



EUROPEAN SYRIAC UNION, ESU
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CALL TO THE SUPPORT TO THE SYRIAC CHRISTIAN MONK AHO OF SAINT JACOB MONASTERY

On January 9, during a security operation by Turkish forces, Syriac monk of Saint Jacob Monastery Sefer (Aho) Bilecen, chief of the Arkah (Üçköy) village Josef Yar and Syriac citizen Musa Taştekin, which returned from Europe, had been detained with 10 other civilians. Following detention investigation Musa Taşdemir have been released quickly. On the other hand, detention of Josef Yar continues and with an unprecedented move Monk Aho have been arrested by Turkish forces. Based on the secret witness statements, arrest of Monk Aho shocked Syriac Christians around the world and particularly tiny Syriac community of Turabdin.

Monk Aho left Istanbul metropole life many years ago, he followed his studies in UK. Following his career, he choses spiritual and hermetic life of Monastery. Monk Aho is highly appreciated and respected humble man by Syriac people and all people of the region. Following the restoration works off the Monastery in 2013, Monk Aho was active in all activities of the monastery, appreciated by local and foreign tourists/visitors by simultaneously continuing his ascetic life. His door remained open for everybody. As the most important cultural value of decreasing Syriac community, monasteries are still active in service thanks to the devoted people like Father Aho.

In the Syriac Christian tradition, historically monasteries have been educational and religious centres and always in the service of populations. On this basis, based on the secret witness avowal, arrest decision of Monk Aho endangers future existence of the monastery. At the same time, it's open and clear message for all Syriac people around the world particularly for those who are returning to the Turabdin region. It is vital to ensure future and existence of Syriac people in the region.

At this moment, as the Syriac organisations we should be active in national and international level for Monk Aho and guarantee his freedom. On this basis, we kindly call to international human rights organisations, European Union and Christian entities to support and put their weight for the liberation of Monk Aho.