



## Statement of Reconciliation

Zurich/Dusseldorf. “The UAC and the NAC wish to mend their relationship with one another and go into the future in reconciliation and mutual respect for one another.” So reads the first sentence of the “Statement of Reconciliation”. The document, which represents an historic step for both churches, was signed by representatives from the two churches on Saturday, 29 November 2014 in the context of a special ceremony in the church quarters of the United Apostolic Church in Düsseldorf.

The Statement of Reconciliation is divided into three sections: a brief outline explains how the separation from the New Apostolic Church and the establishment of the United Apostolic Church came about. This is followed by assessments on which there is agreement on both sides. The actual Statement of Reconciliation is found at the end of the document.

The document states that both churches recognise one another as independent churches, each with their own independent profiles. In addition, the leadership of the New Apostolic Church expressly apologises to those ministers who were excommunicated from the Church owing to these events, as well as to all others who were adversely affected as a result.

### **Contacts are expressly welcomed**

The document goes on to say: “Both churches regret the tensions that came into being between the congregations and members over the period following this separation.” The friendly contacts that have been established on the local level over the last few years with the goal of ecumenical coexistence and fellowship are

expressly welcomed. “These positive developments will also continue to be endorsed and supported in the future.”

In conclusion the United Apostolic Church and the New Apostolic Church express their intent to move forward in their historical analysis.

#### Four signatories

The Statement of Reconciliation bears the signatures of four representatives from the two churches, namely: Apostle Armin Groß in his function as Chairman of the United Apostolic Church, Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider, Church President and leader of the New Apostolic Church International, Apostle Matthias Knauth, Secretary of the Union of Apostles and Bishops of the United Apostolic Church of Europe, and Wilfried Klingler, Chairman of the Committee for Special Affairs of the New Apostolic Church International.

The signed reconciliation paper is the result of several meetings that have taken place between representatives of the United Apostolic Church of Europe and the New Apostolic Church. After a rather lengthy pause, the participants gathered for a renewed meeting in March 2014, which took place in the Church office of the New Apostolic Church of North Rhine-Westphalia in Dortmund.

#### A look back on the events of 1955

The discussion revolved mainly around the events that had led the United Apostolic Church to separate from the New Apostolic Church in the year 1955. Differing views on Chief Apostle Johann Gottfried Bischoff’s “message” within the leadership of the time were principal factors in these developments. The conflict culminated in the dismissal from office, and subsequent excommunication, of three Apostles from the Rhineland. On 24 January 1955 these three Apostles went on to establish their own religious denomination, which is today known as the United Apostolic Church.

#### 29 November 2014

