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The Credential Letters of the Ambassadors of Belize, the Bahamas, Thailand, Norway, Mongolia, Niger, Uganda, and Sudan to the Holy See

This morning, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the ambassadors of Belize, the Bahamas, Thailand, Norway, Mongolia, Niger, Uganda, and Sudan to the Holy See, on the occasion of the presentation of their credential letters.

The following is the Holy Father's address to the new ambassadors, and a brief biography of each one:

Address of the Holy Father

Your Excellencies,

I extend a heartfelt welcome to each of you at this presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Holy See of your countries: Belize, Bahamas, Thailand, Norway, Mongolia, Niger, Uganda and Sudan. Please convey my sentiments of esteem to your respective Heads of State, together with the assurance of my prayers for them and all the people they serve.

As you take up your new responsibilities, I wish first to acknowledge the variety of ways in which your nations contribute to the common good not only of their citizens but of our entire human family. Each of you rightly shares the concern for building up the international community, as can be seen in your participation in the various international organizations and institutions that are a practical expression of the need for solidarity and cooperation among peoples.

In this vital and collective task of striving to safeguard and advance the wellbeing of men and women everywhere, especially in these days marked by the continued problems associated with the global health crisis and by the entrenched violent conflicts around the world, the concerted action of the whole family of nations and the work of diplomacy are required more than ever. Without them it is not possible to protect the dignity and human rights of all, to promote justice, reconciliation and dialogue for the sake of enduring peace, and to care for

our common home as a precious gift for us and for future generations.

In particular, you begin your new diplomatic roles at a time of heightened political sensitivity to the increase in violations of international law and to what I have called a third world war being fought piecemeal. If peace is to have a chance and the poor the prospect of a better future, especially in those parts of the world where longstanding conflicts risk generating habituation in the public consciousness, we are all called to show greater vigilance and respond to the call to be peacemakers in our time.

In responding to these challenges, each of your nations, whether they be old or young, can draw upon a deep trove of historical, intellectual, technological, artistic and cultural treasures, that are unique contributions of your particular peoples. At the same time, in paying tribute to the ingenuity of those you represent, which will surely leave a legacy of goodness for the future, I see your national riches not just as abilities and skills to be celebrated and nurtured, nor merely as high standards of which you can rightly be proud. Your resourcefulness and talents are also gifts that can be placed at the service of the wider world, in both bilateral and multilateral contexts, for the betterment of humanity.

By generously offering their material, human, moral and spiritual resources, countries respond to a noble and essential vocation. Indeed, it is only by striving to confront the problems facing humanity in an increasingly integrated and solidary way that solutions may be found, and not only to the above-mentioned challenges. Attention must also be drawn to other widespread situations affecting fundamental human rights: the lack of universal access to drinking water, food or basic healthcare; the need for equitable access to education for those all too often excluded; as well as the opportunity for dignified work for all. I think too of the sick, the disabled, and the young – especially girls – who are frequently given insufficient opportunities for realizing their potential, and all those from impoverished backgrounds at risk of being left behind, forgotten or even deliberately excluded from fully participating in their communities.

Through constantly raising awareness of those on the existential margins of society, your role as diplomats can help shine a light into the darkest corners of our world, bring those on the peripheries to the centre, and lend a voice to the voiceless and those who have been silenced. It is my hope that in the exercise of your high duties, you will be able to seek, both here in Rome and elsewhere, fresh and creative ways of promoting solidarity and social friendship, particularly with the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters (cf. Enc. *Fratelli Tutti*, 112-117). In this regard, I assure you of the cooperation and support of the Secretariat of State and of the Dicasteries and Offices of the Roman Curia. By building on the many existing initiatives and areas of common concern, I am confident that the positive and cordial relations between your countries and the Holy See will continue to develop and bear fruit.

Dear Ambassadors, as you commence your new missions in service to your nations, I offer you my prayerful best wishes for your important work. Upon you, your families and all your fellow citizens, I gladly invoke the Almighty's abundant blessings. Thank you.

Curriculum vitae of the new Ambassadors

His Excellency Mr. Jaime Efrain Briceño

Ambassador of Belize to the Holy See

His Excellency Mr. Jaime Efrain Briceño was born on 28 September 1961. He obtained an associate's degree in art and science at Saint John's Junior College in Belize City, and a bachelor's degree in business administration at the University of Texas, Austin.

He has held, among others, the following offices: chair at Bishop Martin High School; deputy chair, Beltraide;

managing director, Centaur Communications Corporation; chair of Speednet Communications Ltd.

His Excellency Mr. Joseph R. Curry

Ambassador of the Bahamas to the Holy See

Born in Nassau on 19 March. 1962, His Excellency Mr. Joseph R. Curry is married with two children.

He graduated in journalism and media from the College of The Bahamas, and in organizational communication from the University of Windsor in Ontario, Canada. He later obtained a master's degree in international affairs from the American University in Washington D.C.

He has held various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including: second secretary/deputy consul, Embassy to the United States of America (1990 - 1994) and director of the Department of Economic and Technical Assistance; chair/director of ITICS (Bahamas) Ltd. and later chair of Bayhill Realty; executive assistant to the Prime Minister (2006); chair of Frandor Investments Ltd., ITICS (Bahamas) Ltd. and Bayhill Realty (2007 - 2012); and deputy president of the Senate (2012 - 2017). He and served as delegate of the Bahamas to various international and regional organizations.

His Excellency Mr. Chittipat Thongprasroeth

Ambassador of Thailand to the Holy See

Born on 18 January 1966, His Excellency Mr. Chittipat Thongprasroeth is married with two daughters.

He graduated in political science (international relations), Chulalongkorn University. He then obtained a master's degree in political science from Western Illinois University, USA.

He has held the following positions, among others: third secretary, Department Secretariat for ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1994); third secretary, Department Secretariat for Economic Affairs (1995); second secretary, Department Secretariat for Economic Affairs (1996); second secretary, Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office, New York (1997); first secretary, Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office, New York (1999); first secretary, Division of International Development Affairs, Department of International Organizations (2001); first secretary, Seconded Secretariat at the Division of International Development/first secretary, Social Division, Department of International Organizations (2002); first secretary, Office of the Minister (2003); adviser, Office of the Minister / Adviser, Department for International Organizations / adviser, Office of the Prime Minister's Secretariat (2005); adviser, Department for American and South Pacific Affairs (2006); adviser, Office of the Permanent Secretary / Head of the Department's Secretariat for ASEAN Affairs (2007); deputy consul-general in Frankfurt (2010); deputy director-General Department for Consular Affairs (2015); deputy director-general, Department for ASEAN Affairs (2017); Ambassador to the Ministry, Office of the Permanent Secretary (2019); director-general, Department of Protocol (2020 - 2021).

Her Excellency Ms. Kjersti Rødsmoen

Ambassador of Norway to the Holy See

Born on 20 July 1963, Her Excellency Ms. Kjersti Rødsmoen is married with two children.

She graduated at master's level in business administration and finance from the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) in 1988.

She has held the following offices, among others: second secretary, Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York and to UNICEF (1990 - 1993); first secretary, Embassy in Mexico (1993 - 1996); temporary adviser on International Affairs in the Office of the Prime Minister (1996); head of Department/deputy director of the Department of Human Resources, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1996 - 2000); minister counsellor at the Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York (2001 - 2006) and deputy chair of the Governing Board of the UNDP (2005 - 2006); deputy director of the Department of the Latin American Section, MFA (2008 - 2012); director of the Department of the Latin American Section, MFA (2012 - 2018); Ambassador to Thailand and Cambodia (2018 - 2022).

Her Excellency Ms. Davaasuren Gerelmaa

Ambassador of Mongolia to the Holy See

Her Excellency Ms. Davaasuren Gerelmaa was born in 1976 in Ulaanbaatar, and is married with two children.

She graduated in international relations from the School of Foreign Service of the National University of Mongolia (1998). She carried out her studies at the *Ecole nationale d'Administration* (ENA) in France (2000) and at Victoria University in New Zealand (2001).

She entered the foreign service in 1998.

She has held the following positions, among others: attaché, Department for Europe of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Embassy in France (2001 - 2003); third secretary, Permanent Mission in Geneva (2004 - 2007); second secretary, Department of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007 - 2011); first secretary, Permanent Mission in New York (2011 - 2014); deputy director, Department of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2014 - 2018); director, Department of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018 - 2022); Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other International Organizations (from May 2022).

Her Excellency Ms. Aïchatou Boulama Kané

Ambassador of Niger to the Holy See

Borin Keïta, Niger, on 24 April 1955, Her Excellency Ms. Aïchatou Boulama Kané is married with three children.

She obtained a *maîtrise* in economic sciences, majoring in general economics, from the University of *Rennes I* (France), in 1979, and a *Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées* (DESS) in *transport et distribution* from the University of Paris 1 *Panthéon - Sorbonne* (France), in 1981.

She has held the following positions: head in the Directorate of Industry and Artisanat at the *Service du Développement Industriel et de l'Artisanat of the Artisanat* (MMI) (1982 - 1985); head of the *Service Orientation et Développement Industriel* at the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Transport (1985 - 1988); director of Handicraft Promotion at the Ministry of Economic Promotion (1988 - 1993); secretary of State for Planning (1993 - 1994);

Director of the *Programme Intégré de Développement en Zone Pastorale* (PROZOPAS) (1995 - 1997); head of the Handicraft Development Project in Niger (DANI 2) (1998 - 2003); Institutional Adviser in the Niger Handicraft Development Project (DANI 3) (2003 - 2006); Coordinator of the International Women's Handicraft Exhibition (SAFEM) (2006 - 2011); Member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank of East African States (BCEAO) in an *intuitu personae* capacity (2010 - 2013); Governor of the Niamey Region (2011 - 2013); Cabinet Director of the Prime Minister (2013 - 2015); Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of African Integration and Nigerians Abroad (2015 - 2016); Minister of Planning (2016 - 2021); Ambassador to France (since 2021).

His Excellency Mr. Stephen Mubiru

Ambassador of Uganda to the Holy See

His Excellency Mr. Stephen Mubiru was born in Kamuli, Uganda, on 18 August 1965, and is married with six children.

He graduated in science, animal health and production from the University of Busoga, Uganda, 2002.

He has held the following positions: assistant veterinary officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (1989 - 1991); animal husbandry officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (1993 - 1994); assistant manager of Kasolwe Livestock Farm (Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries) (1994 - 1997); coordinator of Namwendwa Dairy Farmers' Association (since 1997); speaker, Kamuli District Council (since 1998 - 2005); speaker, Uganda Small Scale Farmers' Forum (2002 - 2007); Executive Council member (Secretary for Mobilization) of the Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) (2003 - 2007); speaker, Kamuli District Council (2007 - 2011); council member, Busoga University (2007 - 2012); Ambassador to Malaysia (2012 - 2017); Ambassador to Turkey (2017 - 2021); Ambassador to Germany (from August 2022).

His Excellency Mr. Khalid Mohamed Farah El Fahal

Ambassador of Sudan to the Holy See

Born on 1 January 1963 in Nouhoud, His Excellency Mr. Khalid Mohamed Farah El Fahal is married with five children.

He graduated in letters (BA) from the University of Khartoum in 1984. He was awarded a master's degree and a doctorate in diplomacy and international studies from Washington International University, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, United States of America (2003-2005). In addition, he holds a master's degree in history from *Al Zaeim Al-Azhari* University, Sudan (2021).

He has held the following posts: various positions in the Diplomatic Service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in various diplomatic missions (1986 - 2006); *détaché* at the Political Department of the Presidency of the Republic (2006 - 2009); Ambassador to Senegal with accreditation to Mali, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde (2009 - 2011); Ambassador to France and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO (2011 - 2013); director of the Department of Research and Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (September - December 2013); *Détaché*, diplomatic advisor to the Presidency (2013 - 2016); Ambassador to Angola, Sao Tome and Principe (2016 - 2020); director general of African Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2020 - 2021); director of Communication and Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2021 - 2022); Ambassador to France and Portugal (from 2022).