



The Holy See

LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO GEORGE BUSH

To the Honorable George BUSH President of the United States of America

I wish to convey to you, as Co-Chairman of the Conference which is to begin tomorrow in Madrid, my fervent best wishes that the Conference will be a real path towards peace, as the parties involved and the whole world hope and expect. I have expressed this same wish to Mr Mikhail Gor-bachev, President of the USSR, who is sharing with you the responsibility of presiding over this meeting, and it is one which I would like to extend to all those taking part.

Your efforts and those of your assistants, in particular Secretary of State Mr James Baker, have led to this first important stage, the special significance of which is that it demonstrates a readiness to face in dialogue the grave problems which have burdened the Middle East for decades.

The way forward will not be easy, but I earnestly hope that with your help and the help of all who occupy posts of responsibility and influence this willingness to negotiate will never fail, and that the parties concerned will achieve that mutual trust which is needed if they are to have the courage to seek peace after the tragic experience of years of war, hostility and suffering.

I am convinced that agreement is possible if it is sought with perseverance and if it is pursued by all concerned with constant sensitivity for the fundamental rights of others, and in the firm conviction that true peace, lasting peace, can be achieved only if the demands of justice are met. It is likewise a source of hope for me and for many others that those who have this responsibility represent peoples united in belief in the One God, and that they are seeking peace for that land which is sacred and dear to all Jewish, Christian and Muslim believers.

I accompany these hopes of mine with a prayer to the Merciful God that he will enlighten those taking part in the Conference in such a way that the meetings which follow it will truly produce the

results awaited by all people of good will.

From the Vatican, October 29, 1991.

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

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