



The Holy See

***MESSAGES OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO HIS EXCELLENCY SADDAM HUSSEIN,
PRESIDENT OF IRAQ***

To his Excellency Saddam Hussein

President of Iraq am deeply concerned by the tragic consequences which the situation in the Gulf region could have, and I feel the pressing duty to address you and, echoing the feelings of millions of people, to repeat what I have already had occasion to say in recent days and months. No international problem can be adequately and worthily solved by recourse to arms, and experience teaches all humanity that war, besides causing many victims, creates situations of grave injustice which, in their turn, constitute a powerful temptation to further recourse to violence. We can all imagine the tragic consequences which an armed conflict in the Gulf region would have for thousands of your fellow-citizens, for your Country and for the entire area, if not for the whole world. I truly hope and earnestly implore the Merciful God that all the parties involved will yet succeed in discovering, in frank and fruitful dialogue, the path for avoiding such a catastrophe. This path can be taken only if each individual is moved by a true desire for peace and justice. I am confident that you too, Mr President, will make the most appropriate decisions and will take courageous steps which can be the beginning of a true journey towards peace. As I said publicly last Sunday, a demonstration of readiness on your part cannot fail to bring you honour before your beloved Country, the region and the whole world. In these dramatic hours, I pray that God will enlighten you and grant you the strength to make a generous gesture which will avoid war: it will be a great step before history, for it will mark a victory of international justice and the triumph of that peace to which all people of good will aspire. *From the Vatican, January 15, 1991.* **IOANNES PAULUS PP. II**

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