



Premier of Ontario - Première ministre de l'Ontario

April 18, 2018

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am honoured to extend warm greetings to members of the Jewish community as they mark Yom Ha'atzmaut and commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel.

On this special occasion, people in Israel and around the world come together to celebrate the day when the dream of countless generations was finally realized — a day when the faith, perseverance and courage of the Jewish people culminated in the founding of the modern Jewish state, proclaimed by David Ben-Gurion on May 14, 1948 — the 5th of Iyar at the Tel Aviv Museum, now Independence Hall.

On that remarkable day 70 years ago, Jews from across Toronto and from all parts of Ontario descended on Maple Leaf Gardens doing the Hora and singing Israeli folk songs along Brunswick and College streets — the atmosphere was electric with celebration.

My trip to Israel in 2016 was my first one — and the experience stays with me every day. I visited the Kotel in Jerusalem and placed a note in the holy bricks from Solomon's time. I walked back from the Western Wall, up through the Jewish Quarter, passing through the Zion Gate. I visited Haifa and Tel Aviv, which included perhaps the most inspiring moment of the trip — my meeting with a member of the Haganah and one of Israel's founding fathers, President Shimon Peres Z"L.

And so I am pleased to report that the Israel-Ontario relationship has never been stronger. It is a relationship defined by a critical link between institutions and people in a broad range of sectors. Our government intends to keep enhancing these links between us and Israel so we may go from strength to strength.

I offer my sincere best wishes for a memorable and inspiring celebration. Am Israel Chai!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne".

Kathleen Wynne
Premier