



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO H.E. Mr JAMES L. KATEKA
NEW AMBASSADOR OF TANZANIA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Friday, 12 January 1990

Mr. Ambassador,

In welcoming you to the Vatican at the beginning of your mission as Ambassador of United Republic of Tanzania to the Holy See, I am pleased to accept your Letters of Credence. At this time, I extend to you my good wishes for the success of the mission that has been entrusted to you. I ask to convey my greetings to the President of the United Republic, His Excellency Ali Hassan Mwinyi, together with the assurance of my prayers for the peace and prosperity of all the Tanzanian people.

Your Excellency has made mention of my forthcoming Pastoral Journey to Tanzania. I gladly look forward to the opportunity of visiting your country and meeting her leaders and people. As is always the case, the primary purpose of my Visit will be to confirm my Catholic brothers and sisters in their faith. At the same time I hope to encourage all men and women of good will, whatever their religious beliefs, to commit themselves to building up a society in which justice, harmony and peace will provide the framework for the integral human development of all your fellow citizens. The pursuit of that noble goal has guided Tanzania's development throughout her twenty-five years of existence as a nation and in many ways your country's example has proved an inspiration and encouragement to many of her neighbours in East Africa.

Today, the attention of the world is increasingly focused on the longing of individuals and entire peoples for authentic freedom and for the dawn of a new era marked by sincere dialogue and cooperation for the good of all. The young nations of Africa have a vital contribution to make in this regard. By drawing upon the profound human values of their traditional cultures, these nations can help to foster the growth of what the Second Vatican Council has called "a new humanism - one in

which man is defined first of all by his responsibility towards his brothers and towards history" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 55).

Within the international community, the Holy See has sought to encourage every initiative which promotes the growth of collaboration and solidarity among individuals, nations and social groups. The Church, in the light of her Christian faith, firmly believes that such solidarity is the sure path to true peace in our world. As I have had occasion to observe, "the goal of peace... will certainly be achieved through the putting into effect of social and international justice, but also through the practice of the virtues which favour togetherness and which teach us to live in unity so as to build in unity, by giving and receiving, a new society and a better world" (Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 39).

Such unity and solidarity are inseparable from the moral duty to respect the dignity of the human person in all dimensions of existence, including the cultural and religious dimensions. For this reason, from the very beginning of my Pontificate I have sought to draw attention to the need to safeguard the fundamental human rights of freedom of conscience and of religious practice. The exercise of these rights is essential for the authentic development of individuals, nations and the entire human family. I have noted that it is " from the deepest resources of a right conscience " that religious believers can draw " higher incentives for the task of building a more just and more humane society " (Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Nuntius ob diem ad pacem fovendum dicatum pro a. D. 1988*, 3, die 8 dec. 1987: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, 3 [1987] 1337).

Tanzania's Catholics are a minority among their fellow-citizens. But this does not impede them from contributing to their Nation's progress along the path of authentic social development. They appreciate their Government's respect for their experience and convictions. For example, by taking part in the national dialogue on population they have sought to contribute to the formulation of policies that are in full accord with the moral law and with the best traditions of the African peoples. I wish to commend the Tanzanian government for listening to their voice on this issue which directly concerns the integral truth of the human person, the dignity of individuals and the ultimate good of society at large.

Mr Ambassador, as your government seeks to promote the building up of a society marked by brotherhood, respect and dialogue, I am confident of the continued and willing cooperation of your Catholic fellow-citizens. In renewing my good wishes at the beginning of your mission as Ambassador to the Holy See, I assure you of the ready assistance of the Roman Curia. May the Most High God shower his abundant blessings upon you and upon all the beloved people of Tanzania.

*AAS 82 (1990), p. 796-798.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. XIII, 1 pp. 63-65.

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1990 pp. 30-31.

L'Osservatore Romano 13.1.1990 p.4.

L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English n.5 p.9.

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