



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO NEW AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF SUDAN
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 7 January 1988

Mr Ambassador,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome Your Excellency as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Sudan to the Holy See. I gladly accept your letters of Credence and I thank you for conveying to me the courteous greetings expressed by the Head of the Council of State, His Excellency Ahmed Ali Almirghani, and by the Prime Minister, in the name of the people of the Sudan. I would ask you kindly to transmit my own greetings and good wishes to the Sudanese Government and people, with the assurance of my continued prayers for the peace, harmony and social development of your country.

I have noted your reference to the great need for humanity to recognize that it shares a common destiny. I myself said in my Message for the 1986 World Day of Peace: "Today countless human beings in all parts of the world have acquired a vivid sense of their fundamental equality, their human dignity and their inalienable rights. At the same time there is a growing awareness that humanity has a profound unity of interests, vocation and destiny, and that all peoples, in the variety and richness of their different national characteristics, are called to form a single family" (Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Nuntius ob diem ad pacem fovendam dicatum pro* a. D. 1986, 4 die 8 dec. 1985: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, VIII, 2 (1985) 1468..

With reference to the unity of the human family it is important to stress that the world community's aspiration to justice and peace must be implemented through forms of solidarity, dialogue and universal brotherhood. International organizations already exist whose purpose is to ensure that political, economic, social and cultural relations will be strengthened through such dialogue and

fraternal solidarity. These organizations need the wise and fair-minded support of their member States for effective service of the common good of the entire family of nations.

I am pleased to recognize your Government's firm conviction that religions have an important role to play in creating a spirit of universal brotherhood and cooperation. As you are aware, religious faith leads the believer to a new understanding of his human condition and brings the individual to make the gift of himself so as to create bonds of fellowship with others. Faith not only unites people as brothers and sisters but it causes them to be more responsible, generous and attentive to work for the common good of society (Cfr. *Eiusdem Nuntius ob diem ad pacem fovendam dicatur pro a. D. 1988*, 3 die 8 dec. 1987: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, X, 3 (1987) 1336 ss).

It is with satisfaction that I hear that your people and Government appreciate the Church's labours in strengthening peace, understanding and spiritual values, and her endeavours to alleviate where possible the great human suffering of so much of humanity. The Church's involvement in the advancement of the world community is to be understood as a part of her religious mission, which urges her to initiate activities of assistance and integral development on behalf of those in need, activities such as works of mercy and social, educational and cultural undertakings (Cfr. *Gaudium et Spes*, 42).

I wish to emphasize in particular your mention of the relief efforts which your Government is making on behalf of hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced people who have crossed your borders from and homeless people are indeed praiseworthy, and they bear witness to the inviolable value and dignity of every human person. It is my fervent prayer that the worldwide community will answer the Sudan's appeal for humanitarian assistance in confronting this difficult problem of your region.

Furthermore, I cannot fail to stress the grave concern with which the Holy See follows the serious situation of armed conflict in the southern Sudan, marked as it is by the loss of life, serious injury to civilians, and the destruction of property, while rendering relief efforts nearly impossible. In the face of this painful situation I pray to the Most High God that through mutual understanding and dialogue a peaceful resolution can be found to the hostilities, and that negotiations and agreements may lead to due recognition of the rights of the peoples involved.

As you take up your duties, Mr Ambassador, I assure you of my prayers for the successful and happy fulfilment of your diplomatic mission. Upon Your Excellency and the Government and people of the Sudan I invoke God's abundant blessings.

**Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. XI, 1 pp. 49-51.

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