

HIS EXCELLENCY'S, REUVEN RIVLIN PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL, ADDRESS ON THE OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO THE GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE.

**The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Tuesday 14 April
2015.**

A few months ago, I had the honor, of hosting you in my house, today I am honored to be your guest.

This past month we celebrated Passover and Easter, as part of traditions

that are both, very different, and yet very similar. Celebrations of liberation.

When the People of Israel were slaves in Egypt, the first thing

Moses asked for, was not to ease the hard work; But for the freedom of worship.

The trigger to the Exodus from Egypt was the demand of the Hebrews

to "Let us worship our God".

Religious freedom, is a value, dear to The State of Israel as a Jewish and Democratic state.

The same Freedom of Worship Which helped form the Jewish People

as a nation. I am proud of our obligation, And I re-affirm

that obligation, for Freedom of worship: for Muslim; Christians

from all denominations, and other minorities.

We shall not allow, hate crimes against people, or houses of prayers.

Israel's law enforcement, must deal with such crimes, accordingly.

Such crimes, should not take place- not on Mount Zion

nor on the Mount of Olives, not in synagogues nor in churches.

People who espouse hate, toward priests or teachers, hate all those

who don't think like them.

We should not accept such a reality. We live in a complex political and religious reality, especially here, in Jerusalem, the microcosm of the Middle East.

It is our shared duty to have proper and respectful communication between us.

For many years our relations have been kept through the Status-Quo.

The Status-Quo, is not only a formal obligation.

It is an expression of understanding, and of the delicate balance

of living , in a diverse community.

I believe that despite the differences and challenges, we can all establish trust, Partnership, and mutual respect as people of faith.

May we all have a joyous spring.

God bless you all.

His Excellency

Mr. Reuven Rivlin,

President of the State of Israel