



## Joint Declaration of Archbishop Chrysostomos and Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger

The thousands of years of historical connections between the People of Cyprus and the Jewish People have assumed a new modern fraternity since the establishment of the State of Israel. At the Same time, new relationships of mutual respect have developed between Christian and Jewish communities.

We, the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Yona Metzger and the Archbishop of Cyprus Chrysostomos, give thanks to God for the blessed increase of this mutual respect and affirm our commitment to advancing these excellent relations between Cyprus and Israel.

We acknowledge with great that such relations were not always the case everywhere in the past, and we thus condemn all acts of disrespect towards any other religious community, its integrity and its Holy sites.

We should note, however, that the Church and People of Cyprus were not party to the systematic negation of Jewry nor of accusations of collective guilt of deicide and we accordingly affirm the repudiation of such prejudice as incompatible with the teaching the Holy Scriptures. We should further note that the People of Israel have never committed acts of aggression against the People of Cyprus and have demonstrated their continued support for the later.

Furthermore, we judge that any attempts to undermine the religious identity and attachments of the other, are incompatible with the spirit of mutual respect and thus we deplore all proselytizing activity irrespectively from where and by whom it is exercised.

Above all, we affirm our respective religious teachings regarding the sanctity of life and dignity of the human person—each one created in the Divine Image; and accordingly, we condemn all acts that desecrate this sanctity, in particular violence and terror against innocents and especially when this involves the abuse of the name of God and religion.

We pledge to work together for promoting peace and reconciliation between all peoples and call on all religious leaders as well as all men and women of goodwill to join us in this pledge.

We affirm that we continue the bilateral contact for furthering and deepening our good relations for the profit of our respective peoples.

Archbishop Chrysostomos  
Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger  
(Signed in Nicosia, Cyprus, on December 6, 2011.)

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*Archbishop Chrysostomos II is head the Greek Cypriot Orthodox Church and Yona Metzger is the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel.*