10/07/2024

Archbishop Elpidophoros Attacked for Denouncing Turkish Occupation of Cyprus during 2024 Clergy-Laity Congress

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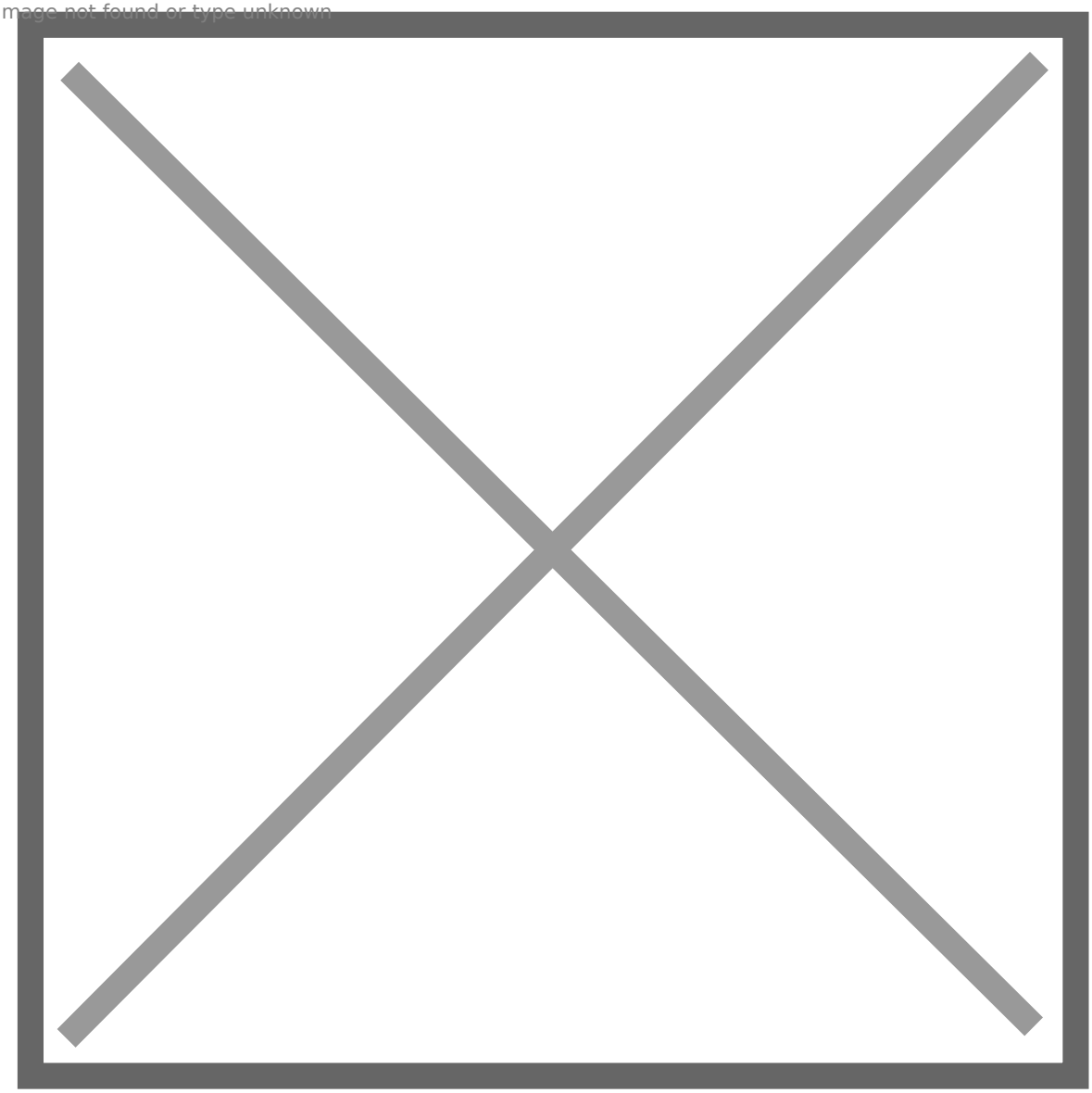
The leader of the Turkish-occupied part of Cyprus Ersin Tatar criticized His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America's recent statements concerning the Turkish occupation of Cyprus in an interview with nationally-broadcast Turkish TV channel Ulusal Kanal.

Tatar called His Eminence's statements "unfortunate", "extremely wrong," and accused him of "distorting the issue" regarding Cyprus.

Tatar's condemnation follows an array of accusations from nationalistic elements in the Republic of Turkey regarding His Eminence's attention to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus at the 2024 Clergy-Laity Congress. In His Eminence's remarks at the "Cyprus: Land of Embrace" concert he asserted: "We are fifty years from the invasion, and the illegal seizure and occupation of one third of this sovereign Island Nation by the Turkish troops. We cannot let the world forget, and we will not let the world forget." See His Eminence's full remarks here.

The Turkish newspaper Aydinlik published a scathing article by journalist Kaan Arslan, condemning the Archbishop for organizing the event and for asserting that the existence of the self-proclaimed pseudo-state in the occupied area is illegal.

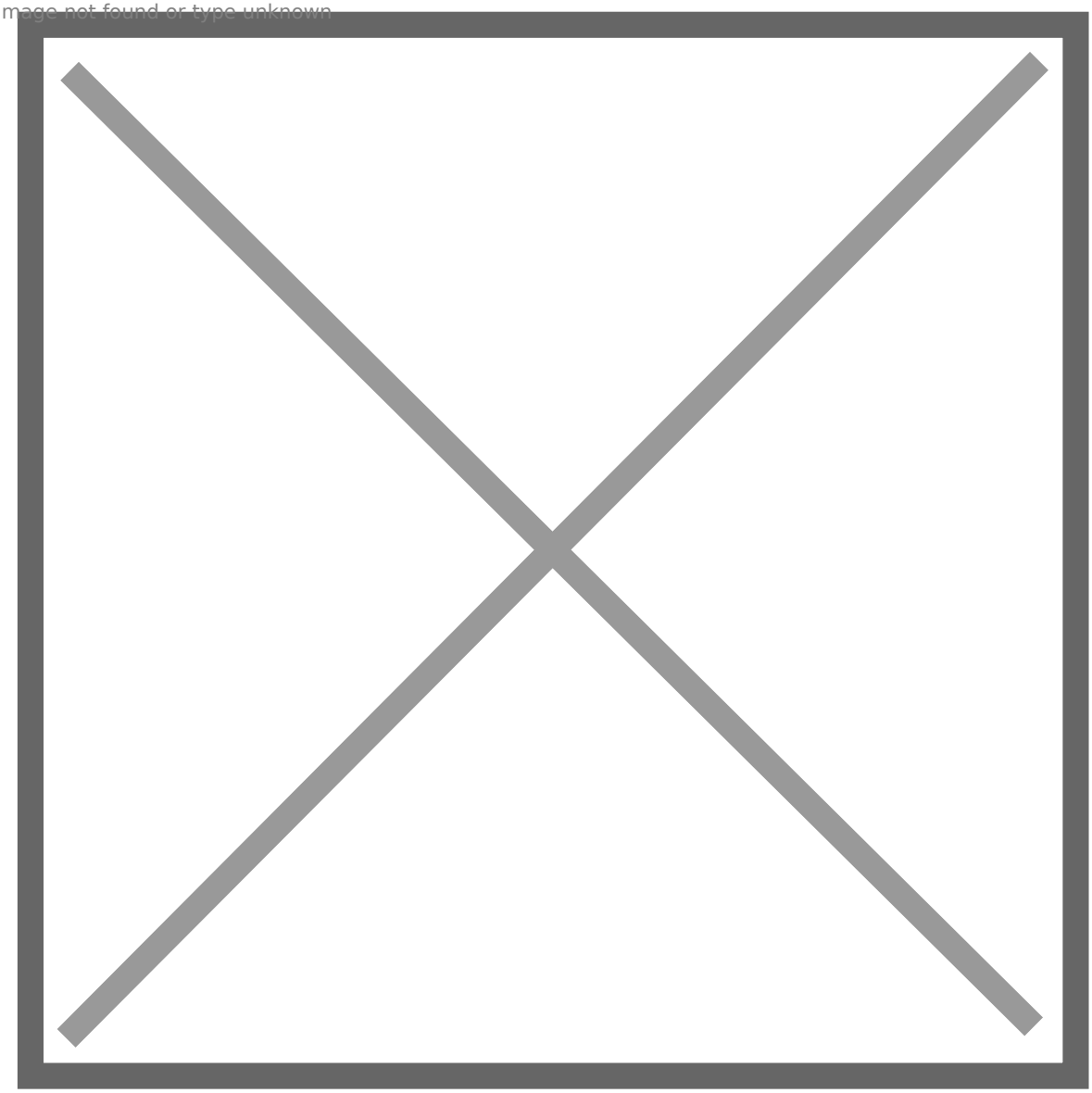
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Turkish newpaper Aydinlik: “The unofficial representative of the Patriarchate has overstepped his bounds! Declares Turkey an invader.”

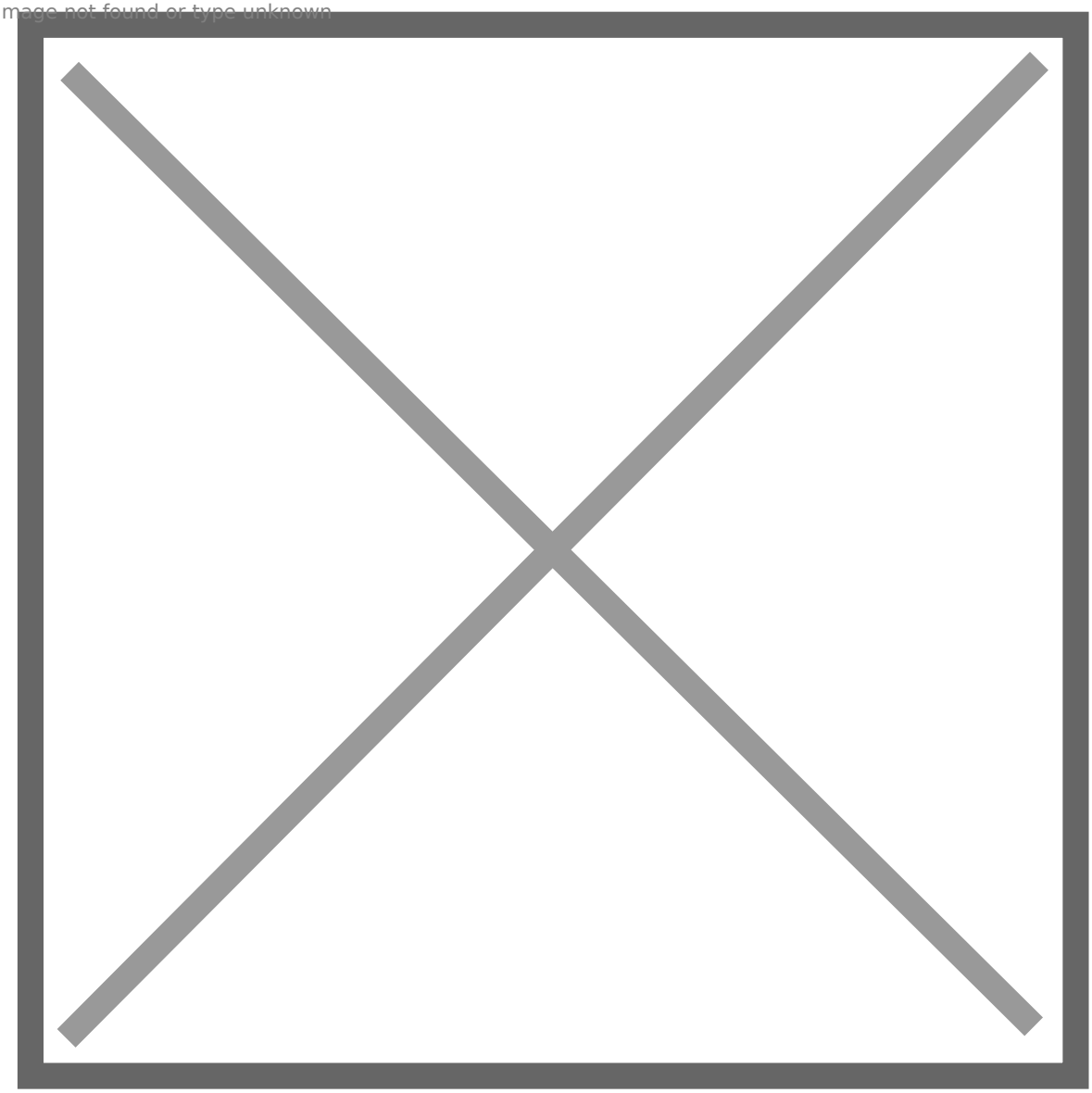
In a similarly harsh tone, the newspaper ODAtv criticized Archbishop Elpidophoros, describing his remarks as a “scandalous” and questioning his appointment as Archbishop of America, suggesting it violates the Lausanne Treaty.

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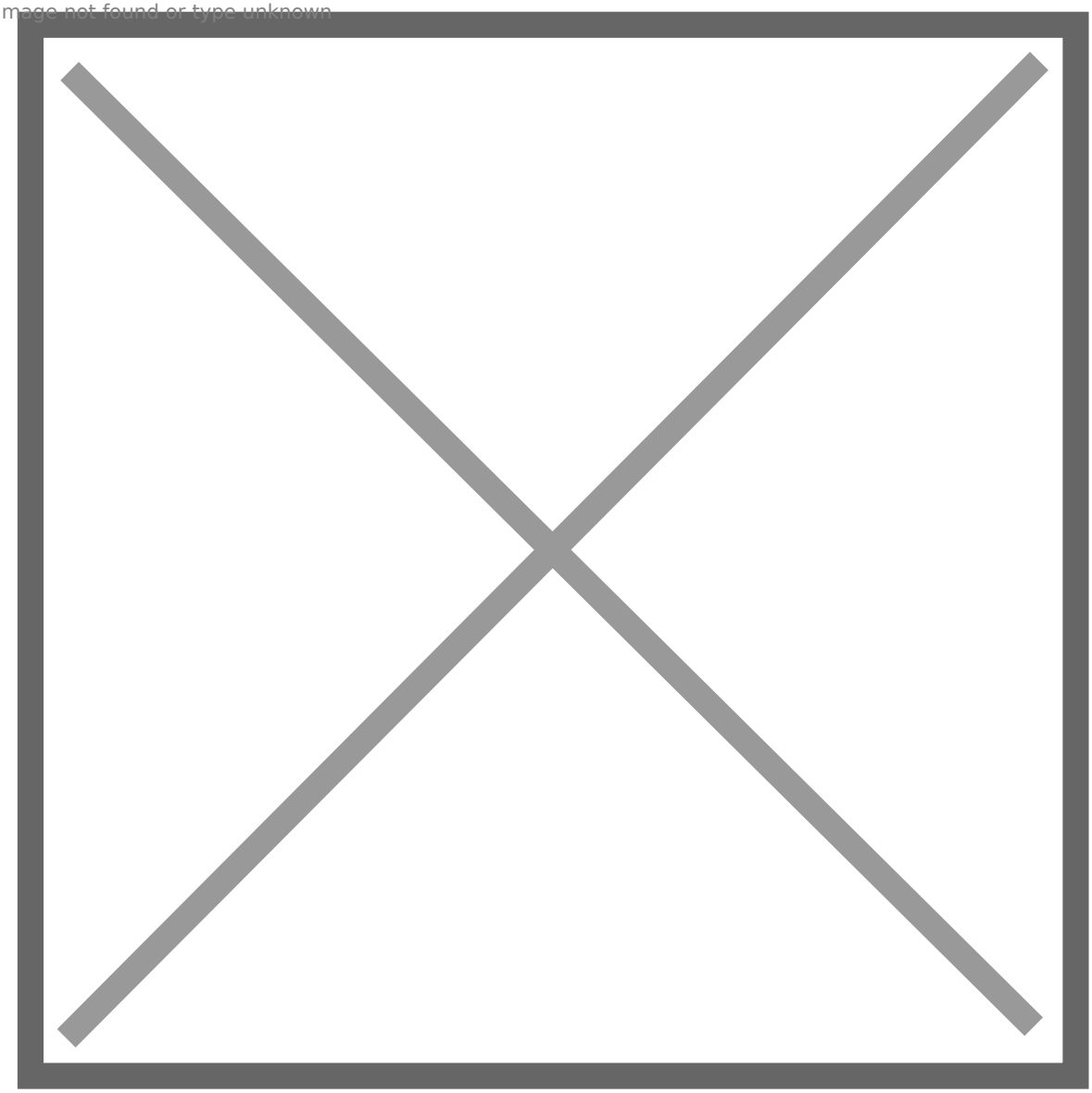
The article protested that, “the unofficial representative of the Patriarchate, Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Orthodox Church of the United States asserted that Cyprus is occupied. This is not the first time Elpidophoros has made an anti-Turkey statement.”

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BursadaBugun, another Turkish publication, implied that Archbishop Elpidophoros’s Turkish citizenship and birthplace of Bakirkoy, Istanbul, are incongruent with his statements on Cyprus.

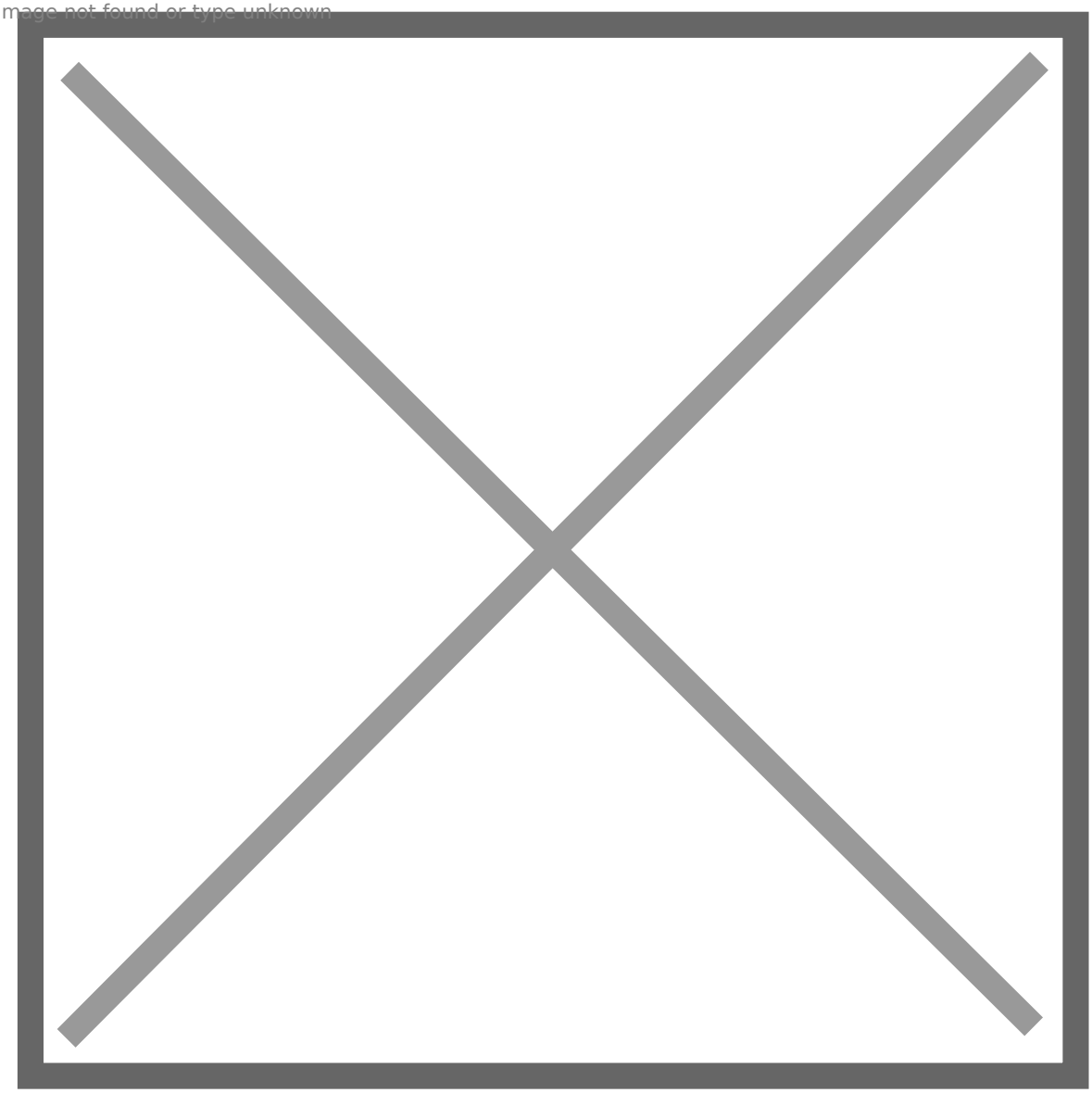
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The article titled “Archbishop of the US Orthodox Church Elpidophoros: ‘Cyprus is under occupation,’” criticized His Eminence’s stance and questioned his legitimacy.

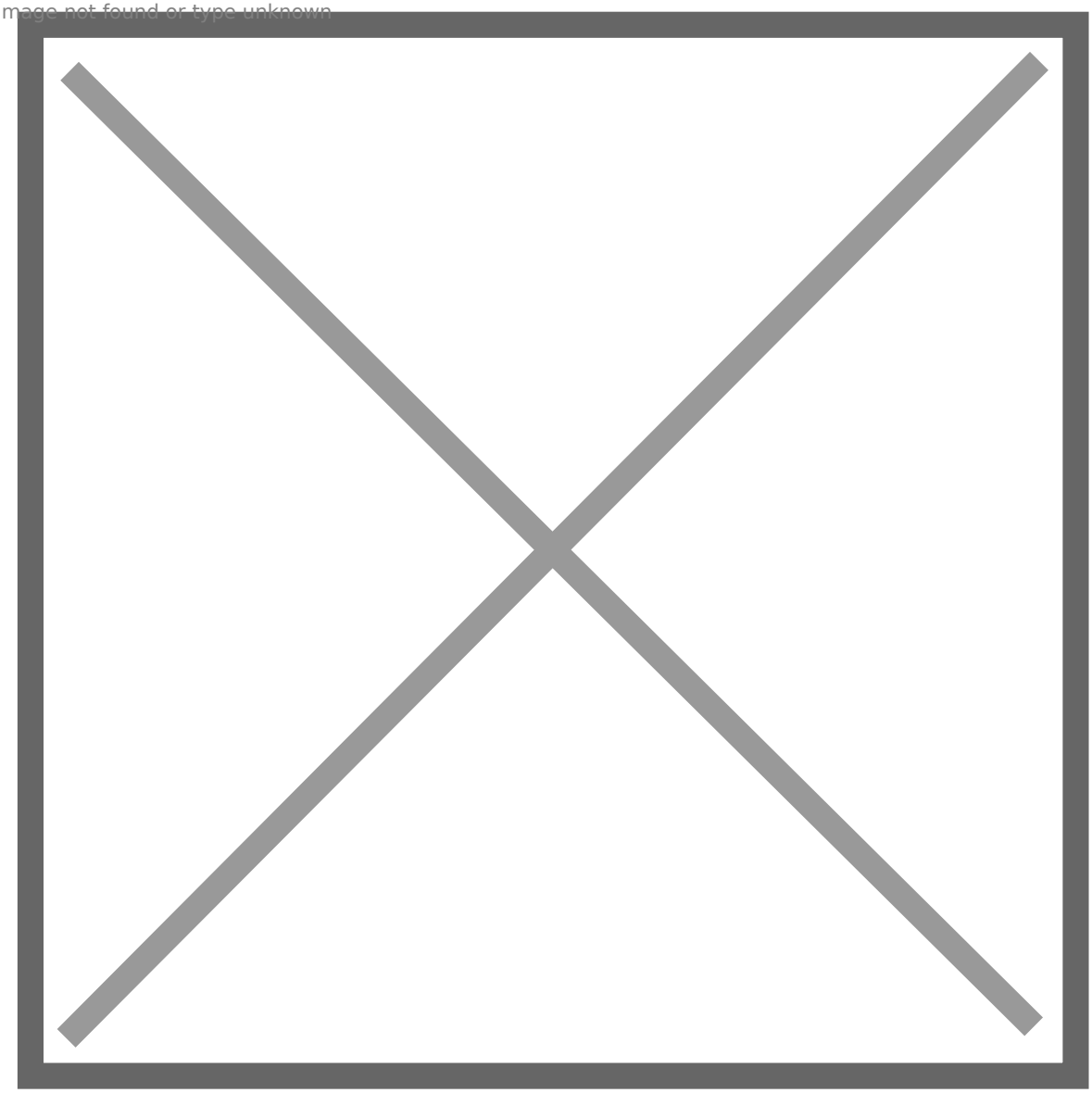
Similar posts appeared on Turkish social media attacking His Eminence:

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This is not the first time that Archbishop Elpidophoros has come under attack by nationalistic groups in Turkey.

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