



MACCABI WORLD UNION

Department of Education

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ב"ו אייר תשע"ז

Yom Yerushalaim Message

50th Jerusalem Day

Dear Friends,

For those who live our daily lives in the great city restored to our People, the significance of this 50th Jerusalem Day since liberation and reunification is immense. Between 1948 and 1967, places holy to our faith were destroyed and desecrated, and no Jews were allowed to set foot in the City of Light founded by our own King David over 3000 years ago. Since the 6-Day War of June 1967, Jews and Israelis pray freely at the Kotel, lavish love upon her ancient and modern precincts, reconstruct and embellish her beauty and build new public spaces, reinvigorate and integrate her Biblical and medieval past with the vitality of our modern national life.

Far above any other place in the world, indeed more than anywhere else in the Land of Israel, Jerusalem is the rock and light of our People, the living testament of our achievements, joys and satisfactions, and our failures and sorrows. From Psalm 137¹ to Hatikvah² she is the very symbol of Jewish national life.

We – half a million Maccabim in over 70 countries – chose Tzion, Yerushalaim, to celebrate the Jewish People's largest global event, Maccabiah 2017. She will host 30,000 spectators from 90 countries in the Opening Ceremony televised all over our planet, and she will host most of our Athletes. So while it is technically true that we choose to place our grand Games in Jerusalem, in another sense, the eternal Capital of Jewish Civilization chose us, because Jerusalem is assuming her role as the multidimensional capital of contemporary Jewish Life.

Only 40 days from now, the Maccabiah Flame will shine out amidst the bright glow of the City of Light – *May we all be worthy of this immense gift! Let's all celebrate Jerusalem of today! May we all celebrate our freedom to walk her streets, enjoy her sights, sounds and aromas, bask in the extraordinary colors as the changing light of the day plays upon her stones, and may we all return to add more to her joy. In this festival of her liberation, may we feel and carry with us the yearning emotion of hundreds of our generations who longed and prayed for her, but could only imagine her and praise her in poems and songs. Today, as it were, let us carry their memory with us as we enter her gates and ascend to her glories!*

With a warm 50th Yom Yerushalaim hug to all of you!

Yom Yerushalayim Sameach!
Chazak ve'ematz!

RABBI CARLOS A. TAPIERO
Deputy Director-General & Director of Education
Maccabi World Union

¹ Psalm 137 mourns the loss of Jerusalem and laments our Exile as a Nation.

² Our national anthem which speaks of recovering our lost homeland "Eretz Tzion, Yerushalaim"; both of these names are synonyms for the City of Peace.