



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO FIVE NEW AMBASSADORS TO THE HOLY SEE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THEIR
LETTERS OF CREDENCE****

*Clementine Hall
Thursday 18 May 2006*

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to greet you on the occasion of the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your Countries: Chad, India, Cape Verde, Moldova and Australia. I thank you for conveying to me the courteous words of your Heads of State and I should be grateful if you would reciprocate by expressing to them my greetings and respectful good wishes for them and for their lofty mission at the service of their Country. Through you, I would like to greet the civil and religious Authorities of your Nations as well as all your compatriots, with a special thought for the Catholic communities.

You belong to the great family of diplomats throughout the world who strive to build bridges between countries, with a view to establishing and strengthening peace and stronger ties between peoples, at the levels of both fraternal solidarity and economic and cultural exchanges, for the well-being of all the populations on earth. This implies, on your part and on the part of the legitimate Authorities of the different countries of the world and of the various international institutions, a resolute will as well as a broad vision in order not to reduce the decisions to be taken to mere emergency measures.

Indeed, it is not enough to opt for peace or collaboration between nations in order to achieve them. Again, each person must be actively committed and concerned not only with the interests of those close to him or her or with one specific class of society to the detriment of the general interest, but must seek first of all the common good of the country's people and, on a wider scale, of the whole

of humanity.

In the era of globalization, it is important that political policies should not be guided mainly or solely by economic considerations or by the search for higher profits or a heedless use of the planet's resources to the detriment of the people, especially those who are the least privileged, at the risk of jeopardizing the world's future in the long term.

Likewise, peace is rooted in respect for religious freedom, which is a fundamental and primordial aspect of the freedom of conscience of individuals and of the freedom of peoples. It is important that everywhere in the world every person can belong to the religion of his choice and practise it freely without fear, for no one can base his life on the quest for material well-being alone. The acceptance of this personal and community approach will undoubtedly have beneficial effects on social life. In fact, loving the Almighty and welcoming him is an invitation to each person to serve his brethren and to build peace.

I therefore encourage the Leaders of nations and all people of good will to commit themselves with ever greater determination to building a free, brotherly and supportive world, where attention to people takes precedence over mere economic aspects. It is our duty to accept responsibility for one another and for the functioning of the world as a whole, so that it cannot be said, as Cain did in answer to God's question in the Book of the Genesis: "Am I my brother's keeper?".

At the time when you are beginning your mission to the Holy See, Your Excellencies, may I be permitted to offer you my very best wishes. I ask the Almighty to pour out divine benefits upon you, upon your loved ones, upon your collaborators and upon all your Countries' inhabitants.

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