IMMINENT FORECLOSURE OF JERUSALEM PATRIARCHATE PROPERTIES

Posted on February 19, 2025 by Keghart

Category: Opinions

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CHANCELLERY
ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE OF
JERUSALEM

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JERUSALEM — The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem faces an imminent foreclosure of its historic properties over a disputed municipal tax debt that have allegedly accrued since 1994. If the court rejects the Patriarchate's appeal on February 24, 2025, the Municipality will seize and auction Armenian Church properties it has owned for centuries.

"If, God forbidding, the Patriarchate's petition is denied, the Jerusalem Municipality will seize real estate properties belonging to the Patriarchate and put them up for auction in order to collect allegedly disputed debts that have never been proven in judicial proceedings, and through customary practices heretofore, have never been enforced," the Patriarchate said in an urgent statement.

"This is a clear attempt by the Municipality to undermine the Armenian Patriarchate through singling it out with economic pressure, with the aim of diminishing its presence in the Holy Land", said the Armenian Patriarchate. "This could have a profoundly negative impact on the overall Christian presence in the Holy Land, as well as on the religious, cultural, educational and ministerial activities of all Christian institutions currently operating in the region."

"The conduct of the Jerusalem Municipality in this matter is especially inappropriate, as it initiated this aggressive process despite the Municipality itself owing the Patriarchate millions of shekels in overdue rental fees. However, the Patriarchate has refrained from taking legal action to enforce payment and, instead, has been engaged in prolonged negotiations with the Municipality in an effort to resolve the debt amicably," it added.

"Filing against the Armenian Patriarchate in the execution office, forcing it to pay the alleged Arnona (Municipal tax) debt, and, even more so, proceeding with the foreclosure of its properties, could jeopardize the Armenian Patriarchate's long-standing mission in the Holy Land, which has been active since the 7th century. Furthermore, it could threaten the continued presence of the Armenian community in the Holy Land, which dates back to the 4th century," the Patriarchate notes.

It calls upon the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Interior Minister, Moshe Arbel, and the head of the governmental committee, Tzachi Hanegbi, to intervene decisively and immediately freeze all actions taken by the Municipality against the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

"We also urge them to resume the meetings of this governmental committee in order to find an

amicable resolution to this issue, solely through negotiation within the framework established by the committee," the Patriarchate concluded.

There are no comments yet.