



THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the President of the State of Israel to the Jewish Communities in the Diaspora on the occasion of Israel's 64th Independence Day

Dear Friends,

I am proud to celebrate Israel's 64th Independence Day with you all. It is not only a day of celebration, but also one to reflect upon and realize that the reality we have built is much more than the vision we once dreamed.

The remarkable achievements we have made in six decades are evidence of an unyielding spirit which defines the Jewish people. We returned to our homeland, rich in history, yet scarce in land, meager in natural resources. We had no choice but to invest in our greatest asset - our people. And we did, together with you. Israel grew tenfold in population, fifty-fold in gross domestic product. We absorbed millions of Jews from around the world. We built beautiful towns and prosperous cities, the new alongside the old, the past next to the future. We have built an extraordinary country, due to our extraordinary people. Today, we can proudly look upon our thriving economy, innovation serves as Israel's heartbeat, and creativity runs through our veins.

Yom Haatzmaut, Independence Day, is also a time to remember those who defended and served our country, many of whom sacrificed their lives for our young state. Today, Israel is still on the unwavering quest for peace and we will never abandon our thirst to live in harmony with our neighbors. The ideals on which Israel's father David Ben Gurion founded our nation are the very same ideals we live by today, and reflect the principles of justice and freedom instilled by our prophets.

It is with great joy that I celebrate with you our modern day miracle, the State of Israel. Our mutual unwavering commitment to each other is crucial. The young generation's commitment to our state is essential as our shared tomorrow will be defined by innovation. As partners of our nation, your ability to secure a future defined by scientific development and discoveries is vital to our shared mission.

My friends, the challenges of our time are demanding. Today, together, let us wave the flags for the future of Israel, as an independent and democratic state. Let us wave the flags of peace, security and brotherhood.

קג עצמאות שמח!

Shimon Peres