



**Tbilisi, 21 June 2019**

## **STATEMENT**

The Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (I.A.O) strongly condemns the unlawful actions of some members of the Georgian Parliament, which took place on the 20th of June 2019 during the 26th General Assembly convened in the Georgian Parliament assembly hall, aiming at the cancellation of the Assembly Plenary session and compounded by threats for physical violence against members of the I.A.O.

The above incidents do not only blatantly violate the international principles of parliamentarianism and Democracy but are also contradictory to the fundamental principles of Orthodoxy.

Furthermore, the I.A.O would like to state the following:

1. The parliament of Georgia happens to be a founding member of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (I.A.O)
2. The decision to convene the 26th General Assembly in Georgia was made upon invitation of the country's Parliament President.
3. In accordance with the Regulation, as is the case for all bodies and international organisations, the assembly meetings are chaired by the General Assembly President-elect.
4. In 2018 in Athens, the I.A.O General Assembly elected Russian MP, Mr. Sergei Gavrilov, for President.
5. According to the I.A.O Regulation, the President of the I.A.O General Assembly presides over the deliberations of the assembly, in co-operation with the Assembly Secretary General.
6. Following invitation by the hosting country, it is standard practice for most of the I.A.O general assemblies to take place in the Parliament building of the given country in the assembly hall where there is a dedicated seat for the chairman of the meetings, which the hosting side kindly offers to the President of the I.A.O.
7. The formal languages of the Assembly are Greek, Russian, English and Arabic.