



The Holy See

*Discurso al Primer Embajador del CHAD,
Excmo. Sr. Don Allam-Mi AHMAD**

5 de enero de 1990

Mr. Ambassador,

It is with great joy that I receive Your Excellency in the Vatican and I welcome you to this house as the first Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Chad to the Holy See.

I thank you heartily for the kind words which you have just addressed to me; they evidence noble sentiments to which I am sensitive. In particular, I am grateful to you for having presented to me the very friendly greetings of your President, His Excellency Mr. Housseini Habré. I am happy to express to him, in return, through you, my deferent and cordial good wishes, recalling as I do the conversation I recently had with him.

On the eve of my pastoral visit to your country, it is fortunate that today this meeting should manifest the proximity of objectives that exists between Chad and the Holy See, and that it should show our intention of cooperating in the service of the common good. For many centuries a crossroads between the Sahara and tropical Africa, Chad has a particular role to play in the progress of peace. Mr. Ambassador, the mission which you will inaugurate here among the representatives of the nations engaged in the building of a more human world will be invaluable, for the international community will benefit from the experience acquired by your people who know how to favour a good understanding among persons belonging to different spiritual traditions. You can well believe that as pastor of the Catholic Church, I find great satisfaction in this.

The country which you represent has, as you mentioned, unfortunately experienced a long period of trials. In the course of these last years, drought, climatic irregularities, locusts, and the resultant famine have caused much suffering, to which have been added the evil of the devastation of war. Your society has been affected by these things and economic difficulties have not failed to have

their harmful effects on the entire social fabric.

Nevertheless, the signs of renewal are very visible today and your country has every good chance of forging ahead by - reason of the dynamism of its inhabitants, in the city as well as in the country, thanks to the moral energy which animates them. Moreover, the growing sense of belonging to a single nation and the will to work together augur well for the building of a forward-looking society now that peace has been restored.

For their part, the faithful of the Catholic Church, who seek primarily to live their faith in their daily engagements, have every intention of joining their own endeavours to those of their compatriots in the work of development. With the encouragement of their bishops, they too are striving to make their own meaningful contribution in the march towards progress. The Catholic Church's health-care facilities, educational institutions, youth centres and charitable organizations are intended to be at the service of all, respectful of the religious convictions of each person. Allow me, Mr. Ambassador, to take the happy occasion of your coming to express my affection, through you, to the Catholic community of Chad and to reassure it that I am delighted at the thought of going soon to celebrate with it the faith that unites us.

In your country, the Muslim and Christian communities maintain good relations with one another. I thank God for these bonds of friendship: they guarantee, in fact, respect for the dignity of every human being and protect the nation from painful internal divisions. It is my hope that an ever more constructive dialogue will develop, not only between the Muslims and Catholics, but with the Christian brothers of other confessions and the members of the traditional African religions which are the depositaries of ancestral values. Solidarity attains its true depth when the common life clearly integrates the spiritual dimension of man. It is my sincere wish that understanding and mutual support among the faithful of Chad may contribute to the strengthening of the unity of your people and to its progress.

At the beginning of your mission, I offer you my best wishes for the happy fulfilment of your task. Be assured that you will always find here an attentive reception and cordial understanding.

On your Excellency, on the President of the Republic, the Government and the people of Chad, I cordially invoke the abundance of the blessings of the Most High.

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