



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO NEW AMBASSADORS ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE***

Clementine Hall

Thursday, 29 May 2008

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to welcome you on the occasion of the presentation of your Letters that accredit you as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your respective Countries: Tanzania, Uganda, Liberia, Chad, Bangladesh, Belarus, the Republic of Guinea, Sri Lanka and Nigeria. I thank you for the courteous words of which you have been interpreters in the name of your respective Heads of State. I would be grateful if you could reciprocate my respectful greetings to them and my best wishes for them and the lofty mission they carry out at the service of their Nation. My greetings also go to all the civil and religious Authorities of your Countries, as well as to all your fellow citizens.

Your presence today offers me the occasion to express to the Catholic communities present in your Countries my affectionate thoughts and to assure them of my prayer that they may continue with fidelity and dedication to witness to Christ, through the proclamation of the Gospel and the many commitments at the service of all their brothers and sisters in humanity.

In today's world those responsible for the Nations have an important role, not only in their country, but also in international relations, so that each person, wherever he or she may live, can benefit from a decent standard of life. To this end, the principal measure in political matters is the search for justice, so that the dignity and the rights of every human being may always be respected and so that all the inhabitants of a country share in the nation's wealth. The same happens on the international level. In all cases, the human community is, however, also called to go beyond mere justice, manifesting its solidarity toward the poorest peoples to ensure a better sharing of wealth, above all permitting countries that have resources on or in their territory to benefit from them in the first place.

Rich countries cannot exclusively appropriate for themselves, what comes from other lands. It is a duty of justice and solidarity that the International Community supervise the distribution of resources with attention in order to further the development of the countries that need it most. In the same way, apart from justice it is also necessary to develop fraternity, to build a harmonious society, where concord and peace reign, and to resolve eventual difficulties that may arise through dialogue and negotiation, and not through violence in any form, that cannot fail to strike the weakest and poorest among men. Solidarity and fraternity ultimately derive from the fundamental love that we must nurture for our neighbour, since each person who has a responsibility in public life is, in the first place, called to make of his mission a service to all his fellow citizens and more in general to all the people of the planet.

On their part, the local Churches will not fail to make every effort possible to contribute to the well-being of their fellow citizens, sometimes in difficult situations. Their most ardent desire is to unflinchingly carry out this service to humanity, to each person, without any discrimination.

Your Heads of State have just entrusted you with a mission to the Holy See that, on its part, is particularly attentive to the good of the person and of peoples. At the conclusion of our meeting, I wish to express to you, distinguished Ambassadors, my best wishes for the service that you are called to carry out in the area of diplomatic life. May the Most High sustain you, your families, your collaborators and all your compatriots, in the edification of a peaceful society, and may each one of you receive an abundance of divine blessings.

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