



The Holy See

Apostolic Journey to Uruguay, Chile and Argentina
(March 31 - April 12, 1987)

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS****

Monday, 6 April 1987

1. I am very pleased to meet you today, members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Republic of Argentina, within a few hours of my arrival in this capital. In my apostolic journeys, this traditional meeting permits me, in every country, to communicate with representatives of the nations of the whole world, which you serve through such a lofty and delicate mission.

I am deeply grateful for the words of the Apostolic Nuncio, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, who welcomed me on your behalf and capably interpreted your sentiments and desires to be at the service of harmony and concord among peoples.

2. My visit as universal Pastor of the Catholic Church to the southernmost countries of the American continent is also intended to be a service to the peaceful and solidary coexistence of nations.

This journey, understood within the context of my pastoral mission, was actually undertaken, among other reasons, for one of an international order, related to the great cause of peace. I have come to thank God and to congratulate the peoples of Argentina and Chile, under their leaders, for the peaceful resolution of the prolonged controversy over the southern tip of the continent, which was at the point of provoking armed conflict. Animated solely by the desire to cooperate for peace among nations, I decided to involve the services of the Holy See in a mediation process. I arrive today in that same spirit to give thanks and to congratulate the two countries.

During a difficult and complex moment, Argentina and Chile have shown that it is Possible to find a

just and peaceful solution to international conflicts when there is a true will for peace and mutual understanding. That will guarantees the conditions conducive to an open and constructive dialogue, in which each party, while safeguarding its rights, interests and legitimate aspirations, shows understanding and openness towards the positions of the other in order to arrive at a negotiated agreement. In this way, the government leaders are the interpreters of the deep desires for harmony which are rooted in the heart of all people of good will, and open channels for the necessary cooperation between countries. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed by Argentina and Chile is evident proof of all this.

3. The climate of true peace among nations does not consist in the simple absence of armed conflict, but in a conscious and effective will to seek the good of all peoples, in such a way that each State, while defining its foreign policy, thinks above all of a specific contribution to the international common good. For this reason, I have proposed the theme: "Development and solidarity: two keys to peace", for this year's World Day of Peace.

Longstanding national and regional selfishness and economic and cultural underdevelopment. two serious threats to peace. are closely interrelated. Both can only be fought and overcome at the same time. in such a way that development may be transformed into an offering in fraternal solidarity (cf. *ibid.*).

In a recent document, the Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax" has called the attention of the international community to a problem which reflects the urgency and, at the same time, the great seriousness of those threats to peace: the foreign debt of many developing countries. An ethical judgment should be brought to bear on the international debt in order to bring out the responsibilities of all the parties concerned and the profound international interdependence of the progress of humanity. If a harmonious and adequate development for all nations, shared in solidarity, is not achieved. the foundations for a solid and lasting peace cannot be established.

4. In addressing you who represent the legitimate interests your respective nations, I want to mention again the need for you to fulfil your mission always in the framework of the great ideals of peace, justice and solidarity among all peoples. In the exercise of your functions as diplomats, you will be able to contribute to the strengthening of the bonds of understanding and harmony among individuals, groups and nations.

This is the appeal which I make to you today in the name of the Church, which desires to continue to spread everywhere the message of Christ, a message of peace and love. Argentina and Chile, who for more than four hundred years have been like brothers in their Christian faith, have shown that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is destined to bear fruits of peace for the good of the entire human family.

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