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Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Francis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in South Sudan (Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Peace in South Sudan) (31 January to 5 February 2023) – The Pope's words on the flight from Rome to Kinshasa

This morning, on board the aircraft carrying him to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, the Holy Father Francis greeted the media works accompanying him on the papal flight.

Introduced by a greeting from the Director of the Holy See Press Office, Matteo Bruni, the Pope addressed the following words to the journalists:

Words of the Holy Father

Bruni:

Good morning, Your Holiness, and thank you for welcoming again on this occasion around 75 journalists from 12 countries, two of which are African. We know this is a journey you have awaited for some time, and we are pleased to listen and to see the gestures of these days in order to be able to recount them.

Pope Francis

Good morning and welcome to you all, and thank you for accompanying me on this journey. I have been waiting for a year... It is a beautiful trip. I would also have liked to go to Goma, but with the war we cannot go there. Only Kinshasa and Juba. From there we will do everything. Thank you for being with me, all together. Thank you for your work, which is so good; it helps a great deal, because it enables the images and also your thoughts, your reflections on the trip, to reach the people, who are interested on the journey. Thank you very much.

I would like to do the tour but I can't today. I don't know, I can stay here, but I feel a bit ashamed to have you all come here... We can say hello from afar, I don't know... Thank you.

Right now we are crossing the Sahara. Let us spare a little thought, in silence, a prayer for all the people who in search of a little comfort, a little freedom, have crossed it and have not made it. So many suffering people who arrive at the Mediterranean and after crossing the desert are caught in the lagers and suffer there. Let us pray for all those people.

[SILENT PRAYER]

Thank you.

Bruni:

Thank you, Your Holiness.
