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VATICAN - Observations on behalf of His Exc. Mgr. Savio Hon Tai-Fai, S.D.B., Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - On the decision of the so-called Conference of Catholic Bishops of China and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, to withdraw the "approval" from His Exc. Mgr. Taddeo Ma Daqin, the Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, His Exc. Mgr. Savio Hon Tai-Fai, S.D.B., said:
1) In the Catholic Church, the Episcopal Conferences do not have the power to appoint or approve a Bishop, or cancel the mandate or to impose sanctions against him. Much less it can be done by the so-called Conference of Catholic Bishops of China, which was not recognized by the Holy See. Therefore, Mgr. Ma Daqin remains in his office as Auxiliary Bishop of Shanghai. The measure in question, in terms of the Church, therefore has no legal value whatsoever, it also creates an unnecessary division in the country.
2) The Archbishop has behaved with admirable fidelity to the Church and professed sincere love for his country. Cardinal Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, already expressed support to Mgr. Ma in his recent article, published in N. 167 of the magazine Tripod in Hong Kong.
3) Many Catholics from around the world have turned to this Dicastery to express its regret for the abuse, committed by the so-called Episcopal Conference of the Catholic Bishops of China and by the Patriotic Association. This injustice is all the more painful because it makes an attempt on communion and discipline of the Catholic Church precisely in the Year of Faith.
4) Catholics are invited to join the ecclesial initiatives of prayer, promoted in various Dioceses, to show participation regarding Mgr. Ma's incident and to those who in China live in similar situations. To this end, one could include an intention of prayer in the Eucharistic celebration. (Agenzia Fides 13/12/2012)

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