

THE MOLDOVAN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday the 11th/24th of June 2014, the Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova, Mrs Natalia Gherman, while on a visit to the state of Israel, visited the Patriarchate accompanied by a group of her associates and the Moldovan Ambassador to Israel, Mr Anatol Vangheli.

They were received by His Beatitude, Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, in the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers.

His Beatitude welcomed the Deputy Prime Minister by pointing out that the Patriarchate recalls the links it always had with Moldova, as Patriarchates and Primate from the Holy Sepulcher used to visit the country to catechize its people.

The Patriarchate, said H.B., has inherited the Byzantine spiritual and natural heritage and through it, it carries on its religious and cultural work.

In response, Mrs Gherman thanked His Beatitude and expressed her interest in seeing her nation maintaining its close links to the Patriarchate and accepting the blessings of the Holy Sepulcher for its welfare.

The Moldovan nation, added Mrs Gherman, has distinguished itself for its bravery, honour and dignity, mostly during the period of Stefan the Great. Today it has resumed its Orthodox tradition, which had been interrupted under the communist regime, and lives in a new era of religious freedom and freedom of expression.

Living in a country which favours peaceful religious coexistence, said she, we are sorry to witness disputes and

conflicts in our neighbouring countries. Mrs Gherman is the daughter of the first President of Moldavia, which led Moldavia to religious freedom after the fall of the communist regime. She herself was baptized as a grownup.

In response, His Beatitude remarked that the Patriarchate strives for the religious character of Orthodox states and for the religious character of Jerusalem too.

He went on to offer the Deputy Prime Minister a gold pectoral cross and an icon of Theotokos Jerusalemite.

Mrs Gherman offered the Patriarch an album of Moldovan landmarks and Moldovan wine, before proceeding to venerate at the Church of the Resurrection.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/c9vJt9GgLVM>

