



The Holy See

MESSAGES OF JOHN PAUL II

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE BUSH

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA *To the Honorable George Bush*

President of the United States of America feel the pressing duty to turn to you as the leader of the Nation which is most involved, from the standpoint of personnel and equipment, in the military operation now taking place in the Gulf Region. In recent days, voicing the thoughts and concerns of millions of people, I have stressed the tragic consequences which a war in that area could have. I wish now to restate my firm belief that war is not likely to bring an adequate solution to international problems and that, even though an unjust situation might be momentarily met, the consequences that would possibly derive from war would be devastating and tragic. We cannot pretend that the use of arms, and especially of today's highly sophisticated weaponry, would not give rise, in addition to suffering and destruction, to new and perhaps worse injustices. Mr President, I am certain that, together with your advisers, you too have clearly weighed all these factors, and will not spare further efforts to avoid decisions which would be irreversible and bring suffering to thousands of families among your fellow citizens and to so many peoples in the Middle East. In these last hours before the deadline laid down by the United Nations Security Council, I truly hope, and I appeal with lively faith to the Lord, that peace can still be saved. I hope that, through a lastminute effort at dialogue, sovereignty may be restored to the people of Kuwait and that international order which is the basis for a coexistence between peoples truly worthy of mankind may be re-established in the Gulf area and in the entire Middle East. I invoke upon you God's abundant blessings and, at this moment of grave responsibility before your Country and before history, I especially pray that you be granted the wisdom to make decisions which will truly serve the good of your fellow-citizens and of the entire international community. *From the Vatican, January 15, 1991.*

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