

كلمة غبطة البطريرك في لقاء رؤساء الكنائس بمناسبة حلول العام الجديد في مقر رئيس دولة إسرائيل

بمناسبة حلول العام الجديد 2020 عُقد يوم الإثنين الموافق 30 كانون أول 2019 اللقاء الرسمي التقليدي لرؤساء الكنائس المسيحية في القدس في المقر الرئاسي لرئيس دولة إسرائيل بحضور رئيس الدولة السيد روفين ريفلين.

في هذا اللقاء ألقى رئيس دولة إسرائيل السيد روفان ريفلين كلمة أمام رؤساء الكنائس والوفود المرافقة لهم ، متمنياً لهم لعام 2020 الصحة والسلام والازدهار، وشدد على أهمية هذا اللقاء لا سيما في مدينة القدس المقدسة مدينة الأديان. وأضاف أن دولة إسرائيل تسعى إلى حماية الحجاج في الأراضي المقدسة، متمنياً لجميع المسيحيين أعياداً مجيدة ورأس سنة مباركة.

غبطة البطريرك كيريوس كيريوس ثيوفيلوس الثالث بطريرك المدينة المقدسة أورشليم ألقى كلمة أمام رئيس الدولة ورؤساء الكنائس:

,Your Excellency, Mr. President“

,Your Excellency, Rabbi Machluf Deri

,Your Beatitude

,Your Eminences

,Your Graces

,Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour for us, Mr. President, to offer greetings to you on behalf of the Christian communities in this holiday

season. At this special time of the year, the whole world looks to the Holy Land in hope and expectation, and we are keenly aware of the responsibilities that we all bear in this .land of the divine-human encounter

As we greet you with the blessings of this season, we wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to you for the strong and unwavering support that you give to the integrity of the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious .character of Jerusalem and the Holy Land

We are particularly thankful for your special efforts in supporting the renovation work at Qasr al-Yahud and around the Baptism Site, for protecting and promoting its restoration, and for upholding the sanctity of this holy place. The Baptism Site continues to be a beacon of peace and a spiritual oasis that embraces the various faith traditions and national .identities which make up our beloved Holy Land

Our work together is crucial, for it enables our Christian communities to welcome pilgrims there without distinction and to nourish their spiritual aspirations. We continue to make incremental progress on the restoration of the site, and look forward to the day when the goodness of peace (to agathon tis ;Irinis) can be celebrated by all; for as we read in Psalms

;Mercy and truth are met together

.righteousness and peace have kissed each other

;Truth shall spring out of the earth

.and righteousness shall look down from heaven

(Ps. 85:10-11)

The dynamics of the Holy Land and its Holy Places, which of course includes the Holy City of Jerusalem, also lay upon us various challenges. For instance, the well-known case of Jaffa Gate continues to be a source of anguish to all of us, for it

is endangering the unique and sacred character of our Christian Quarter. It jeopardises access to our Churches' headquarters, schools, health facilities and places of worship. In addition, it threatens to restrict and diminish the opportunities for pilgrims to walk the "pilgrim way" to .the holy sites and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

We remain steadfast in our resolve to maintain our historic and sacred rights and we acknowledge all the valuable support accorded to us, locally and globally, from those people of good will who uphold the spiritual significance of our beloved .Jerusalem and Holy Land

In our recent gathering with the Minister of Tourism, we recalled the acknowledgement of the Minister that the commitment of the Churches in encouraging pilgrimages has resulted in the significant increase of the number of pilgrims in recent years. This is a matter not just of the economy; more importantly, pilgrimages build stability and help to ensure peaceful co-existence and mutual witness. In this regard we continue to look to the Government of Israel to take into fuller consideration our request to ensure that the Holy Places can provide essential services, like a water supply to Mount Tabor, which is one of the major destinations for the many thousands of pilgrims who visit our Holy Places on a daily basis. We are committed to this common enterprise, and .we look forward to the implementation of this matter

Mr. President, your recent intervention in facilitating the movement of Christians who live in Gaza to visit Bethlehem for the celebration of the Christmas Feast is highly commendable. This has been a matter of pastoral concern to us all, and we .are glad that provisions have been made for this

As we look to the New Year, and the hope of peace that it :brings, we recall the words of the Psalmist about Jerusalem ;You will bless the crown of the year because of your goodness

.and your fields will be filled with your richness

(Ps. 65[65]:12)

Please allow us to express our thanks for the teamwork of Mr. Yacoub Salameh and Mr. Sezar Mrarjleh of the Office for Christian Communities, who have worked above and beyond the .call of duty to help facilitate our common life

We wish you, Mr. President, and your family all the blessings of this season of peace. We pray that the New Year will be a year of progress and deepening reconciliation. MAY God bless .you in your high responsibilities on behalf of all of us

.Hag Sarameach

."Thank you

مكتب السكرتارية العام