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AFRICA/EGYPT – New rules for election of Orthodox Coptic Pope examined by civil authorities

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) – The Synod of Orthodox Coptic Bishops has approved new regulations for the election of a Patriarch. The rules are now being examined by the Presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt. Fides was told this by Catholic Coptic Bishop of Minya, Bishop Boutros Fahim Awad Hanna. "The Orthodox Coptic bishops gathered from 17 to 19 February for a meeting presided by Patriarch Tawadros II" says Bishop Boutros "approved new rules for the election of the Head of the Orthodox Coptic Church. The text has not yet been made public, but it is known that some articles have been revised others have been removed since they no longer reflected the present situation of the Orthodox Coptic Church. Among other things, the electoral body will include representatives of the Orthodox Coptic community in the diaspora, today more than two million faithful".
After being approved by the Synod the new regulation must be ratified by the President of Egypt. "The election of the Patriarch" Bishop Hanna told Fides "is part of Orthodox Coptic community law ratified by the Constitution , which guarantees Christians the right to elect the Leading members of the respective church communities. The procedure therefore is guaranteed by civil law, and for this reason must be ratified by the offices of the Presidency" (GV) (Agenzia Fides 25/2/2014)

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