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ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE

Message from
the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem

We greet you with Christian love to emphasize the fact that the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, being one of the longest-functioning ancient Constantinian Christian Holy Places in the world, was generously cared for by the authorities of the State of Palestine, promoted by His Excellency President Abbas, under the guidance of his special committee.

Indeed, long-awaited and extensive renovations of the exterior walls and interior areas have given a fresh look to the basilica. Any and all visitors will experience pride and be grateful for the Palestinian Authority's assistance, with the mutual agreement of the three main Christian communities, namely, the Armenian and Greek patriarchates and the Latin Custody of the Holy Land, the Franciscan Fraternity.

We acknowledge the fact that such a project was accomplished through a combination of helping hands of governmental agencies, institutions, benevolent unions, and other parties, regardless of their faith affiliation. It has shown that the entire world desires that the basilica remain respectable and resilient for years to come, and it honors the fact that the fourth-century Christian complex was able to withstand a history of tribulations and political upheavals.

It is believed that the basilica is the birthplace of the long-awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ, who was born for the salvation of humanity. The existence of the basilica today is mainly due to the presence of Christians in the Holy Land, particularly in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. We hope and expect that governments worldwide would support Christians to remain in the Holy Land. We believe that this initiative on the part of the Palestinian Authority is also a sincere sign to strengthen and encourage Christians to live peacefully and to coexist with other faiths.

We are genuinely appreciative and grateful to the Palestinian Authority for its great efforts and involvement in the renovation works of the Christian basilica of Bethlehem. We are also grateful to all other agencies, groups, and individuals who participated in many ways in the successful restoration of the basilica.

We pray for peace in the Holy Land and for the spread of a cooperative spirit among all peoples in this region. May God bless all who work together towards a brighter future for this land.

Sincerely,

