Honored guests, ladies and gentlemen, Mayor **Tarlós** , אישטבן טארלוש) ) I am honored to be here today taking part in this special ceremony.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to you Mr. Mayor, to **Ambassador Amrani** and to the President of the Jewish community **András Heisler** for this important initiative.

Today marks another important milestone in the historic process that was begun by the Hungarian Government. On the 19th of March this year, the Hungarian diplomatic trade mission was opened in Israel’s capital, Jerusalem, as a branch of the Hungarian Embassy in Israel.

Today, with the naming of this beautiful park after Israel’s capital, we celebrate a further strengthening of the ties and excellent relations between our two countries, in addition to the strong personal friendship between Prime Minister Orban and Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Today we take yet another important step toward eventually moving your embassy to Jerusalem.

On a personal and historic level it is very moving for me to be standing here just a few blocks away from the childhood home of the visionary of the modern State of Israel, Theodor Herzl.

Herzl’s book, *Altneuland* - or “Old New Land” speaks of an ancient culture reborn in a modern and vibrant state. And I am proud to stand here as a representative of a strong and independent Israel that existed only in Herzl’s mind and heart.

This year we celebrate 30 years of renewed relations between Israel and Hungary. We have seen significant positive developments in Hungarian-Israeli relations since Prime Minister Netanyahu’s visit to Budapest, for the V4 summit, back in July 2017.

Today Hungary and Israel enjoy strong and productive bilateral relations with flourishing economic and strategic cooperation.

These strong ties are based on the deep cultural and historic connection between our countries.

We cannot ignore the fact that part of that history is painful. a vibrant Jewish Hungarian community was wiped out and half a million Jews were murdered here by the Nazi regime.

Today, though, our countries are working together and building bridges between our people. Israeli and Jewish culture are flourishing in Hungary through the Jewish community.

The rich array of cultural expression can be seen in Budapest’s many festivals and cultural events, as well as by the many Israeli artists visiting your beautiful city.

Budapest is a beloved destination for the many Israeli tourists who visit each year and for the hundreds of Israeli student who study in Hungary.

We hope the “Hungarian Culture Year” will expose more Israelis to Hungary and its rich culture, as we hope to see more Hungarian tourists in the streets of Jerusalem and around Israel.

Israelis of Hungarian origin have left a mark on Israeli Culture in many disciplines. The poet, Hanna Szenes and the author satirist and recipient of the prestigious national Israel Prize Ephraim Kishon, just to name a few, have greatly contributed to Israeli literature.

By contributing to the fields of music and arts, literature, sports and culinary, so many bridges between our nations and cultures have been built.

Today, naming this park after Jerusalem in the heart of this beautiful city, we add yet another important link to strengthening our friendship.