

H.B. PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS' ADDRESS TO PRESIDENT TRAIAN BĂSESCU.

Saturday 25 October 2014

Your Excellency Mr. President,

It is a great honor for Us and for Our delegation to be received today by you, together with our beloved brother in Christ, His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, who was instrumental in arranging Our ecclesiastical and pastoral visit to this great and beautiful Balkan country of Romania, which in fact is not alien to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. For the historical and spiritual ties between the Romanian Church and the Jerusalem Patriarchate is well known.

Your Excellency Our visit here is taking place in a time of radical political and cultural developments, both internationally and nationally or locally. We are aware of the unpromising socio-economic situation of your country and the region. Nevertheless, we know from your last visit and pilgrimage to Israel and Palestinian State that you are aware of the turbulent situation in our region that is the Middle East, and in particular the Holy Land.

As we are sure you have personally experienced the, Christian presence in the Middle East is an indispensable component of the multi-ethnic multi-cultural and multi-religious landscape We would like to draw your attention to their plight that is a result of a declared persecution against them.

As much as Christian values and moral norms have shaped and

formed the cultural and ethical identity of your country, a member of the European Union, so much has Christianity molded the current socio-political and religious fabric of the Holy Land that includes Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian State.

Since Church and State serve one and the same purpose, i.e. the well-being of the citizens, it is imperative that Church and State should enjoin their common spiritual values to withstand the destructive forces that threaten the human being, which is considered to be the very image of his creator, the Almighty God.

Invoking upon you the grace of the Holy Tomb of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, We wish you health, both spiritual and physical, longevity, and success in your governmental and political mission. God bless you, and thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem