



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO H. E. MR ALI KAISER HASAN MORSHED
AMBASSADOR OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Friday, 2 March 1984

Mr Ambassador,

I am pleased to accept the Letters of Credence which accredit you as the Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. I thank you for the kind greetings which you have just now conveyed on behalf of the highest authorities of your country, and for the noble expression of the inner dispositions of heart and mind with which you begin your mission to the Holy See.

You have made reference to the presence of the Catholic Church in Bangladesh and to the contribution made by Catholic institutions and personnel in various fields of service to the people. You have also referred to the assistance rendered to refugees. In all of this the Church seeks to follow the teaching and example of her divine Founder, whose whole concern was to serve and not to be served. Such service, whether it be on a personal and individual level or on the level of the various organizations and institutions involved, is the fruit of a conviction that every human being is a unique image of the Creator called into existence through love and for love (Cf. Ioannis Pauli PP. II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 11) .

The Church is fully at the service of the dignity of man. In this she seeks to cooperate with other private associations and public authorities throughout the world which uphold the values that constitute and adorn this unique dignity. It is in this context that the Holy See is pleased to extend a cordial welcome to you as the representative of your country and its Government and people. Your presence here consolidates still further the good relations already existing between the State and the Church in your country. and offers further opportunities for dialogue and collaboration. In

promoting relations with governments and international organizations, the Holy See is following the intentions of the Second Vatican Council when it indicates that "in their proper spheres, the political community and the Church are mutually independent and self-governing. Yet, by a different title, each serves the personal and social vocation of the same human beings. This service can be more effectively rendered for the good of all insofar as both institutions practise better cooperation according to the local and prevailing situation" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 76).

Today, moreover, as you rightly suggested, no country or people can hope to promote true development and progress in isolation from the world community. For this reason the Holy See endeavours to encourage greater international cooperation at all levels, conscious of the truth that for peace to be achieved and maintained it is necessary that peoples be free from excessive inequalities and from every form of undue dependence. Again it is the Second Vatican Council which succinctly enunciates the vision that lies behind the Church's activities in the area of international cooperation and development: "If an economic order is to be created which is genuine and universal, there must be an abolition of excessive desire for profit, nationalistic pretensions, the lust for political domination militaristic thinking, and intrigues designed to spread and impose ideologies" (*Ibid.* 85). This statement was made by the Council almost twenty years ago, but it is still valid today.

Mr Ambassador, as you are well aware, your mission to the Holy See is not to a power in the temporal and worldly order. The heart of that mission is centered on the essential values that give meaning to man's efforts to create a better life in peace and harmony. I wish you every success and invoke abundant divine blessings upon you in the fulfilment of your task.

Finally, I would ask you to convey my greetings to the President of Bangladesh and to the President of the Council of Ministers. Be assured, Mr Ambassador, of my deep respect and love for the people of your country.

*AAS 76 (1984), p. 707-709.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. VII, 1 pp. 592-594.

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