

Press Communique of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of Kazakhstan

1. With a lot of sadness, the Bishops and Ordinaries of Kazakhstan have read two recent articles published by Crux website and Catholic News Agency on Archbishop Francis Assisi Chullikatt, who is our Apostolic Nuncio in Kazakhstan.
2. Archbishop Chullikatt has been working very earnestly for the good of the people and the Church in Kazakhstan. Immediately after his arrival, with zeal and joy he started visiting all the parishes of Kazakhstan. He has been working very hard for the good of all of us here and we are particularly grateful for all the assistance he gives to the Bishops' Conference. Besides, he is involved in good projects at various levels (educational, social, charitable etc.) for the people of Kazakhstan. For us, Archbishop Chullikatt is the kind of Nuncio, we Bishops in Kazakhstan would like to have with us at least for a few more years.
3. In all these almost past three years of his presence in Kazakhstan we heard only good things about Archbishop Chullikatt from the priests, religious sisters and from our lay people, as well from those who work at the Apostolic Nunciature in Astana.
4. There was not noticed the slightest suspicion about Archbishop Chullikatt's moral conduct or any improper behavior towards women. According to our information, his dealings and treatment towards his collaborators and employees in the Nunciature is marked by kindness, courtesy and tact. We never heard any complaint in this regard.
5. We are pleased to recognize the Statement from the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations issued on March 11, 2019, which states that the employment conditions and the visa status of all members of the diplomatic, technical and service staff of the Mission during the tenure of Archbishop Chullikatt were fully in line with the laws of New York and the applicable provisions of U.S. State Department regulations. Thereby the relevant accusations expressed in the above mentioned articles against Archbishop Chullikatt have been proven to be unfounded with regard to this concrete issue.
6. We also wish to recognize with sincere gratitude the important role played by Archbishop Chullikatt during his mission at the United Nations as a staunch defender of the unborn, of the traditional marriage and the institution of the family, often in close collaboration with many friendly Muslim-majority countries, including Kazakhstan.
7. We express our hope that Archbishop Chullikatt can continue his exemplary apostolic work in Kazakhstan with many spiritual fruits and we wish him strength and abundant Divine blessings.

Astana, March 19, 2019

+ José Luis Mumbiela Sierra, Bishop of the Diocese of Most Holy Trinity in Almaty and
President of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of Kazakhstan

+ Athanasius Schneider, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Saint Mary in Astana
and Secretary General of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of Kazakhstan