



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIAL LETTERS BY THE AMBASSADORS OF
SWITZERLAND, MALTA, THE BAHAMAS, CABO VERDE, ESTONIA, ICELAND,
TURKMENISTAN,
GRENADA, QATAR AND THE GAMBIA ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE**

*Clementine Hall
Thursday, 13 December 2018*

[Multimedia]

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to receive you for the presentation of the Letters by which you are accredited as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your countries to the Holy See: Switzerland, Malta, The Bahamas, Cabo Verde, Estonia, Iceland, Turkmenistan, Grenada, Qatar and The Gambia. I would ask you kindly to convey my sentiments of esteem to your respective Heads of State, together with the assurance of my prayers for them and for your fellow citizens.

This year, as you know, marks the hundredth anniversary of the end of the First World War, a tragedy of immense proportions that my predecessor, Pope [Benedict XV](#), did not hesitate to call a “senseless slaughter”. May the lessons learned from the two great wars of the twentieth century, which led to the establishment of the United Nations Organization, continue to convince the world’s people and their leaders of the futility of armed conflict and the need to resolve conflicts through patient dialogue and negotiation. It is my prayerful hope that the mission you now undertake in the service of your various nations will contribute to this lofty goal of “securing a peace based on justice and charity, and promoting the means necessary to attain it” ([Gaudium et Spes](#), 77).

In this year, too, the international community has celebrated the seventieth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This foundational

document continues to guide the efforts of global diplomacy to secure peace in our world and to promote the integral development of each individual and all peoples. The two goals are in fact inseparable. In its very first words, the Declaration states that, “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family, is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (*Preamble*).

In these times of sweeping social and political change, there can be no lessening of the commitment to this principle on the part of governments and peoples. It is essential that respect for human dignity and human rights inspire and direct every effort to address the grave situations of war and armed conflict, crushing poverty, discrimination and inequality that afflict our world, and in recent years have issued in the present crisis of mass migration. No effective humanitarian solution to that pressing global issue can ignore our moral responsibility, with due regard for the common good, to welcome, protect, promote and integrate those who knock at our doors in search of a secure future for themselves and their children (cf. [*Message for the 2018 World Day of Peace*](#), No. 4). The Church, for her part, is committed to working with every responsible partner in a constructive dialogue aimed at proposing concrete solutions to this and other urgent humanitarian problems, with the goal of preserving human lives and dignity, alleviating suffering and advancing an authentic and integral development.

Dear Ambassadors, as you now begin your mission to the Holy See, I offer you my prayerful good wishes and I assure you of the constant readiness of the various offices of the Roman Curia to assist you in the fulfilment of your responsibilities. Upon you and your families, your collaborators and all your fellow citizens, I cordially invoke God’s blessings of joy and peace.