Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Greeting for the New Year

To all of our Christian friends around the world, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I send you these greetings from Jerusalem. I'm standing in the courtyard of this magnificent International Christian Embassy. I'm so proud of our relations with our Christian brothers and sisters. I wonder for many of you if you remember the experience you had when you first visited Israel, when you saw the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or the Via Dolorosa or the Sea of Galilee or Nazareth. I'm sure it moved you deeply.

And it moves us deeply to have this bond with you because we all know that this land of Israel is the land of our common heritage. It changed the story of humanity, it changed civilization. What a magnificent heritage it is. Yet, we also know that it is under attack these days, that the forces of intolerance, of barbarism that attack all religions attack Christians with particular vehemence. We stand with you and I'm proud of the fact that in Israel, this is the one place in the Middle East that the Christian community not only survives but thrives and it's no accident. It's because of our commitment to religious freedom; it's because of our embrace of our heritage; it's because of our embrace of our common future.

So please come to Israel. Come and visit me, I'm waiting for you. It will be a great experience for you. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year.