
ARAM I ARRIVES IN ALEPPO; ADDRESSES ARMENIAN COMMUNITY

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Catholicos Aram I: The Aleppo-Armenian Community Remains and Will Continue to Thrive

ALEPPO, Syria (A.W.) [] Holiness Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia visited Aleppo on Jan. 5, accompanied by a Catholicosate delegation, reported Aleppo based Armenian news outlet Kantsasar.

His Holiness was greeted in Aleppo by the Prelate of Syria, Archbishop Shahan Sarkisian, members of the Syrian-Armenian Prelacy National Assembly, Armenias Deputy Consul in Aleppo Armen Gevorgyan, Syrian-Armenian Member of Parliament Jirair Reyisian, as well as the representatives of numerous Aleppo-Armenian organizations and institutions.

After the traditional salt and bread ceremony, Catholicos Aram I made his way to the St. Mary (Surp Asdvadzadzin) Armenian Apostolic Church, where he was welcomed by Archbishop Sarkisian on behalf of the Armenian community.

Over the past five years, you [] Syrian-Armenian community and the Aleppo-Armenian community in particular [] greatly and endured tremendous difficulties. It is true, that I was not with you [physically] during these difficult five years, but rest assured that you were constantly present and central in my prayers and service, the Catholicos said in his message to guests and parishioners.

His Holiness went on to say that the community endured due to its unwavering faith as Christians and dedication as Armenians. Though many were forced to leave * the Aleppo-Armenian community remains and will continue to thrive, Aram I said.

Commenting on his Jan. 4 meeting with the Syrian President, the Catholicos said that President al-Assad spoke about the Syrian-Armenian community with much gratitude. This type of approach by a President is truly unique, and the Syrian-Armenian community is worthy of it * because of your commitment and faith in this country and its people, the Catholicos said.

In his address, Aram I also thanked Archbishop Sarkisian and all the Armenian community organizations and institutions for their commitment to the Syrian-Armenian people during their difficult time. The Catholicos especially thanked the Armenian volunteers, who dedicated themselves to the defense and protection of Aleppos Armenian-populated districts.

I assure you that the entire Armenian nation [] Republic of Armenia, the two Catholicosates, the Armenian Catholic and Evangelical Churches, all of our institutions and organizations []

by you, because for Armenian around the world knows well that the Armenian community of Aleppo is a historic, significant community. The revitalization of the Syrian-Armenian community is a Pan-Armenian concern and a concern for all Armenians, the Catholicos said.

His Holiness Aram I is scheduled meetings with several community organizations and institutions during his visit to Aleppo, including the Syrian-Armenian Committee for Urgent Relief and Rehabilitation, members of the Prelacy's National Assembly, Syrian-Armenian Parliamentarians, representatives of various churches, as well as the Mufti of Aleppo and representatives of the Muslim community.

The Catholicos will preside over Christmas Mass at Aleppos St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church on Jan. 6.

Kaynak/Source: