



# The Holy See

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APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE TO AFRICA  
(MAY 2-12, 1980)

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE MUSLIM LEADERS**

*Accra (Ghana)  
Thursday, 8 May 1980*

*Dear friends,*

At this time I wish to express my respect for the Muslim representatives present here. Through you I send my cordial greetings to the entire Muslim community throughout Ghana.

During my recent visit to Turkey I had the occasion to speak special words of friendship for my Islamic brothers and sisters. My words were the expression of a contact that was fostered by the Second Vatican Council, and that found an important reference in the memorable Message to Africa of Paul VI in 1967. On that occasion he stated: "We also wish to express our esteem for all the followers of Islam living in Africa, who have principles in common with Christianity, which give us glad hope of an effective dialogue. Meanwhile, we express our wish that Muslims and Christians live as neighbours mutual respect will be constantly present in social life also, and common action to promote the acceptance and the defence of man's fundamental rights"<sup>[1]</sup>.

Yes, mutual respect based on mutual understanding and directed to the joint service of humanity is a great contribution to the world.

Hence today I renew my own sentiments of esteem and those of the whole Catholic Church for the Muslims of Ghana and of all Africa, praying that the Almighty and Merciful God will grant peace and brotherhood to all the members of the human family. And may the harmony of creation and the great cause of human dignity be advanced through our fraternal solidarity and friendship.

[1] Pauli VI *Africa Terrarum*, 5, die 29 oct. 1967: *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, V (1967) 579.

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