



## **ASIA/TURKEY - Ankara denies: the kidnapped Syrian bishops are not in Turkey**

Ankara (Agenzia Fides) - The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has called the allegations which have been circulating in recent days "baseless and misleading" with regards to the two metropolitan bishops of Aleppo abducted last April and held hostage by Chechen militants out of Syria, in the Turkish territory, with coverage of the secret services in Ankara. The blunt denial, re-launched by Turkish agencies, refers to the vice-president of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Elena Agapova who had given assumptions about the fate of the two abducted bishops to the Grand Mufti of Damascus Ahmad Badreddin Hassoun, who on 28 October had met with representatives of the Imperial Society in the Russian capital.

According to the Turkish press, even the intelligence services of Ankara are working to obtain the release of the two Syrian bishops - the Greek Orthodox Boulos al-Yazigi and the Syrian Orthodox Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim - abducted on 22 April, and whose seizure has never been claimed by any of the acronyms operating on the scene of the Syrian conflict. The Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, was founded in 1882 by Tsar Alexander III. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 31/10/2013) .