

Guidelines of the International Bishops Conference (IBC) with Respect to the Recognition of a Church as Independent Old-Catholic Church of the Union of Utrecht

1. The rule of the Old-Catholic ecclesiology is: In one particular country (i.e. a politically independent unity) there is only one episcopally and synodally ordered Church (be it a diocese or a communion of dioceses)
2. Necessary pre-requisites for the recognition as an independent Old-Catholic Church of the Union of Utrecht are:
 - 2.1. The Church is organized in accordance with well grounded Old-Catholic principles, such as regarding the participation of lay persons and ordained ministers in leadership and administration of the Church (usually in the context of a Synod) or the election of a Bishop by the respective Church (usually through a diocesan or supra-diocesan Synod, or through a Chapter of the Church).
 - 2.2. The Bishop (or bishops) of the respective Church signs (sign) the *Statute of the Old-Catholic Bishops united in the Union of Utrecht* of 2000 and the *Declaration of Utrecht* of 1889, which ipso facto implies acceptance of the Statute and the Declaration by the respective Church.
 - 2.3. The respective Church is in the spiritual and material position to fulfill basic church tasks independently, such as:
 - to witness the Gospel of Christ to the world;
 - to celebrate regular masses in parishes and otherwise;
 - to maintain pastoral work for the faithful;
 - to organize proper formation and training of its ordained ministers.
3. The IBK takes into consideration the position of the respective Church in the society and – if a secular recognition by the state is possible – also takes into consideration its position with regards to religious laws.
4. An application to be recognized as an independent Old-Catholic Church of the Union of Utrecht and with this the reception of its bishop (or bishops) in the Old-Catholic Bishops Conference (IBC) of the Union of Utrecht has to include the following documents:
 - One each of a copy of the *Statute of the Old-Catholic Bishops united in the Union of Utrecht* of 2000 and of the *Declaration of Utrecht* of 1889, signed both by the Bishop (or the Bishops) and the synodal governing body;
 - One notarized copy of the Election and Consecration Certificate of the Bishop (or the Bishops);
 - One notarized copy of the Election Certificate of the bishop elect, if the Church seeking recognition as independent Old-Catholic Church includes the application to consecrate its bishop elect.
 - Information concerning the number of congregations, ordained ministers and faithful of the respective Church;
 - One copy each of the official rules and regulations and books of the respective Church (in accordance with Art. 12 of the IBC-Statute);
 - Information regarding the formation and training of the ordained ministers (in line with Art. 14 of the IBK Statute).

5. The decision regarding the acceptance of a Church as an independent Old-Catholic Church in the Union of Utrecht or the consecration of a bishop respectively will be made in accordance with the respective rules of the *Statute of the Old-Catholic Bishops united in the Union of Utrecht* of 2000 (comp. Art. 3 lit. e-f; Art 7 lit a; Art. 8; Art. 9).

Mödling/Vienna, 27. June 2002

For the International Old-Catholic Bishops Conference (IBC)

The President:

Dr. Joris Vercammen, Archbishop of Utrecht

The Secretary:

Fritz-René Müller, Bishop of the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland