

PALESTINIAN AUTONOMY OFFICIALS AT BETHLEHEM HEGOUMEN'S QUARTERS

On Sunday the 9th/22nd of June 2014, the Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem, His Eminence Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Jordan, hosted lunch at the renovated Hegoumen's Quarters of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem for H.B. Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, accompanied by the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias, and His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina. Also invited were religious personalities of the Palestinian Autonomy, such as imams, as well as political figures, i.e. the newly elected Chief Judge Mahmoud Habbash; Waqf Minister Yusef Dwesh; the newly appointed Prefect of Bethlehem Mr Al-Bari; Mr Ziyad Baddak, member of the P.A. Committee on Christian Affairs, as well as numerous members of the Rum Orthodox Community in Bethlehem.

During lunch, Patriarch Theophilos addressed guests in Arabic, see [link: https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2014/06/22/6084](https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2014/06/22/6084)

He went on to present Chief Judge Mr Mahmoud Habbash with a plaque representing Jerusalem and a second plaque with a relief representation of Palestine.

The Chief Judge thanked His Beatitude for the invitation and the presents, and congratulated all on the meeting which, as he said, took place in the heart of Palestine, namely Bethlehem, where Christians and Muslims live as one people, and where thousands of pilgrims flock to venerate either the Holy Sepulcher or the Omar-Haram al Sharif Mosque, as has been the case since the days of Omar Al Hatab's treaty with the ever-memorable Patriarch Sophronios of Jerusalem.

Mr Habbash added that Christians are not a minority within the Palestinian State; they are, he said, a majority alongside the Muslims and that Muslims owe to respect the Gospel as they respect the Koran: respect they Church as they respect the Mosque.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/m4Xi6FxmBT4>

