

Dear Minister of Tourism, Mr. Uzi Laudau,

The Israeli press as well as Christian news sources have recently reported about plans to erect a giant statue of Jesus on Har Kedumim (Mt. Precipice) near Nazareth. The proposed project is said to be akin in scale to the iconic statue of "Christ the Redeemer" which towers over the city of Rio de Janeiro. The land for the proposed statue is owned by the Jewish National Fund, and fundraising has reportedly already begun for the project.

The news reports quote you, as Minister of Tourism, as having endorsed the endeavor with the declaration, "*Start it, and we will bless it.*"

Such a demonstrative and visible statue of a Christian deity in *Eretz Yisrael* will be an eyesore and heartache to those who cherish their Jewish faith and heritage, and to those who uphold the integrity of the land of Israel. Such an endeavor is nothing less than an affront to the Jewish soul, and it is a shame that the foundations of Judaism and that the nature of the Jewish state will be sacrificed under the banner of what some interpret to be religious freedom and democracy. Indeed it could be said that, for the Jewish people, this undertaking constitutes religious oppression.

Before this project proceeds any further, we implore you to withdraw your "blessing" of such an endeavor and to put a stop to it. We trust that true gentile friends of Israel will do their best to understand Jewish sensitivities on this matter.

Rabbi Sholom Gold
Rabbinic Director

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