



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO THE NEW AMBASSADORS TO THE HOLY SEE*

*Consistory Hall
Thursday, 16 November 1995*

Your Excellencies,

1. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you today to the Vatican and to accept the Letters of Credence by which you are appointed Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your respective countries. You represent States belonging to three different continents, different in the history of their development as nations, as well as in their cultural and religious traditions, but one in the Church's prayerful attention and esteem.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Suriname are being represented here for the first time, whereas relations with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan go back to the early years of national independence. I pray that your mission to the Holy See will offer you the opportunity not only to serve your own countries well, but also to deepen your understanding of the profound religious and humanitarian truths and values which inspire the Catholic Church's service of the human family.

2. The situation of the human family at the end of the 20th century presents a picture of vivid contrasts. There is a widespread and intense yearning for peace and well-being, while on every continent ethnic, nationalistic and economic interests continue to spur rivalry and violence.

Some societies have reached unprecedented levels of affluence and prosperity, while other millions of our fellow human beings continue to be oppressed by poverty, hunger and injustices of all kinds. While the knowledge and expertise exist to bring higher standards of living, of education, of health care to the four corners of the earth, such a development would appear unattainable in the face of the old and new barriers deriving from deep-seated prejudices and seemingly

insurmountable divisions within the human family. And yet, your diplomatic profession and the mission you assume today are themselves signs of the will of your peoples to advance on the path of development and progress in spite of obstacles.

3. In the international forum the Holy See seeks to be a voice which speaks encouragement and hope for the human family. It does so above all because the Church's mission involves preaching a message of divine love for all mankind and of salvation for each individual. In my recent Address to the United Nations on the occasion of the Organization's 50th Anniversary I expressed the conviction that "now is the time for *new hope*, which calls us to expel the paralyzing burden of cynicism from the future of politics and of human life" (John Paul II, *Address at the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization*, 15 [5 Oct. 1995]). Herein lies a challenge which I would respectfully put before each one of you. I am confident that you, as the distinguished Representatives of your countries to the Holy See, will pursue the interests of your own Governments and the good of your own peoples within the wider context of genuine service to the human family as a whole, and having as your goal "a new flourishing of the human spirit, mediated through an authentic culture of freedom" (*Ibid.*, 16).

May Almighty God sustain you in your task and noble profession! Upon yourselves and your families, and upon the peoples you represent, I gladly invoke an abundance of divine blessings.

**Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. XVIII, 2 p.1141-1143.

L'Osservatore Romano 17.11. 1995 p.8.

L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly edition in English n.48 p.6.

© Copyright 1995 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana