five members of the Holy Synod to take part in the election process, having the right to vote.

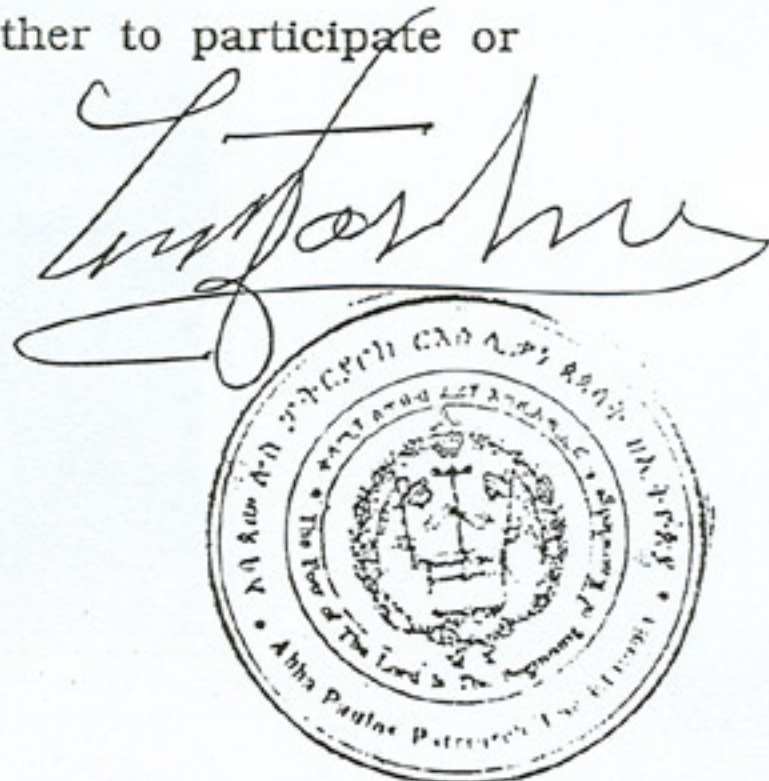
Article VIII :

In any future consecration and enthronement of a patriarch for either one of the two Churches, a delegation should be sent from the other Church to invite her to participate. The type of participation is to be negotiated at that time.

Article IX :

Both Churches should invite each other to participate or observe in all major occasions.

Shenouda III



Article X :

In meetings of official dialogues with other confessions, on matters of faith, each Church will invite the other Church to send at least one member of the Holy Synod to attend.

The two Churches will consult each other on world wide ecumenical affairs.

Article XI :

Both Churches are committed not to depose and replace a Patriarch or a Bishop of her own in his life time, unless his deposition is decided by the Holy Synod of his Church, through a canonical procedure.

Article XII :

A permanent joint committee is to be formed out of the members of the two Synods to monitor the implementation of this protocol and to promote the cooperation of the two Churches in different areas such as:

- 1- Exchange of visits of: Patriarchs, Metropolitans, Bishops, Priests, Monks, Professors, Students and Deacons should be encouraged.
- 2- Theological education.
- 3- Christian Education: Sunday schools, Youth and Family programmes.
- 4- Social services and Development projects.
- 5- Pastoral Care: Both Churches should be given the chance to extend their pastoral care to their people at each other's country.

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Article XIII :

This protocol once approved by both Holy Synods and signed by the patriarchs of the two Churches, will make any previous agreement and/or protocol between the two Churches null and void.

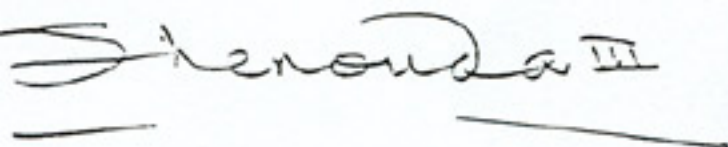
Article XIV :

The text of this protocol, being approved by both Holy Synods and signed by the Patriarchs of the two Churches, has come into effect and should be publicized and circulated to all the dioceses and parishes of both Churches.

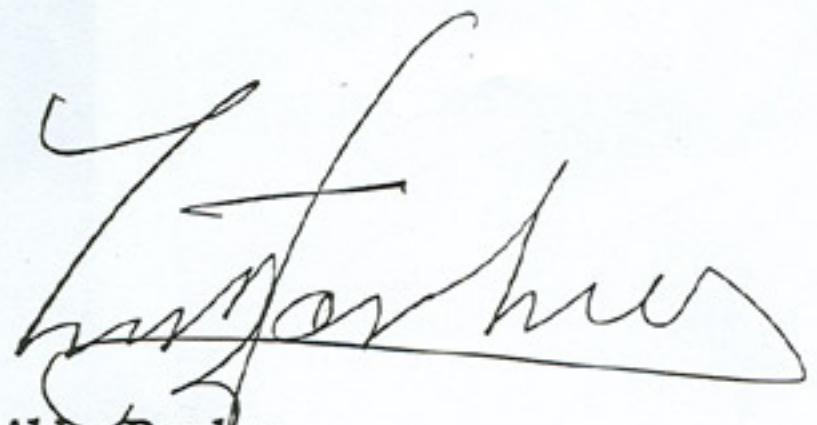
Article XV :

This protocol has been prepared in the Amharic, Arabic and English languages. If misunderstandings arise in matters of interpretation, the English version shall prevail.

The above protocol of fifteen articles, together with the introduction, a total of six pages, pursuant to article fourteen of this protocol, it is hereby signed by the heads of both Churches in April, 1994.



Pope Shenouda III
Pope of Alexandria and
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark



Abba Paulos
Patriarch of Ethiopia

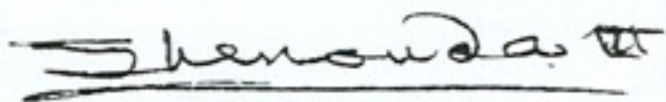


Joint communiqué issued by the Heads of the Coptic Orthodox Church (COC) and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) on the occasion of the official visit of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark to Ethiopia from April 11 to 13, 2008

In the Name Of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God.

In this historical moment of the visit of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark upon the invitation of His Holiness Patriarch Paulos I of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church to Ethiopia, accompanied by a delegation of the Coptic Orthodox Holy Synod members and received by the Ethiopian Orthodox Holy Synod in Addis Ababa, we together thank our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ for the strong and historical relations between our two venerable Churches and for the harmony we are achieving in our mutual visits both in Egypt and Ethiopia.

We are looking forward to reinforcing the historical cooperation between our two Churches in preserving our common Orthodox Faith and Apostolic Tradition, following the teachings of our common Holy Fathers Saint Mark the Evangelist, Saint Athanasius the apostolic, Saint Kyril the great and Saint Dioscorus the protector of the faith.



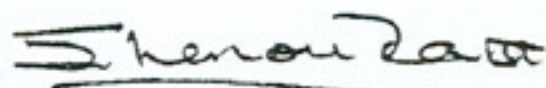
Common declaration



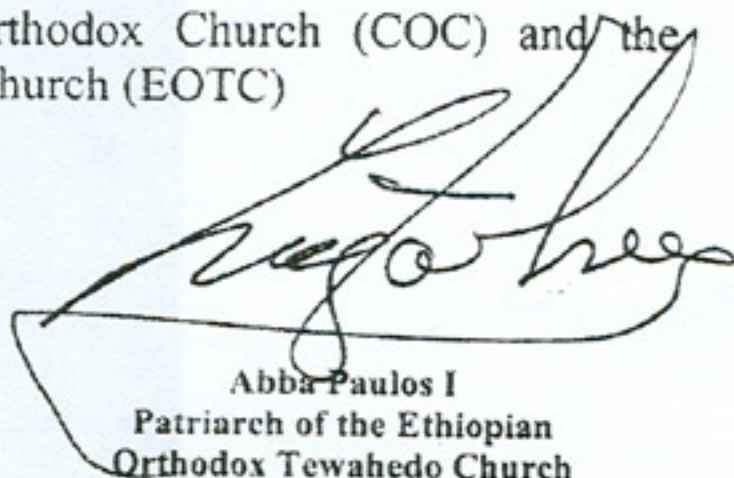
We take this opportunity to jointly sign this document together on behalf of our Churches asking all our clergy and people to activate the protocol of fifteen articles approved by our two Holy Synods and signed separately by ourselves in April 1994.

We, solemnly declare that guided by the Holy Spirit and on behalf of our Churches clergy and peoples, subscribe our joint signatures on this document.

May God bless the Coptic Orthodox Church (COC) and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC)



Pope Shenouda III
Pope of Alexandria
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark



Abba Paulos I
Patriarch of the Ethiopian
Orthodox Tewahedo Church
Archbishop of Axum, and Echeague
of the See of St. Teklehaimanot