

Press release regarding the situation of Romanian pilgrims in Israel after outbreak of war

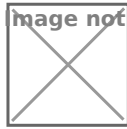


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In the dramatic context generated by the beginning of the war in Israel a few days ago, in which nearly 800 Romanian citizens were on pilgrimage to the Holy Places, the Romanian Patriarchate provides the following clarifications regarding the evolution of their situation:

Since the outbreak of the conflict through the terrorist attacks on Israel, the Romanian Patriarchate has been in constant communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Romanian Embassy in Tel Aviv, which contributed significantly to the coordination of the special repatriation activities of Romanian pilgrims from various cities in Israel.

The Headquarters of the Representation of the Romanian Patriarchate at the Holy Places in Jerusalem and the Romanian Settlement in Jericho, which were in constant contact with the Romanian Embassy in Tel Aviv, were places of refuge and support for the groups of pilgrims who took shelter including in the churches of the two settlements.

In recent days, a significant number of Romanian pilgrims in Israel have returned home safely. They were part of groups that travelled through pilgrimage agencies from several dioceses, including Bucharest, Cluj, Maramureş, Deva, Oltenia, Vâlcea, etc.

The 250 people who travelled with the Basilica Travel Agency of the Romanian Patriarchate returned home in two distinct groups: 200 people on Sunday morning and 50 on Sunday evening.

Those who will return very soon are being accommodated in the safest locations possible (one group is in Jordan) and will return on flights that take off according to the approvals of the Israeli military authorities.

We note that all pilgrimages to the Holy Land scheduled for the upcoming period will be suspended and postponed until full safety conditions are restored on the territory of the State of Israel.

The Romanian Patriarchate hereby thanks the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Romanian Embassy in Israel, in particular Mr Ambassador Radu Ioanid, as well as the V. Rev. Archimandrite Teofil Anăstăsoaie, the Superior of the Settlements of the Romanian Patriarchate at the Holy Places, for the exemplary cooperation with the local authorities in carrying out the repatriation operations of Romanian pilgrims.

Press Office of the Romanian Patriarchate

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