

# THE 9TH INTERFAITH CONFERENCE IN QATAR

From October 24th to October 26th, the 9th International Conference of Interfaith dialogue in Doha was held at Hotel Sheraton of the Emirate of Qatar focusing on “Social media and inter-religious dialogue, a new approach”. The conference was organized by the center of Interfaith Dialogue in Doha in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry and the University of Qatar. The Minister of Justice Mr. Hassan bin Ampntalla Alganem did the opening of the conference. In this conference participated 240 clergy, scientists, politicians and experienced users of technology, Christians, Jewish, and Muslims. Of the Orthodox participated the Patriarchal Vicar of Qatar Archimandrite f. Makarios of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, the deacon Dimitrios Safonof of the Patriarchate of Moscow and lay from Serbia and Romania.

By the Patriarchal Vicariate in Qatar

*(translated from the original document in Greek by Mrs. Irini Valasi)*

Images of the 9th International Interfaith Conference in Qatar

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# THE ARCHBISHOP OF ATHENS IN QATAR

His Beatitude Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Hieronymus conducted a two-day tour in the Emirate of Qatar escorted by

His Eminence Metropolitan of Ellassona Vassilios, His Grace Bishop of Diavlia Gabriel, and the Manager of C.E.F.S Archbishop F. Antonios Avramiotis and nonclerical affiliates. On Monday October 24th 2011, His Beatitude together with His escort was accepted at the palace of the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and after he had a meeting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Hamad bin Jaber bin Tzaseem Al Thani. In the afternoon of the same day, His Beatitude Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Hieronymus together with His escort the clergy and non-clergy visited the Holy Church under construction of the Saint Our Father Isaac the Syrian and Saint George the Great Martyr in Doha Qatar.

By the Patriarchal Vicariate in Qatar

*(translated from the original document in Greek by Mrs. Irini Valasi)*

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## **N . G . O .                      “ROMIOSINI” CONTRIBUTES TO THE CENTER OF LOVE IN ELEUSINA**

**N.G.O. “ROMIOSINI” CONTRIBUTES TO THE CENTER OF LOVE IN ELEUSINA**

By initiative of the non governmental organization “Romiosini” of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem examination of the oral hygiene of the children who are cared for by the center of love in Eleusina was successfully conducted on Sunday October

16<sup>th</sup> 2011 by a team of dentists that visited the Center.

With sensitivity and respect for the children's souls but most of all with altruism and love, the team of dentists with Mrs. Christophorou in charge proceeded with the dental check-up of almost 40 children, recorded their problems and donated toothbrushes to the children. Soon transportation of the children to the dental offices of the volunteer dentists will be arranged in order to have their problems treated.

In parallel, a short however highly important presentation as for the ways of maintaining dental health was conducted which was carefully attended by the older children and the volunteers of the Center as well.

Simultaneously the young children had the opportunity to keep busy with activities such as mold making with plastecine, drawing and the making of small teeth, which the children shaped with their imagination.

The Head of the center of Love in Eleusina, Mr. Charalambos Pirounakis expressed his gratitude to the dental team and N.G.O. for their initiative and joy they gave to the children while Mrs. Aikaterini Diamantopoulou the Deputy Manager of N.G.O. who was also present congratulated Mr. Pirounakis and the volunteers for their work and assured them that they will proceed to the arrangement of further visits from doctors and other specialists such as general physicians, pediatricians, psychiatrists and other specialists who will voluntarily and free of charge offer their services to the children of the Center.

N.G.O. "Romiosini" Secretary's Office

(translated from the original document in Greek by Mrs. Irini Valasi)

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# **HIS BEATITUDE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM MEETS WITH HIS EMINENCE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE.**

On Thursday, September 30th / October 13th 2011, His Eminence Minister of Greece Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis being on a visit to the state of Jordan after his visit to Egypt and on his way to Lebanon met with His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos at Intercontinental Hotel in Amman.

During this visit the Minister of Foreign Affairs was escorted by a seven-member delegation from the Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, a member of whom was Mr. Themistoklis Dimidis who had served as the Greek Consul General in Jerusalem years ago, Representatives of the General Council of Foreign Affairs , economic operators and journalists.

In this meeting, His Beatitude was escorted by the Elder Chief, Archbishop of Constantina, Aristarchos, Archimandrite f. Hieronymus and Archimandrite f. Philoumenos.

In the beginning of the above mentioned meeting the Minister discussed with His Beatitude in private regarding issues of the Middle East, the Council of Churches in the Middle East and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, having His ecclesiastical jurisdiction in three political jurisdictions, Jordan, Israel, and Palestinian Autonomy and attending to the well-being of

His congregation and the Christians in the Middle East and contributing the utmost concerning the peacekeeping process, through His pacificatory and conciliatory stance and life as well.

After this private meeting followed a discussion in a wider circle involving all the members of the Minister's escort as well as the members accompanying His Beatitude.

This discussion revolved around the importance of the Most Holy Shrines, which for Orthodoxy and Romiosini have rightfully been kept and protected by the Patriarchate and until today have attracted numerous pious pilgrims as well as followers of religious tourism and the attention of the politicians due to Their importance and Their place in the ever-forming political situation in Jerusalem.

This meeting and this discussion has certainly constituted a step forward as for the cooperation between the Patriarchate and Greece, as a successor of the Byzantine Empire for the support of the very ancient and inalienable rights of Othodoxy in the Holy Land.

Residing in the Metropolitan Church of the Patriarchate in Amman, His Beatitude participated the following Friday, October 1st /14th 2011, in the Divine Liturgy celebrated in the Metropolitan chapel of St. Nektarios and preached the numerous congregation regarding the holy work of the Church through Its sacraments where our Lord Jesus Christ is invisibly however actually present.

Chief Secretary's Office

*(translated from the original document in Greek by Mrs. Irini Valasi)*

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# THE PAST AND THE PRESENT OF THE GREEK COMMUNITY IN JERUSALEM.

Between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June / 6<sup>th</sup> of July and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June / 7<sup>th</sup> of July, the Swedish Christian Study Centre (SCSC) located nearby David's Gate, organised an International Conference on the Christian presence and its heritage in the Holy Land, particularly that of the cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Gaza.

Amongst the speakers at this Conference, was the representative of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem His Eminence Aristarchos Archbishop of Constantina and Chief Secretary, who held a speech on the theme of Saint Porphyrios Bishop of Gaza—'The life and Thought of St. Porphyrios'.

Invitee speaker was also Dr. John N. Tleel, as the representative of the Greek Community in Jerusalem. Dr. Tleel is an elder Jerusalemite, Rum -Orthodox and dentist by profession. He is one of the devoted members of the Patriarchate and author of the book 'I am Jerusalem'. Dr. Tleel gave a lecture with the title: 'Profile of the Hellenic Community in Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century' which is cited below:

"International Conference:

CELEBRATING THE FIRST 2000 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN HERITAGE IN  
THE HOLYLAND

'Profile of the Hellenic Community in Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup>

Century'

John N. Teel, author of "I am Jerusalem"

This profile theme, is not a research, or a study, it is not a full history, it is not about personal experiences, it is not a living making of history, but it can be, a tentative and brief combination, of a huge and vast historical contribution, to the Holy City of Jerusalem, <sup>4</sup>of the Hellenic Community, or the Hellenic expression, the Hellenic Παροικία (Paroikia) in Jerusalem, in the 20th Century', and regrettably and sadly, its ultimate decline, and almost fateful disappearance, as it looks today in 2011.

Hellenic civilization penetrated and expanded in this part of the world and especially in Jerusalem, in the fourth century BC, when Alexander the Great, sitting victorious on the back of his horse, entered and saw Jerusalem from Mount Scopus, not so far from this room, where we are gathered today, and Sune Fahlgren, our host, and Director of the SCSC, will, certainly and boastfully, ask us later on, to go upstairs on the roof, to view and admire the fantastic panorama of the surrounding Jerusalem area.

Alexander the Great, fourth century BC, Constantine the Great, fourth century AD, Patriarch Sophronios the Rum. seventh century AD, great makers of the Jerusalem history, are the interconnected inspirers, to all the 24 BC and AD centuries, of the rich and many-sided Hellenic history of Jerusalem.

Even before the 20th century, we can discover celebrated names, like Φιλοκτήτης Νέγρης (Philoktitis Negris) (1860) doctor, who published an essay "on cholera", also the famous doctor Χαράλαμπος Μαζαράκης (Charalambos Mazarakis) (1870), who acted as substitute for the Greek Consulate, Αστεριάδης (Asteriadis), a Government official, who was also Mayor of Jerusalem, Σταματιάδης (Stamatiadis), a doctor, Φλωρέντζου

(Florentzou) and many others.

Until 1948 the Hellenic Community of Jerusalem, or the Paroikia, numbered 2000 residents. They were living in the Old City, within the walls, in the Hellenic Όμιλος (Homilos), called Greek Colony, in the upper Bakaa, in Katamonas, the ancient Hellenic name and location of the Katamon, and in all the neighborhoods of the Capital of Palestine, which was Jerusalem.

All the 23 Greek/Rum Orthodox convents and monasteries of the Old City, at that time, not as today, were full and vibrant with Greeks of all ages.

#### 1902 to World War One

The residents were confined in the Old City. Outside the Walls, making their appearance, sporadically and fearfully, were various neighborhoods. Institutions and Monasteries belonging to the French, Americans, Germans, Italians, Swedish etc.

At that time the few in number members were professionals, more merchants, employees and technicians.

Among the Professionals were, the doctors: Nikolakis Spyridonos, Photios Eukleidis, Nikiphoros Mazarakis, Nikolaos Papaioannou, Georgios Yerousis, Varnavas Vareltzis.

A parenthesis: Nikiphoros Mazarakis was also the President of the early and already Benevolent Hellenic Association "Ευποιία" (Eupoia) and served as director in the Israelite Hospital as well. Nikolaos Papaioannou was the physician of Patriarch Damianos. End of the parenthesis.

Chemists: Christakis Gaitanopoulos, Neoklis Ioannidis, Argyrios Mavromichalis.

A personal parenthesis, for the sake of the Hellenic History in the 20th Century: My mother came to Jerusalem from Mathytos, sometime before its destruction in 1915. Mathytos is situated



in the north of the Peninsula of Thraki, on the west side of the Hellespont and not far from the Dardanelles. Today it makes the western or European part of Turkey. My mother came for an eye treatment, at the St. John Ophthalmic Hospital. Her brother Evangelos, was already in Jerusalem, but she stayed in the house of the Chemist Neoclis Ioannidis and his wife Euthalia, until she married my Palestinian father. Euthalia was the sister of the known Jerusalem historian of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, and later on, Archbishop of Athens and all Greece and author of 'The History of the Church of Jerusalem'. Neoclis was the Pharmacist at the drug store and the hospital of the Patriarchate, located in the Old City, in the old and first floor, under the two upper structures, of today's, two-storied Gloria Hotel, built in 1951 and 1969. This much, much older part of the three stories building, during the Jordanian rule 1948-1967, served as the main office of the Palestinian/ Jordanian Mayor of Jerusalem, as well as the Municipality. Today, 201 1, this nearby Rum Orthodox monument in the Old City, a hospital and a pharmacy, during the Ottoman occupation, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, today, is an Israeli Municipal annex. End of the parenthesis.

Advocate: Symeon Petasis.

Architects: Nikiphoros Petasis, Christodoulos Spyridonidis.

Professors: Georgios Vrachy pedis, Konstantinos Eliadis, Georgios Modinos, Nikolaos Loidis, Agapitos Arfaras, Nikolaos Ka'iretlidou and many others.

Merchants: Theodoros Inglesis, Minas Spathopoulos, Christophoros Christophorou, Antonios Kapelos, Sakelaris, Konstantinos Micha'ilidis, Avramidis, Konstantinidis, Lambrou, Dedas (Chadjipetrou), Sotiriou and many others.

Book-seller: Dimitrios Takos.

During that early, important and active period, the Greek

Government was no less active. Γρυπάρης (Gryparis) was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, and Μιλτιάδης

Ραφαήλ (Miltiadis Raphael) was serving as Consul of Greece in Jerusalem.

Some names as a tribute to the memory of the families of that time and period:

Avramidi, Aga, Anastasiadi, Argyriadi, Atseli, Attaliotou, Andread L Apergi. Alamanidou, Avgerinou, Valvi, Vasiliadou, Vareltsi, Velazertou, Vozemberg, Voskopoulou, Gavrielidou, Galtanopoulou, Karafylaki, Yerasimou, Yerousi, Georgiadou, Georgiadou, Yerousi, Georgiou, Yianniou, Daga, Danielidou, Deda, Dimitriadou, Drakouli, Zafiriadou, Zographou Zographou, Inglesi, Inglesi, Ignatiadou, Ioannidou, Kaloudi, Kantopoulou, Kara'itlidou, Carnapa, Karaphylaki, Katsinopoulou, Keladitou, Kretekidou, Lambrou, Laskaridou, Louvari, Lykidou, Malafatopoulou, Matzaridou, Mauridou, Banes, Megasthenous, Meimaraki, Mykonos, Misyrlis, Michailidou, Moustaki, Moutafidou, Mylona, Mystakidou, Nikolaidou, Nikolaidou, Ninon, Panaretou, Papadopoulou, Patetsou, Patlakou, Petridi, Podia, Poteri, Protoppapa, Reveli, Repanidou, Savvidou, Saridi, Solomonidi, Strafti, Sphaellou, Philippidou, Flamba, Fokylidou, Chatzipetraki, Chnaroyannaki, Chouli, Antoniou and, and...

In 1902, with the Greek Consul General I. Alexandropoulos at the head, and some of the persons already mentioned above: Nikiphoros Mazarakis, Nikolaos Spyridonos, Photios Eukleidou, Nikolaos Papaioannou, Georgios Yerousis, Christakis Gaitanopoulos and Konstantinos Eliadis, and with the generous donation offered by the great benefactor and the known Jerusalem builder. Archimandrite Euphthymios, the Greek Orthodox Superior (Skevophylax) of the Church of the Anastasis (Resurrection), the area and the land of the GREEK COLONY was chosen. The holy earth of Jerusalem was dug and the foundations, for the building of the first houses and the Club (Λέσχη),

were placed.

## The start of 1920

The war was over. The British entered Jerusalem. A new wind of hope began blowing, the community started again to reorganize itself, after the destructive effects of the war. New names of university graduates, doctors, chemists, teachers etc., were added to the list of the professionals.

In 1922 the “Φιλόπτωχος Ελληνική Αδελφότης” (Charitable Hellenic Brotherhood) was founded. The founders were seven members of the community.

In 1924 the first women’s Association was founded: “η Ένωσις Ελληνίδων Κυριών” “η Οδηγήτρια”, (The Hellenic Ladies Union). Photo Mavromichali was the foundress, and Sophia Spyridonos was the first President, of a committee of nine members.

The Hellenic Boy Scout Movement, the oldest in Palestine, was founded by Markos Lioufis, in 1920. He came from Cairo. He organized the movement and made it a member of the Universal Scout Family. In 1950, after participating in the Pan-Hellenic Jamboree, in Dionysos, Greece, the Boy Scout Association (1928) became a member of the Scouts of Greece. Some leading names for the sake of history: Evangelos Solomonidis, Elias Kareklas, Christophoros Christophorou, Konstantinos Papadopoulos, Panayiotis Ignelis, Kyriakos Papanastasiou, Chrysostomos Karathanasis, Ioannis Ardizoglou, Evangelos Kaloudis.

Back in Jerusalem from the Jamboree in Dionysos, in 1950, I was asked to contribute to the activities of the Greek Boy Scouts. Reluctantly, and with mixed feelings, I consented. It was a mission impossible, in difficult, uncertain and changing political times. From 1952 to 1973, I published the Greek Scouts Magazine “Το Τρίφυλλο”, (To Triphyllou, the Trefoil),

the Scouts emblem, and "Al-Zambaka" in Arabic. Initially it was stenciled and in Greek only, but blossomed, not only into a multilingual printed magazine, but also ecumenical, serving the entire population. In 1957, "Το Σώμα Ελλήνων Προσκόπων", the Boy Scouts of Greece, honoured me with the "Special Service Medal", "Μετάλλιον Ευδόκиму Υπηρεσίας". It was not for me, but it meant "Ο! Hellenic Scouts of Jerusalem, thank you for, τοις κείνων ρήμασι πειθόμενοι", (Thermopylai, "the hot gates," 480 BC, Leonidas with the 300 Spartiates). The Medal was conferred on me, by Greek Consul General Pavlos Pantermalis, on behalf of Greece, at the Greek Consulate in the Old City, in St. Anne's Greek Orthodox Monastery. The Consulate also became a 'distinguished refugee' in the Old City!

Scouts are sometimes the mosaic mirror of Jerusalem. Parading in Jerusalem with their national Greek Scout flag waving, on Hellenic national days, the Greek Scouts, entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the flag, and then folding it, and placing it behind the door, on the right side of the Church of the Anastasis. This was an exclusive right.

In 1928, the "Social and Athletic Association "Ηρακλής, (Hercules)" was founded, and in the middle of the century, a new Association, the "Ολυμπιακός" (Olympic) replaced it.

In 1938 the "Hellenic Community of Jerusalem", "Η Ελληνική Κοινότης Ιεροσολύμων", was founded. The long awaited dream and event at last was realized. It was an official and historic recognition. The first Executive Committee: Themistoklis Saoulis, the first President, and members: Socratis Tokatlidis, Pangratis Vareltzis, Eugenios Philalithis, Argyrios Ignatiadis, Emmanouil Kasotis, and Antonios Antipas. M. Sakelariadis and Dimitrios Papas were the involved Consuls General of Greece.

In 1938, and for the first time, the Greek Government, injected some modern Greek education into the classic Gymnasium of the Patriarchate. They sent three professors:

Georgios Chronopoulos, and Apostolos Chatziemmanouil, philologists, and Dimitrios Photopoulos, for mathematics, physics, and chemistry. My brother David and I, were fortunate, to have known them as our professors, as well as friends.

## 1940 World War TWO

October 28, 1940, the famous and historic: OXI-NO! The Greeks fought heroically an unequal war, against the invading Italians and Germans, but eventually the Germans occupied Greece. The war and the occupation brought temporarily, a change in the Hellenic demographic map of Jerusalem. Greek refugees fleeing the German occupation, took refuge in Palestine and especially in Jerusalem. King George the second of Greece made a historic visit to Jerusalem. Patriarch Timotheos and the King, in the Church of the Anastasis (Holy Sepulchre). The Patriarch addresses the King: "Your Majesty, you are the first Hellene King,

who visits the Holy Places, after the triumphal entry of Emperor Heraclios, into the Holy City of Jerusalem", in 630 then, and today, 2011, in this Swedish room, we are "Celebrating the first 2000 years of Christian Heritage in the Holy Land". And eleven years more.

The Hellenic community took an active share and fought also in the war. Two young Jerusalemites, Anestis Zographos and Manolis Mykonos gave their lives serving in the submarine "Papanikolis", and in the destroyer "Adrias". Moreover the twenty years old, Chrysanthi Antipa, was one of the victims, at the King David Hotel explosion. Then, I was an eye-witness, of the passing by, in front of me, of the terrible mass of funerals.

A tribute to the valiant Jerusalem young men who fought:

- 1) Avramidis K., 2) Abouggelis N., 3) Arkeftidis or Ardizoglou S., 4) Yanniou An.,
- 5) Danielidis Str., 6) Dimitriadis Chr., 7) Iordanou Pan., 8) Kalamatianos P.,
- 9) Kalogeropoulos Γ., 10) Karaphylakis I., 11) Katsopoulos St., 12) Michailidis Γ.,
- 13) Papadopoulos Em., 14) Plakas G., 15) Potaris N., 16) Sophoulis Em., 17) Spathopoulos AI.,
- 18) Tsihlakis Gavr., 19) Christophorou Chr., 20) Anthopoulos A., 21) Dimitriadis P.,
- 22) Dimitropoulos I., 23) Zacharakis Γ., 24) Zografou P., 25) Zographos F.,
- 26) Kalogeropoulos D., 27) Kardasopoulos B., 28) Kosmidis Γ., 29) Kaskaridis N.,
- 30) Bogdanidis D., 31) Papanikolaou K., 32) Mykonos AI., 33) Mykonos Manolis,
- 34) Zografos Anestis, 35) Papadopoulos A., 36) Papadopoulos H., 37) Spathopoulos G.,
- 38) Tsihlakis K., 39) Chavounitis Th., 40) Elenitsas K., 41) Elenitsas P., 42) Sophoulis Γ.

A solemn moment of History! Patriarch Timotheos, ατή Λέσχη, in the Hellenic club, addresses the newly mobilized and offers to each one of them a cross.

May 1948

Jerusalem was cut in two. When history is cruel, it is also indiscriminate and makes no distinction. The fate of the Palestinian Arabs, was also the fate of the Palestinian

Hellenic Community. The majority of the families took refuge in the Old City. Many names, are immortalized in the last issue of the Magazine Triphylo (1973), as well as in I am Jerusalem. It was the beginning of the bitter dispersal. For a little they continued struggling and coping with the situation and at the same time continuing faithfully their activities. To my profound conviction, this Jerusalem Hellenic Community of the 20th century, wherever in the world they settled, Jerusalem and only Jerusalem, was Jerusalem. And this should be our eternal tribute to them.

The result, two Communities emerged, one in the Jordanian Old City and around, and one in the Israeli side, and around the Hellenic club.

Today, and after the 1948 and 1967 wars, still two Committees exist for the few remaining persons, one in the Old City, East Jerusalem: Dr. Konstantinos Petrakis, Dr. Nikolaos Ninos, Vailios Triantaphyllidis, Ioannis Ardizoglou, Georgios Stavridis, and Georgios Varacilas, and one in the old Greek Colony, West Jerusalem: Vasilios Tzaferis, president, Konstantinos Anastasiou, vice-president, Vasilios Triantaphyllidis, secretary, Konstantinos Moumtzoglou, treasurer, Anastasios Damianos, commissioner, Panayiotis Secherlis,

Alexandras Korfiatis, consultants, and two members from the Old City, Nikolaos Ninos, and Sophia Vottarou.

And, I cannot leave out, the charitable Ladies of the Old City: Sophia Vottarou, Eleni Petraki, El I i Solomonidou, Mariana Banayan, Phano Papanastasiou, Theodora Panayiotopoulou-Vasiliadou and Artemis Anastasiou.

On the 15 of May, 2011, the Committee in the Israeli side of Jerusalem, invited me to attend an Easter Festivity at the famous and historic Greek Club, in the historic Hellenic Colony, known, as the Greek Colony. The Greek Consul General

Mr. Sotirios Athanasiou, his wife, Mrs. Kantiana, a handful of the traditional Greek Jerusalemites, and more non Greeks were present. The nostalgia for the glorious past was deeply felt.

Ending wishfully, and thinking hopefully, I feel confident, that the Hellenic Phoenix of Jerusalem, shall rise again from its ashes, and this time, before being completely burnt!"

Sources:

– Archimandrite Kleopas koikylidis, 1905.

-Konstantinos Mavridis, Bulletin, "Ελληνική Ζωή", (Hellenic Life, 1946)

-Irini Philalithi- Mavromichali, Magazine, "To Triphyllo" (1972-1973 No. 110-113)

-John N. Tleel, "I am Jerusalem" (2007 Second Edition)

OldCity Jerusalem July 6,2011 Bilda

Swedish Christian Study Centre

**Chief Secretary's Office.**

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**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND –**



# LAMBETH PALACE.

**Jerusalem 08<sup>th</sup> of August 2011, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2011.**

The Dean and Chapter of Westminster with the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster extended an invitation to His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to attend the International conference on Christians in the Holy Land. His Beatitude graciously nominated Ramzi Zananiri to attend the conference on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The meetings were held at the **Lambeth Palace** which has been a London residence of Archbishops of Canterbury since the thirteenth century. It acts as home for the Archbishop of Canterbury and his family, as well as central office for the Archbishop's national and international ministry.

The **Guard Room** which has its origins as the Great Chamber in medieval times, this was where the Archbishop would receive honored guests, visiting dignitaries, and receive petitions from people from every walk of life, **hosted the 2 day conference on Christians in the Holy Land.**

## **The conference program covered the following milestones**

- Introductions by the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams and the Archbishop of Westminster Vincent Nichols, followed by His Beatitude Patriarch

Fouad Twal and the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem Suheil Dawani;

- Diverse youth voices were heard from a number of Christians living in the Holy

Land in diverse circumstances;

- Reflections expressed from participants who maintain a

close interest in the situation of Christians in the Holy Land, including Jewish and Muslim friends, living both in the Holy Land and in other parts of the world;

- A full plenary session engaged upon the current situation of the Christian communities in the Holy Land; in particular the most pressing challenges which they face? What are the implications for Christians in the West and for others including policy makers?
- Addresses by Lord Howell Minister of state at the foreign office, Cardinal Tauran, President of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (representing the Holy See), John Dalli EU Commissioner (representing President Barosso) and László Tőkés, Vice-President European Parliament.
- Highlights upon why the situation of Christians in the Holy Land raises issues of concern both in the immediate region, and further afield: issues that are of significance and legitimate concern to people of all faiths and political persuasions.
- What change can be expected in the coming period? What practical steps could be taken, especially by participants themselves and their networks, to help to improve the lives of ordinary Christians in the Holy Land and to counter the trend towards emigration? (Discussion in smaller groups followed by a plenary session in which feedback will be pooled and final conclusions reached).

The conference addressed the issues with their root causes rather than symptoms. It was obvious that the sponsors were very much concerned, committed and determined to making a difference and expressed a high sense of solidarity to Christians in the Holy Land.

Contextual challenges were highly visible throughout deliberations and reflections, with strong emphasis towards what change do we want to realize and HOW?

Although deliberations were cause oriented, with a strong exposure of the human face and sufferings endured throughout this long historic conflict, yet there were a great deal of emphasis towards sustaining Christian presence as a contribution to civil society that is pluralist, democratic and free where ALL can enjoy the fruits of peace for both people sharing the Holy Land for the three monotheistic faiths.

The conference broke out into eight working groups to discuss the WHAT and HOW can we be of help towards specific thematic approaches. Later the committees shared their input with the conference.

The forum natures of representation are very diverse and as individuals are very active and greatly structured, effective and highly influential. The conference has tremendous potentials that can be tapped upon and make a difference in peoples' lives, if properly invested in a strategic approach.

In my opinion there were diverse issues highlighted and some were very practical with concrete approaches that would result into immediate tangible results that can be realized.

The two day conference was excellently organized and program went like "Big Ben" and outcomes are very promising. The outcomes of the conference were entrusted in the hands of Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams and the Archbishop of Westminster Vincent Nichols. Unfortunately, no task force or follow-up committee was entrusted with the responsibility to put wheels on this very important engine.

***Ramzi Zananiri***

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# **HIS BEATITUDE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS III ON A TWO DAY PRIVATE VISIT TO UKRAINE.**

On the Day of Veneration of the Cross, Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> / 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2011, after the Holy Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, accompanied by Archdeacon Fr. Athanasios, departed for a two day private visit to Ukraine. His Beatitude was invited by the Institute of Human Rights and Prevention of Extremism and Xenophobia in order to deliver a lecture as the main speaker at the international conference “World religions and civil societies united against hatred and extremism” convened in Kiev on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2011. The invitation extended to His Beatitude by the founder of the aforementioned Institute, Mr. Oleksandr Feldman MP, is as follows (please access the Universal Remote Locator [URL]: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2011/02/21/1227/> ).

The lecture delivered by His Beatitude is as follows (please access the Universal Remote Locator [URL]: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2011/03/28/1220/> ).

Any interested party may find details regarding this particular Conference in the article by Mr. Jonah Mandel published in the newspaper “The Jerusalem Post” on Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup> 2011 (please access the Universal Remote Locators [URLs]:

<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2011/03/30/1232/>

<http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishNews/Article.aspx?id=214368> ).

**Chief Secretary's Office.**

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# **INVITATION TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RIGHTS & PREVENTION OF EXTREMISM & XENOPHOBIA, UKRAINE.**

Kiev, February 21, 2011

His Most Godly Beatitude, the Patriarch of the Holy City of  
Jerusalem and all Palestine Theophilus III

Your Beatitude,

In a world where hatred and extremism are making gains every day, it is essential for two major forces to join together to explore ways to counter these dangerous trends. In this spirit, we are pleased to invite your participation in Kiev, Ukraine on March 28-29, 2011 to an international conference "World religions and civil societies united against hatred and extremism" convened by the Institute of Human Rights and Prevention of Extremism and Xenophobia.

We expect hundreds representatives of the major faiths and ethnic groups, officials and non-governmental organizations

alike, to join us. We would be honored to count you amongst us at this forum. In fact, we would like to offer you a keynote speaking position at the conference.

The goal of the conference is for major religions and civil societies to explore common cause in the urgent fight against the 21<sup>st</sup> century's most alarming threats: extremism, hatred, intolerance, anti-Semitism, xenophobia. Through robust debate and discussion we will formulate the best practices and recommendations for states and governments to counteract the shameful continued existence and growth of hatred and intolerance.

We respectfully request your confirmation in Kiev

Most sincerely,

**Oleksandr Feldman, MP**

**Founder, Institute of Human Rights, Prevention of Xenophobia and Extremism.**

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**THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCHES  
OF THE HOLY LAND VISIT THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF**

# ISRAEL FOR THE NEW YEAR 2011.

December 29, 2010

On Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> / 29<sup>th</sup> 2010, the Leaders of the Christian Churches of the Holy Land visited the Presidential Mansion of the State of Israel on the occasion of the New Year, as has been custom during the last few decades. This visit initially included a reception and, later, a ceremony that comprised the performance of fine musical compositions by the musician Mr. Yair Dalal from Bagdad. Following that a ceremony was held during which the President of the State of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, greeted and welcomed the Leaders of the Christian Churches and their escorts, Archpriests, Priests and laymen and wished them and their Communities a peaceful and blessed New secular year 2011.

*Specifically he said: «I am happy about your response to the invitation for this event. For us, the state of Israel, each person or religious institution is free to believe in all things of his, her or its own choice. We have a common Father in God and common heavens in the skies, therefore it is the duty of the religions, irrespective of their differences, to bring peace to the world just as it is the duty of the politicians.*

*The peace process is difficult; however, peace is a dire necessity. I think that we have no other choice because we live in an era of high technology particularly regarding weapons. Please allow me to caution that time is running out. Palestinians are preparing to establish their own state. The wiser means towards peace is to desire the progress of your adversary. The better your adversary, the better it is to make peace with him. Additionally, the necessity of peace is more imperative for the reason that we have moved from the war on the battlefields, as was most often the case in the past, and have entered the era of the*

*terrorist phenomenon which, in order to confront it, requires the cooperation of many civil and religious entities.. We, the state of Israel, are preparing ourselves for the 'two states' solution, in which you, the religious leaders, will most likely assume a very important role. Please pray for peace to our one Father and God. I wish for you and your Communities that the new year of 2011 will be a year of peace, prayer, understanding, hope, cooperation, progress and success».*

After that, His Beatitude The Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III was invited to speak on behalf of the leaders of all the Churches of the Holy Land that were present. His speech, in English, is as follows (please access URL <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2010/12/29/1093/> )

Whereupon the event, on the occasion of the new secular year 2011 held at the Presidential Mansion, ended.

Chief Secretary's Office.

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## **THE NEW AMERICAN CONSUL VISITS THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM.**

Upon taking office, the new American Consul, Mr. Daniel Rubstein, visited His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> of September, 2010.

His Beatitude welcomed the new Consul of the U.S.A. and wished



him a successful career in his new office.

Within the framework of this visit, an interesting discussion took place regarding the large number of pilgrims that recently visited the Holy Lands: firstly on the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God and secondly on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Also discussed was the way in which these pilgrims affect peace as well as the economic situation in the Holy Land.

Further discussions included the Patriarchate's history in the Holy Land from the first day it was established, its smooth relations with the Muslims since 638 AC, and its religious, cultural, peacekeeping and social work in the Patriarchate's ecclesiastic domain that is in the following four areas of political jurisdiction: Israel, Jordan, Palestinian Authority and Qatar, which the Patriarchate recently took the initiative to erect a church, thus opening the way for further Christian Churches.

Another topic of discussion was the Patriarchate's educational work which has been supported primarily by the U.S.A. i.e. it was financed by the U.S. Aid grant.

Finally, in view of the Patriarchate's participation in the Council of the Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, the discussion moved around the Patriarchate's contribution to the peacekeeping process in the Middle East.

His Beatitude offered the Consul the publication by Professor Dr. Demitrakopoulos entitled 'The Site of The Baptism of Our Lord on the River Jordan', Professor. Votokopoulos' book on the Byzantine manuscripts of the Patriarchate and the Medal commemorating 2000 years of Christianity.

**Chief-Secretary's Office.**