



The Holy See

*ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF NIGER TO THE HOLY SEE **

Thursday, 11 December 1975

Mr Ambassador,

Our first words will be to thank you for the kind thoughts you have just expressed, and to tell you how happy we are to receive today the new Representative of the Republic of Niger. A noble mission awaits you. We trust that it will be a fruitful one, sure that the bonds of friendship that already exist between the Holy See and your country can be drawn even closer during the duration of your office. We ask you kindly to convey our most respectful greetings to His Excellency Lt Col. Seyni Kountché, Head of State, with our good wishes for his heavy responsibilities and our encouragement for the people of Niger.

We are living in a difficult age. There is no need, unfortunately, to enumerate the situations of conflict which do not spare any continent and the economic or social problem, sometimes so serious, with which so many nations are having to cope. It is not easy, moreover, to ensure progress and development when certain natural conditions are unfavourable, or when a calamity such as the one that befell you recently, sweeps over a whole region. The efforts to overcome it are all the more praise-worthy. But the citizens of the world should feel even more solidarity, and learn the sense of sharing. Are not all men brothers because they have the same God? Moslems, Christians or other believers, all together can contribute to the construction of the common good, and thus give a living testimony of what human brotherhood must be, and build a society directed towards the Absolute.

This is, we are convinced, the image that the little Catholic community gives in Niger. Respectful of the convictions of their neighbour, its members endeavour to cooperate in all loyalty in the progress of the nation, bringing their specific contribution, the resources of their faith, the reasons for their hope and their ideal of charity. That is certainly a reason for confidence for the future.

May the years to come see a consolidation of dialogue and mutual esteem. This is the wish we now present to the Almighty, invoking his blessings on your country, its rulers and the person of our Excellency.

*ORa 1976 n.1 p.2.