



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO H.E. FOUAD BOUTROS,
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COOUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF LEBANON***

Tuesday, 11 June 1968

Mr. Minister,

We are happy to be able to reply to your request for an audience and welcome you here this morning.

We do so all the more gladly since We have sentiments of deep esteem for your noble country and We still keep in Our heart the unforgettable welcome that the Lebanese people gave Us during Our stop in Beirut on the occasion of Our journey to Bombay.

Your Excellency also knows that the Holy See has always emphasized the special role that your country has played and continues to play in the Near East, through its happy example of peaceful cohabitation and fraternal collaboration in a territory of two different religious communities, Christian and Moslem, and the Holy See regards sympathetically your country's legitimate anxiety to see that its national independence and territorial integrity are respected. We are aware that the events of June last year have created in this part of the world a situation full of tensions and disequilibrium which is far from being calmed yet.

The Holy See for its part wishes that conditions of peace may soon be brought about which will put an end to the state of insecurity that continues to reign in the Near East and which keeps a large part of the population of this region in a precarious human and material situation.

We also consider that the measures approved last autumn by the Security Council of the United Nations constitute a positive step on the way to a solution of the grave and urgent problems still in suspense. And We like to think that the mission of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General of

the United Nations is finding and will find in all those called on to cooperate in the application of these measures, in particular on the part of the Lebanese Governors, the support and understanding it requires.

We gladly take this opportunity to renew Our expressions of good will to the dear Lebanese people and its Authorities, especially the President of the Republic, and call upon them, as on Your Excellency and those who are dear to you, an abundances of divine blessings.

*ORa n.12 p.1.