



## The Holy See

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*Discurso al Embajador de TÚNEZ,  
Excmo. Sr. Don Saâdeddine ZMERLI\**

*16 de marzo de 1990*

Mr. Ambassador,

Welcome to the Vatican, where today I have the pleasure of receiving Your Excellency on the occasion of the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Tunisian Republic to the Holy See.

I am touched by the courteous words which you have just addressed to me, and I thank you most kindly. You had the goodness of mentioning, among other things, the efforts of the Apostolic See in encouraging initiatives corresponding to the essential concerns of human beings and promoting the establishment of an ever more just international order, based, as you have emphasized, on respect for others and on solidarity among people. I am grateful for these reflections and happy to affirm that, by its commitment to promote a spirit of negotiation, Tunisia, a crossroads and place of exchange, is making its contribution in safeguarding the values of justice and peace as well as good understanding among the nations.

Your presence in this place, likewise shows your country's desire to respect motivations of a religious nature in relationships among peoples. Indeed, if one wants to assure just and peaceful relations among States, it is important to take into consideration the field of spiritual values. Among these, should not the awareness that all people are brothers and sisters, which also echoes the sublime commandment of the love of neighbour to dear to believers, inspire those who are responsible for the destiny of peoples in the tasks which fall to them?

Your country's laws, as you emphasized, guarantee freedom of conscience and protect the free exercise of all religions. In expressing my satisfaction to you, I wish that, in this climate, and

thanks also to the dispositions of the "Modus vivendi» concluded by bilateral agreement 25 years ago, Christians and Muslims In Tunisia can continue to walk together on the path of brotherhood, in the regular exercise of each one's activities and in a dialogue which is ever more beneficial among the heirs of different spiritual traditions called to work together for the common good.

Please allow me, Mr. Ambassador, to use the occasion of this meeting to address, through you, a cordial greeting to the Catholic community in Tunisia, whose members are seeking to renew their dynamism through the holding of synod assemblies. May Christians continue to create bonds of solid friendship where they live, and contribute, with their Muslim fellow citizens, to rediscover life's objectives which respond to the hopes of the Tunisian people! may both groups, moved by their religious convictions, become creators of unity, rapprochement, and responsible dedication in the service of all.

My thoughts at this moment are directed towards all of your compatriots, and first of all the President, His Excellency Mr. Zime el-Abidine Ben Ali, to whom I would ask you to express my deferential greeting, as well as to the Prime Minister, Mr Hedi Baccouche, your predecessor in the post which you now occupy. I express my best wishes for them and those who work with them in the responsibility of governing the Tunisian nation. Lastly, I express my fervent wishes for the wellbeing and prosperity of all the Tunisian people who are continuing their journey towards progress.

As for you, Mr. Ambassador, I offer you my sincere wishes for the success of your mission. Be assured that you will always find here the understanding welcome which you need. May the Most High fill you and yours with his abundant blessings!

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