

WATCH historic opening of US embassy in Jerusalem live this afternoon



Today – May 14 2018 – Israel celebrates the 70th year of its miraculous rebirth as a nation after its people were scattered around the earth for 2 000 years and persecuted repeatedly.

On this special day America is making history as the first world power to move its embassy to Jerusalem, thus declaring publicly that this city is the capital of Israel.

The grand opening of the US embassy is taking place at 4pm Israeli time (GMT +3), which makes it at 3pm South African time – and a link to a live-streamed video of the opening can be found on [this page](#).

The event is happening 70 years to the day after President Harry Truman, in 1948, made the US the first nation to recognise the sovereignty of modern Israel.

But despite Jerusalem's history as the heart of Israel – King David established it as the nation's capital nearly 3 000 years ago, Israel's two ancient temples were there and through the centuries of exile Jewish people prayed for Jerusalem to become the capital of an independent Jewish state – there has

never been a US embassy in the city until today.

Israel declared Jerusalem to be its capital in 1949 and established its Knesset (parliament), the presidency, the courts, ministries and governmental agencies there. But due to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, only a handful of states, mostly from South America, have ever had embassies in Jerusalem and since 1980 there have been no embassies in the city.

In 1995 the US Congress passed a law stating that the embassy be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem but Bill Clinton, George W Bush, and Barack Obama all used their executive powers to block the move, arguing it would damage the prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

In December 2017, when President Donald Trump controversially announced that the US would formally recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, he said: "Israel is a sovereign nation with the right like every other sovereign nation to determine its own capital."

In February Trump announced that the US embassy would move to Jerusalem on the 70th anniversary of the state of Israel on May 14. Inspired by the US, Guatemala will be officially opening its embassy in Jerusalem on Wednesday and political sources in Romania, the Czech Republic, Paraguay and Honduras have been quoted in recent months as saying that their countries are also considering moving their embassies to Jerusalem.

Trump plans to address today's embassy ceremony in Jerusalem by video from the White House. US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US Deputy Secretary of State John J Sullivan will speak at the event. Trump's daughter Ivanka and husband Jared Kushner will also be there.

Countries that will be officially represented at the event

are: Albania, Angola, Austria, Cameroon, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ivory Coast, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Kenya, Macedonia, Burma, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Serbia, South Sudan, Thailand, Ukraine, Vietnam, Paraguay, Tanzania and Zambia.

When the state of Israel was established 70 years ago, the Jewish people were emerging from the ashes of the Holocaust in which six million people – about a third of the total number of Jewish people scattered around the world at that time – were murdered in an attempt to wipe out the Jewish race.

The Jewish people's return to their ancient historic homeland in 1948 – their second return from exile – was a feat that no other nation has achieved and was a miracle in itself.

Twelve hours after the state of Israel was reborn the entire Arab world declared war on the nation. Against overwhelming odds the new nation miraculously defeated its enemies – a pattern that was repeated in the wars of 1956, 1967 and 1973. Even today's celebrations are being held amidst security threats on many fronts and were preceded by a military operation last week in which Israel remarkably destroyed extensive Iranian military positions in Syria overnight after Iran's Quds Force fired 20 rockets into Israel.

The Hebrew language which had not been spoken for 2 000 years is now the first language of millions of people in Israel. Surrounded by hostile Islamic dictatorships, subjected to unprecedented global media hostility, and condemned by many nations and organisations who apply double standards to Israel, this tiny nation is a thriving democracy and a world leader in medicine, technology and agriculture, with a military that ranks among the finest in the world.

Modern Israel quite simply continues to fulfill biblical prophecies about the scattering and restoration of God's

people and the outworking of God's plans and purposes. The dry bones of Ezekiel 37 have stood up, got breath, tendons, flesh and skin (Ezekiel 37: 1 – 14).

"I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it," declares the Lord. – Ezekiel 37:14