



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE DIRECTORS OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Friday, 12 February 2021

[Multimedia]

Dear Friends,

I extend cordial greetings to you, the Directors of the European Institute of International Studies, and express my appreciation for your presentation of the volume: *The Culture of Encounter: International Relations, Interreligious Dialogue and Peace*, representing the fruit of the Stockholm Meeting of October 2019. I greet too Cardinal Anders Arborelius, and thank him for the support that the Church in Sweden has given to this initiative in favour of promoting dialogue between the religions in service of the unity of our human family.

The continued global health crisis has painfully highlighted the urgent need to promote a culture of encounter for the whole human family, and for all men and women to be “passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 216). In this context, I especially welcome the efforts being made to respond to the opportunities and challenges that this poses for the world’s religions.

As academics and diplomats from different countries, you and your colleagues have an important role in promoting such a culture. By its very nature, your contribution must be grounded both in reasoned analysis and an orientation to practical and relational applications and outcomes, with particular concern for the rights of the poorest and most marginalized. In other words, minds and hearts need to be in harmony in pursuing the universal common good and – in the best tradition of the Salamanca School – in seeking the integral development of every man and woman, with no exception or unjust discrimination.

In our day, such an integrated approach to defending and promoting the rights of all is incumbent

upon both political and religious leaders, for it is precisely a culture of encounter that can provide a basis to a more united and reconciled world. Only this culture, moreover, can lead to sustainable justice and peace for all, as well as genuine care for our common home.

As mankind continues to face the uncertainties and challenges of the present, I encourage you to remain committed to the search for new and creative paths leading to the growth of this culture of encounter, for the sake also of the concord and wellbeing of future generations. I thank you for your visit, and I ask you, please, to remember me in your prayers. Thank you!