



## The Holy See

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***DISCOURS DU SAINT-PÈRE JEAN-PAUL II  
AUX MEMBRES DE LA COMMISSION  
INTERNATIONALE DE L'ÉTAT CIVIL\****

*Vendredi 13 septembre 1996*

Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am pleased to offer you a cordial welcome and through you to greet the representatives of the countries and international organizations who, in various capacities, belong to the International Commission of the Civil State (CIEC). In particular, I thank Mr. Aldo Dainotto for his friendly words in the name of your whole assembly.

Your visit, ladies and gentlemen, shows your esteem for the way in which the Church is always concerned about the human person, his civil rights and his status in society. It is precisely these points of interest which have led the Holy See to join your international commission as an Observer.

2 The issues studied by the commission are important, not only because they respond to a desire for juridical harmonization, but also because of their close relationship with the values of justice, solidarity and, ultimately, peace.

The mobility of individuals within continents and beyond is more and more a constitutive feature of our civilization. This inevitably creates unprecedented situations that require juridical solutions adapted to ensure the protection of basic human rights. The work of juridical harmonization carried out by the International Commission of the Civil State seeks to resolve the conflicts that can occur between different legislations, in order to ensure the displaced person the best possible situation. It is appropriate to respect differences and not to fear them. Administrative officials can do much in

this regard. Clear confirmation of the law's provisions, and transparency in the attribution of its provisions, in a context of sincere solidarity, make the citizens of the different countries more trusting towards new arrivals, and more willing to consider them as belonging to their own society.

3 You are specialists and practitioners of the law. Like many others, your field is in service to the individual and his living environment, in the first place, the family. The task of juridical harmonization, especially regarding marriage and the family, must encourage, among other objectives, the search for common solutions to problems created by evolving situations. This will be an authentic service to man, to the extent that one knows how to introduce the necessary innovations, while retaining the essential principle that the family is the basic cell of human society.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I again express the Holy See's esteem for and encouragement of the International Commission of the Civil State, I cordially offer you my best wishes for the success of your work and I invoke on you and your loved ones an abundance of divine blessings.

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