

האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים  
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM



INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

המכון לארכיאולוגיה

August 3, 2001

Prof. F. Pergola  
PIAC  
Via Napoleone III, 1  
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Dear Prof. Pergola,

A few days ago I met Father Michele Piccirillo and (separately) Dr. U. Dahari (secretary of the Congress) to discuss the future of the International Congress of Christian Archaeology, scheduled for 2004 in Jerusalem. We all reluctantly agreed that, although there are still hopes that the situation in Jerusalem will improve in the not too distant future and that some agreement will be signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, we cannot take the risk and must give up our plans to hold the Congress in Jerusalem as programmed.

The atmosphere of peace and cooperation which encouraged us to organize the CIAC in Israel, in collaboration with our Palestinian colleagues, the foreign schools of archaeology and the Christian Patriarchates in Jerusalem, has completely changed. Terror and violence have taken place and we cannot predict when the desired improvement will happen.

As we had all agreed that the coming September should be the time to send out the official announcement and Call for Papers, we have to admit that at that at present we cannot take responsibility for accomplishing our plans for 2004. We find it appropriate to leave the decision about the location of the XV Congress in the hands of the Comitato Promotore.

Though we have started our preparatory work and done our best to solve the problems on the practical level, at present we cannot ensure that we will be able to travel safely and hold sessions in all parts of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and other important sites.

Needless to say, if a radical change takes place within a short period we will be happy to continue according to the program. If you find it impractical to transfer the Congress to another location and consider postponing it to 2005, we will be happy to continue our work, assuming that the passing of time will bring the region to peace or, at least, to productive negotiations between the sides. However, the decision must be taken by the Comitato Promotore.

I send this letter with deep feelings of disappointment and frustration. On behalf of the local Organizing Committee I thank you for your cooperation and sympathy. If necessary, I will be happy to explain our decision in more detail, either orally or in writing.

With best wishes,

*Yoram Tsafir*

Prof. Yoram Tsafir  
President of the Jerusalem Committee of CIAC