



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO NINE NEW AMBASSADORS
TO THE HOLY SEE****

Saturday, 11 January 1997

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican and to accept the Letters accrediting you as the Ambassadors of your respective countries to the Holy See. Your presence here today bears witness to both the unity and the diversity of the human family; a unity in diversity which constitutes the foundation of an impelling moral imperative of mutual respect, co-operation and solidarity among all the nations of the world. In your persons I greet the beloved peoples of the countries which you represent: Australia, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Estonia, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Singapore and Tanzania.

The presence and participation of the Holy See in the life of the international community is a practical expression of the Church's conviction that dialogue is the primary and most effective means of promoting peaceful coexistence in the world, and of eliminating the scourge of violence, war and oppression. The Church deeply esteems the contribution which you make as diplomats towards building a more just and humane world. The urgency of this service to humanity is all the more apparent in the light of tragedies such as those presently affecting the peoples of the Great Lakes region in Africa. Whenever the fabric of harmony and just relations between peoples is torn, our common humanity suffers.

Within the international community the Holy See supports every effort to establish effective juridical structures for safeguarding the dignity and fundamental rights of individuals and communities. Such structures however can never be sufficient in themselves; they are only mechanisms which need to be inspired by a firm and persevering moral commitment to the good of the human family as a whole. For communities no less than for individuals, commitment to solidarity, reconciliation and peace demands a genuine conversion of heart and an openness to the transcendent truth which is the ultimate guarantee of human freedom and dignity.

I assure you of the readiness of the Catholics of your countries to serve the common good through the educational and social services provided by the Church. At the same time I give voice to their desire to profess their faith freely and to

share fully in the life of society.

Your Excellencies, I offer my cordial good wishes as you take up your mission to the Holy See. Upon yourselves and your families, and upon the leaders and citizens of your countries, I invoke abundant divine blessings.

**Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. XX, 1 p. 81-82.*

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