



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO H. E. MR AHMAD IBRAHIM ADEL
NEW AMBASSADOR OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC
OF EGYPT TO THE HOLY SEE***

Friday, 10 October 1984

Mr Ambassador,

it is a pleasure for me to accept the Letters of Credence accrediting Your Excellency as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Arab Republic of Egypt. I welcome you and thank you for the greetings that you have conveyed from your President, His Excellency Mohamed Hosni Mubarak. In turn I would ask you to reciprocate with the assurance of my own cordial good wishes.

I am grateful to Your Excellency for your reference to the Holy See's readiness to promote the cause of peace in the world whenever and wherever it is able. Your country's desire to find a just and lasting peace in the Middle East is one that I share with all my heart. I too am hopeful that a true and comprehensive peace can be achieved for that region through the cooperation of all those who live there. But, as you have rightly pointed out, such a peace must be rooted in a spirit of justice that recognizes the rights of all peoples in the area.

As you mentioned, I addressed an Apostolic Letter earlier this year to the Bishops, clergy, religious and faithful of the whole Church on the City of Jerusalem. In that message, I recalled that the destiny of the Holy City, homeland of the hearts of all believers in the One God and a symbol of coming together, union and peace for the whole human family, remains a cause of continuing tension. I am convinced that the religious identity of Jerusalem, and in particular the common monotheistic tradition, can provide a way to promoting a coming together among all those who feel the Holy City to be their own.

This is fundamental for a just peace in the region of the Middle East, as are the safeguarding of Lebanon and a just solution for the Palestinian people. The wounds of division and the feelings of animosity can indeed be overcome if all those who believe in the One God and who are committed to the defence of fundamental human values recognize what they hold in common and admit that peaceful coexistence is the most promising prospect for the future of everyone concerned.

I am also happy to hear Your Excellency confirm the fact that your country is continuing the efforts of its five-year plan by which special attention is being given to the spiritual as well as the material well-being of its citizens. I am certain that these efforts enjoy the cooperation of all the communities that make up the Egyptian people. The history of Egypt, in fact, is characterized by the presence of different religious communities, each of which, in its identity of faith, considers itself an integral part of the nation, and desires to make its own contribution to the progress and peaceful life of the country.

For this fruitful and peaceful life a fundamental element is the religious liberty to which you have alluded, as a right of every person and a guarantee of respect for the conscience and dignity of others.

Your Excellency, I trust that your stay here will be a fruitful one. You may be assured that you will receive the ready cooperation of the Holy See as you fulfil your mission. May God pour out upon you and the Egyptian people his abundant favours and his choicest blessings.

*AAS 77 (1985), p. 147-148.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. VII, 2 pp. 979-980.

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