

H.B. ADDRESS TO THE RECEPTION OF THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF TOURISM FOR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR.

Holy City of Jerusalem, 17 of December 2012.

"Your Excellency,

Fellow Heads of Churches Brothers and Sisters,

Honourable Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt that the Holy Land in general and Jerusalem in particular are the sacred place that we hold so dearly to our hearts. We all share the common belief in this sacredness and cherish it in our souls. We are honoured and consider ourselves privileged to serve in this great city and larger region.

In witness, Jerusalem is shared by the three Abrahamic faiths, that is to say Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In this respect it is unique and positioned to belong to the whole world. Thus it can be further said that Jerusalem is inclusive not only to the Abrahamic faiths but to all faiths and beliefs.

We in our capacity as religious leaders, do encourage the various peoples of the world to come and visit this Holy Land. We encourage them to come and partake in Jerusalem's experience of spirituality as well as participate in its religiosity.

We would like to commend all those who helped organise this

gathering and We extend our thanks for this cordial invitation. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Thank you".

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III,

Patriarch of Jerusalem.