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Attention turns to developments in Holy Land



UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, condemned the latest terrorist attacks in Israel, which claimed the lives of at least 11 Israeli citizens.

A spokesman for Guterres underlined that the Secretary-General called for an immediate end to violence, which he said only serves to undermine the prospects for peace.

Still in the same region, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Theophilos III, on Wednesday received a group of top US office-holders, led by US Congressmen Andy Harris and Jose Luis Correa, at the Patriarchate.

In receiving the American delegation, His Beatitude underlined what he called "…Our joy to welcome you at this occasion of our Feast of Easter, along with the Jewish Passover and the feast of Ramadan in Jerusalem, the spiritual capital of the three monotheistic religions, a point of blessing but also a point of political controversy."

His Beatitude added: "…Throughout the centuries the Patriarchate has preserved not only the Christian but also the Jewish holy places and keeps their functional role despite the war it faces from extremists. For this reason, despite being attacked by the extremists, the Patriarchate receives the respect and honor by many".

In response, the visiting lawmakers expressed their heartfelt interest to help the Patriarchate and the Christians of the Holy Land through their efficient actions toward the Israeli government.

In a related development, a bipartisan group of US congresspeople this week conveyed a letter to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressing "deep concern" about what they called a rise in extremist attacks against Jerusalem's Christian community.

The letter called on Blinken to work with his Israeli counterparts to ensure that Jerusalem continues to be a safe place for Christians, Jews and Muslims to live and worship freely.

Among others, the letter noted that “…In recent months, the leaders of Christian churches in Jerusalem, including the Greek Orthodox Church, Catholic Church and others have spoken publicly about the mounting challenges faced by Christian communities in Jerusalem…While the Israeli government has committed to protecting the rights of all religious minorities in Jerusalem, the actions of radical groups are threatening the safety and long-term viability of Christian worship and presence in the city.”

Source: orthodoxianewsagency.gr

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