



The Holy See

*Discurso al Embajador de MALI,
Excmo. Sr. Don N'Fagnanala KONE**

4 de enero de 1990

Mr. Ambassador,

With pleasure I welcome Your Excellency to the Vatican on the occasion of the presentation of the Letter accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Mali to the Holy See.

I am touched by the very kind words which you have addressed to me and I thank you, in particular, for having conveyed to me the courteous message of your President, His Excellency General Moussa Traoré. Please express to him my respectful and cordial regards and tell him how happy I am at the prospect of seeing him soon at Bamako and of making the acquaintance of his compatriots in the course of my coming pastoral visit on the African continent.

You alluded, Mr. Ambassador, to the Apostolic See's efforts towards promoting more equitable relations between human beings, in a persevering struggle against poverty and anything that undermines the dignity of the human being. I note with satisfaction the favourable response that these diverse initiatives aimed at helping the progress of brotherhood and peace are finding in your country.

Likewise, you have mentioned the harmony between the - various religious communities in Mali. I thank God for this and ardently hope that the faith of the different groups will serve as a stimulus for a good understanding among all and for a generous service of the common good, in a sincere openness to the universal solidarity which belief in a God who loves all people and shows mercy to them, should awaken in every heart. It is my hope that an ever more constructive dialogue may

develop between Muslims and Catholics, as well as with the members of other confessions and traditional African religions.

Allow me, Mr. Ambassador, to express an affectionate greeting through you to the small Catholic community of Mali which I am preparing to visit, in order to strengthen it in the dynamism of its faith. May the Catholic faithful continue to participate with competence in the progress of Malian society, joining fraternally with their fellow-citizens in the considerable tasks of national development!

As you begin your mission, I offer you my best wishes and assure you that you will receive considerate and cordial assistance from all those who are engaged in the service of the international community.

Finally, I turn once again to the dear people of Mali, to whom I wish to express my esteem for its culture, its past of rich traditions and its present determination to continue the building of the nation. To all your compatriots, whose qualities of courage, endurance and tenacity are well known, and who aspire to a better future for their children, I express my joy at the prospect of meeting them soon on their own soil. On all of these people, on those who govern them, on Your Excellency and the President of the Republic of Mali I heartily invoke the abundance of the blessings of the Most High.

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