



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO 5 NEW AMBASSADORS ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION
OF THE CREDENTIALS***

Thursday, 16 December 1999

Your Excellencies,

1. I am pleased to welcome you and to receive the Letters accrediting you as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your countries: Denmark, Burundi, Singapore, Rwanda and Pakistan. I thank you for the messages you have conveyed to me on behalf of your Heads of State. I would be grateful if, in return, you would express my warmest greetings to them for their lofty mission at the service of their compatriots. Through you I extend a cordial greeting to the authorities of your nations and to your fellow-citizens, especially the peoples of Africa, whom I assure of my support.

The approach of the new millennium is an invitation for all men and women to pay ever greater attention to their brothers and sisters in humanity, especially those who are called to exercise important political economic or social responsibilities, tasks that are primarily a service to the entire human community. It is on this condition that our contemporaries will continue to hope for a better future and will resolutely commit themselves on behalf of their brothers and sisters.

2. Globalization should not lead to an increased impoverishment of the most disadvantaged peoples, who are often forced to comply with the economic regulations of wealthy countries. The economy must also be governed by social policies at the national and international level, and not depend solely on financial factors, which leads to tragic situations for numerous peoples whose debts make all development impossible. Nations with a long history of democracy and technology and long-standing economic and social vitality, have acquired knowledge and know-how. They can put these at the service of countries that have difficulty in managing their infrastructures and

the organizations that are indispensable for economic growth, health needs and basic personal necessities. By so doing, they will not seek their own advantage but will be concerned to support the building of a nation and will strive to encourage a just freedom for the good of all society. It is also important to develop aid to countries committed to fighting poverty and injustice, sources of many flashpoints of violence and violations of human rights. In these areas the time has come more than ever for all peoples to show concrete and tangible solidarity, for a better distribution of the world's wealth and goods.

3. This year, in which we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, we should mobilize ourselves to give the young what they need for their growth and do the utmost to prevent them from being subjected to violence and to work that prevents them from attending school, so that they can lead a normal life for their age. It is the task of civil authorities to see that young people find their place in social and economic networks, and to give them some responsibilities in the city so that they can play an active role in social life. This attention will help to reduce the marginalization of an increasing number of them and will prevent the development, especially in cities and suburbs, of exacerbated forms of violence, drugs and crime, which weaken social relationships and relations between the generations. It is intolerable that children and young people should be the object of a corrupt commerce, whether for the satisfaction of amoral adults or to supply illegal networks of adoption or organ donation. How can society be described as human if it does not guarantee future generations their dignity and their most elementary rights? I salute the work being done for young people by individuals and associations who, by taking an active part in the protection and education of youth, give them the love they need and teach them the values of moral and social life, thus instilling in them confidence and hope for the future.

4. I am certain that as diplomats you are particularly sensitive to the different aspects of social life that I have just described. As you begin your mission, I offer you my best wishes and invoke an abundance of God's blessings on you and your families, your staffs and your respective nations.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly edition in English* n. 51 p.4.

© Copyright 1999 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana