



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
TO H.E. MR KOFI ANNAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION***

*To His Excellency Mr Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization*

I have been informed that you are preparing to come to Europe to examine with political leaders the best way to end the violence that is so tragically afflicting the peoples of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

On this occasion I would like to express my prayerful solidarity and to wish you complete success in your mission. The Holy See greatly appreciates the fact that the United Nations Organization is regaining its full role in dealing with a crisis that challenges the whole international community. It is urgently necessary for the law and institutions to make themselves heard and not be silenced by the clash of arms.

As you know, since the beginning of the Kosovo crisis I have been keen to express without any hesitation my conviction that only honest, patient and realistic negotiations can offer an adequate response to the legitimate aspirations of the people concerned, and I encouraged all the efforts made in this regard.

In view of the deportation of terrified peoples, exactions of every sort and the bombings of the past month, today I can only encourage everyone who, like you and with you, is seeking to return to the path of dialogue in order to formulate a peace plan and thus put an end to a human tragedy which challenges everyone's conscience. My deep appreciation is also extended to all the organizations and volunteers who are so generously devoting themselves to comforting our many brothers and sisters in humanity. The Catholic Church is also present in the field and is involved in helping everyone she can reach. This humanitarian action is irreplaceable; it must continue and be intensified and diversified.

With all believers I am convinced that the spiral of hatred and violence can only be stopped by the force of brotherhood, law and justice.

Mr Secretary-General, many are looking to you and have confidence in you. This is why I commend you to God in prayer,

so that courage and foresight may be given to you in abundance.

From the Vatican, 27 April 1999.

JOHN PAUL II

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