

## STATEMENT OF CLARIFICATION

[ROEA Chancery - October 18, 2010] Concerned that unofficial internet postings distort and misrepresent the current status of the dialogue of reconciliation with our sister Romanian eparchy in North America, we offer the following information.

The Press Release posted on our website, [www.ROEA.org](http://www.ROEA.org), is the only official statement of the ROEA on this issue. We deplore any other postings that claim to report factual information from unknown “sources close to the Episcopate”. Such erroneous postings disinform and foster disunity in the Church and our Episcopate.

We likewise deplore misrepresentations of the Episcopate Council or Congress. Stating that unity would be desirable, our dialogue with the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas (ROAA) was established in 1993 not by the Episcopate Council but the Congress, which has repeatedly endorsed its work. The role of Council is to implement the decisions of Congress. The dialogue is thereby the work of the entire Church.

We deplore denigration of the members of our Joint Dialogue Commission. The JDC operates with our blessing and direction. Its sensitive work has been long and often difficult. There is no truth to the assertion that it attempted to override the agreed process by presenting an unauthorized version of the 2008 “Proposal” at the summer Council session or at any time.

As repeatedly stated, the July 2008 Congress recognized the “Proposal to Establish the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate in North America” prepared by the two dialogue commissions, as an acceptable basis to continue the work that would lead to a final text that could be presented to the Church of Romania. That Congress also called for legal and financial due diligence studies. As openly reported, the JDC was directed to weigh and interpolate into the Proposal any pertinent input from the Clergy Conference, Council and Congress.

The 2009 Congress was informed that the Proposal was nearly complete but the Archbishop asked for further study on one of the points. The Congress was also informed that the “annotation” (notes of clarification) of the Proposal, requested by Council, would be presented once the Proposal text was completed. This refined, finalized Proposal, negotiated by the two eparchial commissions with the blessing of their hierarchs, was received by Council in October, 2009 and was debated at length. The Annotated version (i.e. that explains what both sides understand the Proposal points to mean and their common vision of working toward the administrative unity of all Orthodox jurisdictions in North America) was presented to Council in June, 2010.

There was no deception by the JDC, nor did it ever attempt to override the process in any way. The text presented in October, 2009, together with the annotations presented in June, 2010 and a one-word change suggested by Council on September 30, 2010 comprise the actual, authorized text passed by Episcopate Congress on October 1, 2010. There is no “unauthorized” text.

We are dismayed to read that the September 30 Episcopate Council session in Cleveland was split 50/50. This report must be based upon speculation, personal opinion or wishful thinking, since the clear majority voted to recommend the Proposal and Annotations to the Episcopate Congress. The next day, Episcopate Congress overwhelmingly passed a resolution accepting the same Proposal and Annotations that had been properly received by Council months before and recommended in its latest session.

Some may feel that the dialogue remains “status quo” because no change of status has been enacted by either of the two Romanian Orthodox eparchies. On the other hand, the October 1 resolution of Congress effectively benchmarks the text as being final, and represents further progress toward the reconciliation of our two sister eparchies.

Of course, no progress beyond this point is possible without a sufficient exchange of legal and financial information. To this end, the Episcopate Congress also passed a resolution urging timely completion of the due diligence studies.

Finally, it is pure speculation to claim that the financial and legal due diligence issues are “so complex” that it is unlikely they can be completed anytime soon. In the reports offered by the Due Diligence Committees, no such statement has ever been made. Quite to the contrary, it is our expectation and the expressed expectation of the Congress that the due diligence committees will complete their work in a timely manner.

The Episcopate Congress passed the following resolution concerning the Dialogue: *“We find the Joint Dialogue Commission’s merger proposal and its Annotations of 2010 with the recommended change in Point XI to read, “...the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church shall issue the Gramata...”, acceptable as a preliminary step and a good theological basis for establishment of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate in North America.”*

The Episcopate Congress also passed the following resolution concerning the Due Diligence process: *“That the Congress hereby supports the efforts of the due diligence committee in requesting information from the ROAA and urges the ROAA to provide such information in a timely manner, but not to exceed 90 days from the date of the request and this resolution will be included in the due diligence requests. If any further information is requested of the ROEA, please make such request and it will be provided in a timely manner by our due diligence committee.”*

We deplore the fact that members of the media, whether traditional or “new,” would post ostensible news stories without the merest attempt at verification or fact-checking. We urge the members of our God-protected Episcopate and all faithful Orthodox Christians to refrain from speculation that only disinforms, inflames the passions, and exacerbates enmity between the people of God.

The process of reconciliation proceeds at its own pace. We are aware that some are frustrated by its slowness while others are alarmed by its speed. We appeal to all to show forbearance and charity, and to trust that the unhappy controversies that have for too long divided the Orthodox faithful of Romanian origin in North America will be resolved in God’s time and according to His Will.

+Archbishop NATHANIEL