



## **THE PRESIDENT**

Jerusalem, January 18, 2017

Dear friends,

Each and every time I walk in the streets of Jerusalem, I feel as though I am retracing my family roots. Some fly to Krakow or to Casablanca, but I have no need for an airplane or a passport in order to discover my origins. My antecedents, the Rivlin family, lived and worked in Jerusalem. Here they taught and were taught. Here they opened businesses and founded neighborhoods. Though ancient Jerusalem is not just the destination for the trail of my personal family history. In this place occurred the Binding of Isaac, and stood King David's capital. It is here the paratroopers stood and wept alongside the stones of the Western Wall. When the people of Israel go in search of their shared history and roots, they find themselves time and again in the same place.

But not just the Jewish people share this sensation – Jerusalem is mine and yours, it belongs to all of us; it is a city which tells a universal story. The long history of this wonderful city is replete with incident, legends, identities, and cultures of the world's greatest and most influential empires of the ancient and modern worlds.

Many songs have been written of Jerusalem; songs of yearning and learning, of love and prayer. Paintings and mosaics describe the city, its history and its rich, diverse story. Today, the development of technology affords us the ability to see images which shed new light, and provide up-close and realistic insights on life in the city throughout the ages. Since time immemorial, and this very day, many have come through its gates from around the world, eternalizing Jerusalem, before returning home with the memory of Jerusalem packed with their possessions and etched upon their hearts.

In Jerusalem I find the 'Heavenly Jerusalem' – full of the holy sites of the three Abrahamic faiths – alongside the 'Earthly Jerusalem' of the markets, and daily trade.

And even – in the words of my beloved teacher, the poet and Jerusalemite, Yehuda Amichai – I find the Jerusalem ‘in between’; where both the spiritual and physical worlds meet time after time, creating a true foundation for religious, social, and national coexistence. It seems to me that specifically it is the rich diversity of the Jerusalem ‘in between’, which represents a fascinating challenge, and an inspiration to photographers everywhere.

Therefore, in the spirit of longing and prayer for the peace of Jerusalem, I am pleased to join the important and welcome work of creating an impressive collection of the very best photographs of Jerusalem. So that we can all see the strength of Jerusalem, the strength of unity which we see through our eyes and with our hearts.

I urge you all to join the challenge, and send us unique photographs of our beloved Jerusalem. Artistic and aesthetic photographs – especially photographs with a message of unity, which give personal and emotional expression to our common denominator called Jerusalem.

Share with us photographs of the Jerusalem in our hearts, of the cosmopolitan Jerusalem, the Jerusalem of its views, the Jerusalem of its residents, visitors and guests, the Jerusalem of its faithful, of its religions and ceremonies. Jerusalem of those who love the city, of its children, secrets, stones, sites, alleyways, Jerusalem the old and the new, the ‘Heavenly and the Earthly Jerusalem’, the personal, the shared, the multinational and international.

Jerusalem of unity, of hope, and beauty.

The Jerusalem of me, you, and all of us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Rivlin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Reuven (Ruv) Rivlin