



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO H.E. Mr EDWARD M. LUBINDA
NEW AMBASSADOR OF ZAMBIA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Friday, 19 January 1990

Mr Ambassador,

It is with pleasure that I welcome you to the Vatican at the beginning of your mission as Ambassador of the Republic of Zambia to the Holy See. In accepting your Letters of Credence I ask you to convey my warm greetings and best wishes to Dr Kenneth David Kaunda, President of the Republic, and to all the Zambian people. I trust that your stay in Rome will serve to strengthen the good relations which Zambia and the Holy See have come to enjoy.

My [Pastoral Journey to your Nation last year](#) happily coincided with the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Zambia's independence. I had the opportunity to view at first hand the many challenges and the opportunities facing your fellow citizens. I was able to appreciate the progress which your country has made towards realizing those noble goals which have inspired her growth as an independent and free Nation. As a friend, I wished to encourage all those who strive to make Zambia " a place of authentic freedom brotherhood and solidarity " (Cfr. Ioannis Pauli PP. II [Allocutio in aeronaviu portu Lusacae](#), die 2 maii 1989: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, XII, 1 [1989] 1081).

My Visit also coincided with the celebrations marking the centenary of the presence of the Catholic Church in your land. Through the various activities which she has undertaken in these past hundred years, the Church has always endeavoured to serve God by working for the authentic good of the people. During the last twenty-five years in particular, she has sought to play her own part in Zambia's development as a modern society founded upon respect for the dignity and freedom of every human person. The Church's contribution will always, of course, be an expression of the faith she professes. She is firmly convinced that the Gospel message provides a solid and enduring basis for the promotion and protection of human dignity. In fidelity to Christ's

teaching, the Church wishes to cooperate with all those who are committed to preserving the truths and moral values which are essential to the building of any truly humane society.

The evangelical principles which guide the local Churches also inspire the presence of the universal Church within the international community. Through its diplomatic activity, the Holy See strives to foster the growth of peace and an increased respect for the human person, to safeguard the fundamental rights of individuals and nations, and to advance dialogue and cooperation among peoples. I am sure, Mr Ambassador, that in the course of your mission to the Holy See you will find many opportunities to support these goals.

You have expressed your confidence that Zambia has a special role in the continuing development of Africa and its peoples. During my visit, I expressed my own conviction that your country's contribution to the future cannot be separated from her commitment to the profoundly human values which have found expression in her public policy. A firm and convinced witness to those values within the context of Africa's changing political and social situation may prove to be one of Zambia's most lasting achievements. Such a witness will require sacrifice, as your Nation faces the serious difficulties to which you have made reference. Yet, for the good of all Africans, "the difficulties of the present moment must not lead to a lessening of your commitment to protect and promote each individual's rights " (Cfr. Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Allocutio in aeronavium portu Lusacae*, die 2 maii 1989: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, XII, 1 [1989] 1082).

In a particular way, the presence of so many refugees within your borders represents a great challenge to Zambia's generosity and to her sense of solidarity. In effect, she has been called, at a critical moment in her growth as a Nation, to share her own resources with vast numbers of truly needy people. Your Government's efforts to assist these victims of conflict and economic imbalance, whatever the immediate sacrifices involved, highlight those principles and virtues which can provide a sure basis for the authentic development of the whole region.

Your Excellency has also recalled the problems posed by racial conflict and the unacceptable system of apartheid. It is my hope that Zambia will continue to foster constructive dialogue and reconciliation among all groups involved in the promotion of justice and peace in Southern Africa. Here too, fidelity to the principles underlying your own Nation's growth will help to inspire confidence in solutions that guarantee respect for the equal dignity of every person as a member of the human family and a child of God. Zambia can thus give evidence of her conviction that a society of peace and harmony will never emerge from violence and hatred, but rather must be founded on respect for all, regardless of race, colour or creed.

Mr Ambassador, in assuring you of the ready assistance and cooperation of the various offices of the Holy See in the fulfilment of your mission, I take this opportunity to renew my good wishes to you and to the President and the people of the Republic of Zambia. May Almighty God bless you and your fellow citizens with abundant heavenly gifts.

*AAS 82 (1990), p. 877-879.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. XIII, 1 pp. 116-118.

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