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**Apostolic Trip of Pope Francis to Panama for the 34th World Youth Day (23-28 January 2019) –
Departure from Rome, Telegrams to Heads of State, and Official Welcome at Tocumen
International Airport, Panama**

Departure from Rome

Telegrams to Heads of State during the flight from Rome to Panama

Official Welcome at Tocumen International Airport, Panama

Departure from Rome

This morning Pope Francis began his 26th international apostolic trip, this time to Panama on the occasion of the 34th World Youth Day, taking place from 23 to 28 January 2019 on the theme: “I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (*Lk 1: 38*).

Before leaving Santa Marta, the Holy Father Francis met with a group of eight young refugees from various nations, received by the Pedro Arrupe Centre in Rome.

The aircraft carrying the Holy Father (an Alitalia A330) departed from Rome Fiumicino Airport at 9.51 and landed at Tocumen International Airport at 16.15 local time (22.15 in Rome).

Telegram to the President of the Italian Republic

At the moment of leaving Italian territory, the Holy Father Francis sent the following telegram to the President of the Republic, the Hon. Sergio Mattarella:

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
HON. SERGIO MATTARELLA
PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC
PALAZZO DEL QUIRINALE

AS I PREPARE TO LEAVE FOR PANAMA ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD YOUTH DAY, INSPIRED BY A KEEN DESIRE TO MEET YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD IN A SPIRIT OF FAITH AND OF HOPE, IT IS MY PLEASURE TO ADDRESS TO YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, AND TO ALL ITALIANS, MY AFFECTIONATE AND CORDIAL GREETING, WHICH I ACCOMPANY WITH SINCERE GOOD WISHES FOR SERENITY AND HARMONIOUS COMMITMENT TO THE COMMON GOOD

FRANCISCUS PP.

Telegrams to Heads of State during the flight from Rome to Panama

During the flight to Panama, and flying over France, Spain, Portugal, Santa Maria (Azores-Portugal), U.S.A. Oceanic, Puerto Rico (San Juan Oceanic), the Dominican Republic, the Dutch Antilles and finally Colombia, the Holy Father Francis sent the following telegrams to the respective Heads of State:

Overflight France

HIS EXCELLENCY EMMANUEL MACRON
PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC
PARIS

AS I FLY OVER FRANCE ON MY WAY TO PANAMA FOR MY APOSTOLIC VISIT, I SEND CORDIAL GREETINGS TO YOUR EXCELLENCY AND YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS. I PRAY THAT ALMIGHTY GOD MAY GRANT YOU ALL PEACE AND STRENGTH AND I INVOKE DIVINE BLESSINGS UPON THE NATION.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Overflight Spain

HIS MAJESTY FELIPE VI
KING OF SPAIN
MADRID

I EXTEND CORDIAL GREETINGS TO YOUR MAJESTY, THE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY, AND THE PEOPLE OF SPAIN AS I FLY OVER YOUR COUNTRY ON MY WAY TO PANAMA FOR MY APOSTOLIC VISIT. INVOKING THE BLESSING OF ALMIGHTY GOD UPON THE NATION I PRAY THAT HE MAY GRANT ALL OF YOU PEACE AND WELL-BEING.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Overflight Portugal and Santa Maria (Azores-Portugal)

HIS EXCELLENCY MARCELO REBELO DE SOUSA
PRESIDENT OF THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC
LISBON

I OFFER BEST WISHES AND THE ASSURANCE OF MY PRAYERS AS MY APOSTOLIC VISIT TO PANAMA TAKES ME THROUGH PORTUGUESE AIRSPACE. ENTRUSTING THE NATION TO THE CARE OF ALMIGHTY GOD I WILLINGLY INVOKE UPON THE PEOPLE OF PORTUGAL THE BLESSINGS OF JOY AND PEACE.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Overflight USA (Oceanic) and Puerto Rico (San Juan Oceanic)

THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON

AS I FLY THROUGH THE AIRSPACE OF THE UNITED STATES ON MY WAY TO PANAMA, I SEND CORDIAL GREETINGS TO YOU AND TO YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS. INVOKING THE BLESSINGS OF ALMIGHTY GOD UPON YOU ALL, I PRAY THAT PEACE AND WELL-BEING MAY FLOURISH IN THE NATION.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Overflight Dominican Republic

HIS EXCELLENCY DANILO MEDINA SÁNCHEZ
PRESIDENT OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
SANTO DOMINGO

AS I TRAVEL OVER THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ON MY APOSTOLIC VISIT TO PANAMA, I OFFER BEST WISHES TO YOUR EXCELLENCY AND YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS, WITH THE ASSURANCE OF MY PRAYERS FOR THE PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF THE NATION.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Overflight Dutch Antilles

HIS MAJESTY WILLEM-ALEXANDER
KING OF THE NETHERLANDS

AS I FLY OVER THE DUTCH CARIBBEAN ON MY APOSTOLIC VISIT TO PANAMA, I EXTEND WARM GREETINGS TO THE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, PRAYING THAT ALMIGHTY GOD MAY BLESS YOU ALL.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Overflight Colombia

HIS EXCELLENCY IVÁN DUQUE MÁRQUEZ
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA
BOGOTÁ

AS I FLY OVER COLOMBIA ON MY APOSTOLIC VISIT TO PANAMA, I EXTEND TO YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF THE NATION MY WARM GREETINGS. UPON ALL OF YOU I INVOKE THE DIVINE BLESSINGS OF PEACE AND STRENGTH.

FRANCISCUS PP.

Official Welcome at Tocumen International Airport, Panama

Upon arrival at Tocumen International Airport, Panama, the Holy Father Francis was welcomed by the President of the Republic, Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, and by his wife. Two children in traditional dress then presented a floral tribute to the Pope.

After the performance of the anthems and the presentation of the respective delegations, the Pope greeted the bishops of Panama and a representation of 2000 faithful were also present, while traditional folk dances were performed. He then transferred by car to the apostolic nunciature of Panama.

Upon arrival he was welcomed outside the nunciature by a group of young people, and was received at the entrance to the Residence by the religious and lay personnel of the Papal Representation.
