



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

Charles Iain R. Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont Grand Master Mason

David M Begg CA Grand Secretary

21 August 2014

To: **All Grand Lodges in amity with The Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland.**

Following the circulation on 23rd of July 2014 of a document entitled, 'The Berlin Declaration', by the Grand Masters of Austria, Alpina of Switzerland, Luxembourg, United Grand Lodges of Germany, and Regular Grand Lodge of Belgium, the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the Grand Lodge of Scotland have considered this Declaration and have agreed to issue the attached Joint Statement.

Yours sincerely and fraternally

Grand Secretary



JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND; THE GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND; AND THE GRAND LODGE OF SCOTLAND ON THE "BERLIN DECLARATION"

We have received a copy of the Berlin Declaration and welcome the fact that the five Grand Masters who have signed it are proposing to follow the United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland, and others, by restoring recognition to the Grande Loge Nationale Française.

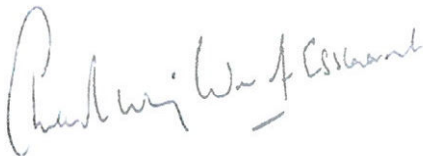
The question of granting recognition to the new Confederation of French Freemasonry is an entirely separate matter. It is a long standing principle of international Masonic relations that where a Grand Lodge exists a second Grand Lodge cannot be recognised, no matter how regular it might be, without the agreement of the existing Grand Lodge to share territorial jurisdiction with it. As the Grande Loge Nationale Française has not agreed to share its territory with the Confederation, and having re-recognised the Grande Loge Nationale Française to then unilaterally recognise the Confederation without their blessing would constitute a breach of this long standing principle, and even be thought to be interference in the territorial jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge.

Since the idea of a Confederation was first floated England, Ireland and Scotland have consistently stated that a "blanket" recognition cannot be given to such a body and that we would require solid evidence that each of the Grand Lodges which are part of the Confederation individually complies with the generally accepted principles for Grand Lodge Recognition. Should one of them not comply with those generally accepted principles then recognition cannot be extended to the Confederation.

At the present time the United Grand Lodge of England and the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland are not considering recognising any other Grand Lodge in France and will not do so in future without the agreement of the Grande Loge Nationale Française.

It is stated that the Confederation is a means of bringing together regular Grand Lodges in France and that it will act as an "umbrella" to represent regular French Freemasonry on the international stage, as the United Grand Lodges of Germany does for regular German Freemasonry. For one hundred years the Grande Loge Nationale Française has been internationally recognised as the representative of regular French Freemasonry. A Confederation claiming to represent regular French Freemasonry which does not include the Grande Loge Nationale Française or in any way have its blessing, can have no credibility on the international stage.

August 2014



Charles Iain Robert
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Grand Master Mason

SCOTLAND



Peter G. Lowndes

Pro Grand Master

ENGLAND



Douglas T. Grey

Acting Grand Master

IRELAND