



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GRADYE M. PARSONS  
STATED CLERK

January 16, 2014

President Bashar al-Assad  
The Syrian Arab Republic  
Damascus, Syria

Excellency:

As people of faith committed to peace in the world, we are deeply grieved by the tragedy that continues to unfold in your nation and the surrounding region. We have special and deep ties to Syria and the region, because our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been in partnership with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon for over a hundred years. We long to find some way we can be helpful to all who are involved in seeking a resolution to the conflict.

You have been gracious in receiving representatives from our church in the past and I write as the leader of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to ask that you receive Elder Amgad Beblawi, as my personal representative.

Our highest governing body, the General Assembly, has called for a mediated process leading to a cessation of violence by all parties. We have called for outside parties to cease all forms of intervention in Syria. We have urged a role for the United Nations as the most appropriate arbiter of the crisis. We have urged our own government to refrain from any form of military intervention in the conflict.

While you cannot speak for other parties in the conflict, I urge you to use every effort, on behalf of the Syrian people, to work for a negotiated solution that can open up a future of peace and a restoration in which the rights of all the Syrian people are protected.

We pray for success in the Geneva peace talks scheduled to take place next week to find a way out of this tragic and costly struggle. You too, are in our prayers, along with all who look to you for leadership.

May God be with you.

Reverend Gradye Parsons  
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)