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Title: In pictures... The Opening Ceremony of the Holy Sepulcher in the Presence of a Representative from the Coptic Orthodox Church

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Pope Tawāḍrūs II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of St. Mark's Church, has delegated Bishop Antony, Bishop of Jerusalem for Orthodox Copts, to attend a ceremony organized by the Orthodox, Catholic and Armenian Churches on Wednesday, marking the end of the 10-month restoration process of the Holy Sepulcher at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in occupied Jerusalem.

The ceremony was attended by: Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras; Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I; Jordanian Interior Minister Ghālib al-Zaʿbī, on behalf of King ʿAbdullā II; PLO Executive Committee member Ḥanā ʿAmīra, on behalf of Palestinian President Maḥmūd ʿAbās; the Apostolic delegate of the Latin Patriarchate; priests, monks and nuns; as well as many official and religious delegations from around the world.

At the beginning of the celebration, the ceremonial procession of church leaders entered the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Subsequently, the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilius III delivered an address, as did Pope Francesco Baton (Guardian of the Holy Land) and Armenian Orthodox Patriarch Nourhan Manougian - these being the three churches that signed the Restoration Agreement.

The ceremony included speeches by the Apostolic delegate of the Latin Patriarchate, Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, who signed the agreement when he was still a guardian of the Franciscan Holy Land, and the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I. [The ceremony also included a reading of] a letter by the Archbishop of Eastern Churches of the Vatican Cardinal Leonardo Sandri.

After the end of the celebration, the church leaders, their representatives and all those invited went to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, where the final outcome of ten months of intensive work were presented. The Protectorate of the Holy Land revealed that a second phase of restoration work, which includes the areas adjacent to the Holy Sepulcher (the tomb building without its iron foundations), will be launched according to a new agreement [so as to] sustain the results attained in the first phase under the supervision of experts and engineers from Greece.