



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE NEW AMBASSADORS
ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE****

Consistory Hall

Friday, 1st June 2007

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to receive you today at the Vatican for the presentation of the Letters that accredit you as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassadors of your respective countries: Pakistan, Iceland, Estonia, Burundi and Sudan.

You have conveyed to me the kind words of your respective Heads of State. I thank you for this, and I should be grateful if you would convey to them my respectful greetings and my cordial good wishes for their person and the lofty mission that they carry out at the service of their people.

Permit me also, through you, to address a warm greeting to all the civil and religious Authorities of your respective countries, as well as your countrymen.

My thoughts and prayers also go to the Catholic communities present in your countries. You know the spirit of fraternal collaboration in which they work with all their brethren in humanity, ready to witness to the Gospel that invites living the commandment of love for one's neighbour.

Coming from different continents, your presence here today gives our contemporaries the image of the world that, from North to South, from East to West, is concerned to establish ever stronger relationships in order to build a society where it is good to live.

In reality, in today's world, it is more important than ever to strengthen the bonds that unite countries, taking particular care of the poorest nations.

In fact, it is not possible to use the riches of the poorest countries with impunity, without their being able to take part in world growth. It is the duty of the authorities of all countries to work together for a better distribution of the riches and resources of the planet.

A collaboration of this sort will effect solidarity, peace and fraternal life in the heart of each country and between countries.

I earnestly appeal to all nations, in particular the richest, to renew their commitment so that all people become aware of their responsibility in this regard and agree to transform their lifestyle in view of an ever more equitable sharing.

Also permit me to emphasize the role that religions can have in this field. In fact, they have the duty to form their members in a spirit of fraternity among all the inhabitants of the same country, with respectful attention to all people.

May no one be the object of discrimination or be excluded from society for his or her convictions and religious practice, which are fundamental elements of the person's freedom.

May societies do credit to themselves by protecting these basic rights through the attention they manifest for the dignity of each human being.

Indeed, no true religious initiative can be the cause of division or violence between people and among human communities. On the contrary, the awareness that each person is a brother to protect and promote is fundamental.

At the moment when you are beginning your mission to the Holy See, I offer you, Ladies and Gentlemen Ambassadors, my best wishes for the success of your service.

I ask the Almighty to assist you, your relatives, your collaborators and all your citizens, and to shower his abundant benefits upon each of you.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English n. 24 p.3.*

