



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO HIS EXCELLENCY Mr ALEXANDRE CÉCÉ LOUA,
AMBASSADOR OF GUINEA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 29 May 2008

Mr Ambassador,

I am pleased to welcome you on the occasion of the presentation of your Letters that accredit you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Guinea to the Holy See. I thank you for the kind greeting that you have addressed to me on behalf of His Excellency Mr Lansana Conté, President of the Republic. I would like to convey my best wishes to him and also to all the Guinean people, whom I hope live in harmony and peace, so that all families experience a worthy and prosperous life.

As you have emphasized in your discourse, Mr Ambassador, dialogue among cultures and religions is an important objective, and I am pleased to know that in your Country the quality of relationships between Muslims and Christians permits a regular collaboration, in particular regarding questions of the common good of the Nation. Moreover, solidarity among all citizens is a necessary and primary condition so that society can benefit from the fruit of a real and lasting progress. However, to preserve social peace, it is the duty of the State to ensure, through its effective commitment, a just and equitable administration of material goods, in respect for the legitimate rights of everyone, and to favour a good understanding among all the human communities of the Country.

In this year in which we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is particularly opportune that solidarity manifests itself also, and in a concrete way, among Nations and that "all international leaders... act jointly and... show a readiness to work in good faith, respecting the law, and promoting solidarity with the weakest regions of the planet" (*Address at the United Nations General Assembly*, 18 April 2008). In this spirit I hope that after the sorrowful trials that your region has experienced, an active collaboration will consolidate its

stability and encourage fraternity among peoples, and I also express the hope that the international community supports the efforts of the countries involved.

On the other hand, to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of individuals and families, the integral development of the Nation must inspire universal moral values, which keep the origin and the goal of material goods in sight and create an ever more just and harmonious society. In this prospective, it is necessary to show a particular solicitude for the people who experience numerous forms of poverty or fragility. The duty to respect the rights of each person to live in dignity is founded on the very will of the Creator, who has given all persons a common transcendent dignity.

Mr Ambassador, I also wish to assure you that the Catholic Church wants to contribute to the integral development of society through her educational activities, health care and social promotion, which I know are appreciated by the population. You know, in particular, the attention of the Church for the promotion of people through the education of youth. Moreover, it is important to be attentive to the health of everyone, in particular through formation and information on pandemics linked to the behaviour of individuals. Through this commitment the Catholic community intends to work for the common good, the fraternity and the consolidation of peace in justice. I hope that, thanks to an ever more trustworthy relationship between the Church and State, this work be supported with ever greater generosity, to the benefit of all Guineans, without discrimination of origin or religion.

I take the occasion to ask you to very cordially greet, the Catholic community of Guinea gathered around its Bishops. I encourage them to always be a leaven of reconciliation and peace in society, so that all can live together and develop ever more fraternal bonds of collaboration.

Mr Ambassador, today you begin your noble mission as representative of your Country to the Holy See. Please accept my most cordial wishes that I offer for a successful mission and be certain to always find the comprehension and support necessary from my collaborators.

Upon you, your family, your collaborators, upon all the citizens and officials of your Country, I warmly invoke an abundance of Divine Blessings.

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