

# THE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF MOLDAVIA AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday morning, December 4/17, 2018, the President of the Republic of Moldavia Mr. Igor Dodon visited the Patriarchate, escorted by his wife, a team of his associates and the Ambassador of Moldavia in Israel Mrs. Gabriela Moraru.

His Excellency the President and his escorts were warmly received by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilus and Hagiotaphite Fathers, saying that the Patriarchate, the first historic Church and the beacon of Christianity modestly welcomes him at the Patriarchate and the Tomb of the crucified and resurrected Christ.

His Excellency the President expressed his joy, saying that he is visiting the Patriarchate after 2004, as the first President of a country with 3.000.000 inhabitants and more than 1000 monasteries, having Saint Stephen as a patron Saint.

His Beatitude referred to the bonds of the Patriarchate with the country of Moldavia, when the Patriarchs visited Moldavia and strengthened it spiritually, while the Moldavian people supported the Patriarchate materially for the maintenance of the shrines.

In recognition of the support of Moldavia to the Patriarchate, His Beatitude offered the President the honorary distinction of the Great Cross bearer of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre and an icon of Theotokos of Jerusalem, of the Sacred Edicule and a painting depicting the city of Jerusalem.

The President thanked Him for this honour, which has an impact upon his country and committed himself to support the Patriarchate and the Church of his country.

Then the President visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre,

escorted by His Beatitude and under the sounds of bells tolling.

On this visit he was welcomed by the Hegoumen of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Most Reverend Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis and the ministering Fathers of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

**From Secretariat-General**