



The Holy See

***DISCOURS DU SAINT-PÈRE JEAN-PAUL II
À S. Exc. MONSIEUR ALPHONSE NIANGOULA,
NOUVEL AMBASSADEUR DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DU CONGO****

Jeudi, 28 octobre 1993

Mr. Ambassador,

With joy I bid Your Excellency welcome on the occasion of your presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Congo.

I appreciate your courteous address and thank you in particular for having conveyed to me the kind message of His Excellency President Pascal Lissouba. I would ask you in return to convey my respectful greetings to him and assure him of my prayers that God may assist him in his noble task on behalf of the common good of all the members of the Congolese nation.

You had the courtesy to mention, among other things, the journeys that bring me to various parts of the world with words of freedom, love and peace which, as a messenger of the Gospel, it is my duty to proclaim upon this earth. The Church, as you know, Mr Ambassador, has no other aim than the service of mankind and all the great causes that concern it. Faithful to the mission she received from her Founder, she seeks to help elevate the life of society by introducing the highest values of the moral and spiritual order so that throughout the world the human person may grow in his preeminent dignity as a creature formed in God's image

Your presence in this house is a sign that the Congo is open to inspiration of a religious nature and I have no doubt that your mission, which officially begins today, will on the one hand help to strengthen the bonds uniting us and, on the other hand, will reinforce our cooperation in promoting increasingly equitable and peaceful relations among the family of nations. Very soon I shall have the joy of welcoming here the members of the Episcopal Conference of the Congo who are

coming to Rome for their ad limina visit. This will offer me the opportunity to be close to your citizens once again, to pray for your country to encourage the Congolese Bishops to continue their task as peacemakers, to foster reconciliation, to encourage concrete acts of solidarity and to work to restore confidence in the future. Like other African countries, the Congo has experienced difficult times; nevertheless, I hope that due to the wisdom of your fellow citizens, in the future not only will the worst always be avoided, but that your nation will conscientiously strive to achieve democratic progress.

On this solemn occasion please allow me Mr Ambassador, to address my cordial greetings to the faithful of the Catholic Church in the Congo. Led by their Bishops, they are ready to work for national development and they sincerely want to offer their constructive cooperation in building a strong and prosperous society, conscious that as Christian citizens it is their duty to offer their homeland competent service.

I offer you my best wishes for the noble task that awaits you. Rest assured that here you will always find an attentive welcome and a cordial understanding from my co-workers, particularly those whose mission it is to assure the Apostolic See's presence in the international community.

Upon Your Excellency, the people of the Congo and those who preside over their destiny, I wholeheartedly invoke an abundance of divine blessings.

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