



# Addresses of Presidents Peres and Abbas at Invocation for Peace

## Leaders Express Deep Longing for Peace in the Holy Land

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Here below are the addresses given by Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at the end of the Invocation for Peace at the Vatican, June 8.

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### ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT SHIMON PERES

Your Holiness Pope Francis, Your Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas,

[ACKNOWLEDGMENTS]

I have come from the Holy City of Jerusalem to thank you for your exceptional invitation. The Holy City of Jerusalem is the beating heart of the Jewish People. In Hebrew, our ancient language, the word Jerusalem and the word for peace share the same root. And indeed peace is the vision of Jerusalem.

As it is said in the Book of Psalms: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

“May those who love you be secure.

7 May there be peace within your walls

and security within your citadels.”

**8** For the sake of my family and friends,

I will say, “Peace be within you.”

**9** For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,

I will seek your prosperity.

During your historic visit to the Holy Land, you moved us with the warmth of your heart, the sincerity of your intentions, your modesty, and your kind ways. You touched the people’s hearts – regardless of their faith or nation.

You emerged as a bridge-builder of brotherhood and peace. We are all in need of the inspiration which accompanies your character and your way.

Thank you.

Two peoples – Israelis and Palestinians – still are aching for peace. The tears of mothers over their children are still etched in our hearts. We must put an end to the cries, to the violence, to the conflict. We all need peace. Peace between equals. Your invitation to us to join you in this momentous ceremony to call for peace, here in the Vatican garden, in the presence of Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Druze leaders, graciously reflects your vision of the aspiration we all share: Peace.

On this moving occasion, brimming with hope and full of faith, let us all raise with you, Your Holiness, a call for peace between religions, between nations, between communities, and between fellow men and women. Let true peace become our legacy soon and swiftly. Our Book of Books commands upon us the way of peace, demands of us to toil for its realization. It is said in the book of Proverbs: “Her ways are ways of grace, and all her paths are peace.

”So too must our ways be. Ways of grace and peace. It is not by chance that Rabbi Akiva captured the essence of our Torah in one sentence: “Love your neighbor like thyself.” We are all equal before the Lord. We are all part of the human family. For without peace, we are not complete, and we have yet to achieve the mission of humanity. Peace does not come easy. We must toil with all our strengths to reach it. To reach it soon. Even if it requires sacrifice or compromise.

The Book of Psalms tells us: “Whoever loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it.

”This is to say, we are commanded to pursue after peace. All year. Every day. We greet each other with this blessing. Shalom. Salam. We must be worthy of the deep and demanding meaning of this blessing. Even when peace seems distant, we must pursue it to bring it closer.

And if we pursue peace with perseverance, with faith, we will reach it. And it will endure through us, through all of us, of all faiths, of all nations, as it is written: "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

"The soul is elated upon the reading of these verses of eternal vision. And we can – together and now, Israelis and Palestinians – convert our noble vision to a reality of welfare and prosperity. It is within our power to bring peace to our children. This is our duty, the holy mission of parents.

Let me end with a prayer:

He who makes peace in the heavens shall make peace upon us and upon all of Israel, and upon the entire world, and let us say Amen.

The President of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, delivered remarks to the participants in the Invocation for Peace here at the Vatican on Sunday evening. Below, please find the full text, in English, of President Abbas' prepared remarks.

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## **ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT MAHMOUD ABBAS**

In the Name of God, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful,

Your Holiness Pope Francis

Your Excellency President Shimon Peres,

Your Beatitudes, Honorable Sheiks and Rabbis

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great honor for us to meet again with His Holiness Pope Francis in fulfillment of his kind invitation to relish his spiritual and noble presence, and listen to his opinion and crystal wisdom, which emanate from a sound heart, vibrant conscience, as well as an elevated ethical and religious sense. I thank your Holiness from the bottom of my heart for initiating this important gathering here in the Vatican. Simultaneously, we highly appreciate your visit to the Holy Land Palestine, and in specific to our Holy city Jerusalem and to Bethlehem; the city of love and peace, and the cradle of Jesus Christ. The visit is a sincere expression of your belief in peace and a truthful attempt to achieve peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

Oh God, we ever praise you for making Jerusalem our gate to heaven. As said in the Holy Quran,

"Glory to Him who made His servant travel by night from the sacred place of worship to the  
" You made pilgrimage and furthest place of worship, whose surroundings We have blessed.  
prayer in it as the best acts the faithful can make in your praise, and made your truthful promise

" God Almighty has spoken "Let them enter the Masjid as they did for the first time.in your say: the truth.

O, Lord of Heaven and Earth, accept my prayer for the realization of truth, peace and justice in my country Palestine, the region, and the globe as a whole.

I beseech You, O Lord, on behalf of my people, the people of Palestine - Moslems, Christians - who are craving for a just peace, dignified living, and liberty, I beseech you, Oh and Samaritans Lord, to make prosperous and promising the future of our people, and freedom in our sovereign and independent state; Grant, O Lord, our region and its people security, safety and stability. Save our blessed city Jerusalem; the first Kiblah, the second Holy Mosque, the third of the two Holy Mosques, and the city of blessings and peace with all that surround it.

Reconciliation and peace, O Lord, are our goal. God in His Holy Book has addressed the faithful: "Make peace among you," Here we are, O God, inclined to peace. Make firm our steps and crown our efforts and endeavors with success. You are the promoter of virtue and preventer of vice, evil and aggression. You say and you are the most truthful, "And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it, and trust in Allah. Lo! He is the Hearer, the Knower." In the saying of ""Spread the peace among you.Prophet Muhammad,

Today, we reiterate after Jesus Christ addressing Jerusalem: "If only you had known the path of " (Luke 19:42). As well let us remember the words of Saint John Paul II when he peace this day "If peace is realized in Jerusalem, peace will be witnessed in the whole : said " Simultaneously, in our prayer today, we repeatedly call after those who advocate world " as came in the "Call for the peace of Jerusalem" and makers,"Blessed are the peace peace: Holy Scriptures.

Accordingly, we ask You, O Lord, for peace in the Holy Land, Palestine, and Jerusalem together with its people. We call on you to make Palestine and Jerusalem in particular a secure land for all the believers, and a place for prayer and worship for the followers of the three monotheistic religions Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and for all those wishing to visit it as it is stated in the Holy Quran.

O Lord, You are the peace and peace emanates from You. O God of Glory and Majesty grant us security and safety, and alleviate the suffering of my people in hometown and Diaspora.

O Lord, bring comprehensive and just peace to our country and region so that our people and the peoples of the Middle East and the whole world would enjoy the fruit of peace, stability and coexistence.

We want peace for us and for our neighbors. We seek prosperity and peace of mind for ourselves and for others alike. O Lord, answer our prayers and make successful our endeavors for you are most just, most merciful, Lord of the Worlds.

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