



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO CARDINAL GABRIEL ZUBEIR WAKO,
ARCHBISHOP OF KHARTOUM (SUDAN)***

Monday, 28 November 2005

*Your Eminence,
Brother Bishops,
Distinguished Visitors,*

It gives me great satisfaction to welcome you to the Vatican and through you to send heartfelt greetings to the people of your country. I very much appreciate the sentiments which have prompted your visit, and I wish to reassure you of my prayers and deep concern for the peaceful development of civil and ecclesial life in your nation.

The cessation of the civil war and the enactment of a new Constitution have brought hope to the long suffering people of Sudan. While there have been setbacks along the path of reconciliation, not least the tragic death of John Garang, there now exists an unprecedented opportunity and indeed duty for the Church to contribute significantly to the process of forgiveness and national reconstruction. Though a minority, Catholics have much to offer through inter-religious dialogue as well as the provision of greatly needed social services. I encourage you therefore to take the necessary initiatives to realize Christ's healing presence in these ways.

The horror of events unfolding in Darfur, to which my beloved predecessor Pope John Paul II referred on many occasions, points to the need for a stronger international resolve to ensure security and basic human rights. Today, I add my voice to the cry of the suffering and assure you that the Holy See, together with the Apostolic Nuncio in Khartoum, will continue to do everything possible to end the cycle of violence and misery.

Dear friends, upon you and your people I invoke God's blessings of wisdom, fortitude and peace!

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