GREETINGS TO H.B. DANIEL PATRIARCH OF ROMANIA AT THE RECEPTION OF H. B. THEOPHILOS III PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM IN BUCHAREST.

Bucharest, Friday, 24 October 2014

Your Beatitude, Patriarch of Romania and Brother in Christ Mr. Daniel,

"Behold now, what is so good or so pleasant as for brothers to dwell together in unity" Ps.132(133)

Our triune God has made us worthy of being together with Your Beatitude and with brothers and sisters of your country, which has been watered and therefore blessed by the blood of many martyrs all for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are coming from Jerusalem, which is the cradle of the sacrificial and resurrectional witness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We bring to you the grace of the Holy Tomb and the greetings of the Christians of the Holy Land.

The Church of Jerusalem has been the inexhaustible spring that continues to supply the spiritual waters to the ecumenical and the local Orthodox Churches as it has throughout the life of the Church.

The ecumenical and local Orthodox Churches, in turn, have been on one hand protecting the spiritual springs i.e. the Holy Places that bear witness to the sacred history of salvation and on other hand, nourishing the Church of Jerusalem and its

faithful believers through their pilgrimages.

These blessed lands of Romania and its Church are not alien or distant to us,for Our predecessors, i.e. great patriarchs of the Holy City of Jerusalem, like Dositheos and Chrysanthos, worked as spiritual guides in these lands , and by their pastoral spiritual and educational activities succeed to keep unadulterated the Orthodox doctrines and faith. Furthermore, they were able to safeguard the ecclesiastical traditions and the ethnic- cultural identity.

In this way, these great leaders of the Church became messengers of the Gospel of oneness and the unity in our Lord Jesus Christ. In our contemporary time, our Churches and the Orthodox nations are experiencing the challenges of a world that is in total confusion and disorientation. Our greatest call to respond is this reality, which opposes the fundamental values of the light and truth of the Gospel of God's philanthropy.

"For in Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it". (John 1:4)

This is the mission of the ecumenical Orthodox Church and particularly the Church of Jerusalem which gives martyria to the multi-cultural and multi-religious region that is Israel, the Palestinian state, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and beyond. It is precisely this martyria of Christ's sacrificial love and reconciliation that we are called upon to pronounce to all our human fellows.

We praise and give thanks to our Lord, God the Father who through the intercessions of our most-blessed Lady and Mother of God the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and supplications of the new Martyr Demetrios the pious, protector of Bucharest, led our feet here. We are thankful for your cordial reception.

May the blessings of the Holy Land and the grace of the Holy

Tomb of our risen Lord guard you and protect the Romanian Church and the Romanian people.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem