



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO THE NEW AMBASSADORS
ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE****

Thursday, 6 December 2001

Your Excellencies,

1. I am pleased to receive you today and to welcome you at the time when you are presenting the Letters accrediting you to the Apostolic See as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your countries: Bangladesh, Djibouti, Finland, Eritrea, Georgia, Lesotho, Rwanda, Mauritius and Mali. I also greet the new Ambassador of Switzerland on a special mission. I would be grateful if you would kindly convey to your respective Heads of State my gratitude for the messages that you have brought me and convey my cordial and respectful greetings and warm good wishes for them and for their mission at the service of all their fellow-citizens. May I also use this occasion to greet through you the authorities of your countries and all your fellow countrymen. I am happy to greet in a special way your Catholic fellow-citizens and their pastors. They are all eager to contribute to the harmony and peace of your country.

2. Today, our contemporaries are full of anxiety, produced by the unstable situation our world is going through and from uncertainty about the future; many seem unable to envisage a serene future, especially the young who are disturbed by the tragic events that the adult world has to offer them. In particular it is the duty of national leaders and their representatives in the diplomatic service to be deeply committed to uprooting what is a source of conflict and tension among human groups and among nations through dialogue and international cooperation. There is no specific issue, for which you cannot find a negotiated solution, that should destroy the respect for individuals and peoples.

3. Your mission, Your Excellencies, consists of serving the noble cause of your country and the noble cause of peace. These are the highest acts of love for neighbour that must be carried out

with a desire to contribute to the common good and to better understanding between individuals and peoples. We will then be able to offer the generations that come after us a world it will be good to live in. We must constantly remember that all the injustices that our contemporaries can suffer, all situations of poverty, the lack of education for youth are the source of a great number of the violent conflicts that have erupted in the world. Justice, peace, the fight against poverty and against the lack of spiritual, moral and intellectual formation of young people, these are the essential features of the commitment for which I appeal to national leaders, diplomats, and all persons of good will.

4. At the time that you are beginning your mission to the Holy See, I would like to offer you my very best wishes. I gladly invoke an abundance of divine blessings upon you, your families, your staff and the nations that you represent.

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