



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE NINE NEW AMBASSADORS
ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE***

Friday, 18 May 2001

Your Excellencies,

1. I welcome you with pleasure to the Vatican for the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as the Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your respective countries: Nepal, Tunisia, Estonia, Zambia, Guinea, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, South Africa and The Gambia. Your presence gives me the opportunity to greet your political leaders and all those whose duty is to serve the common good in the offices entrusted to them. I would like to extend a cordial greeting to all your compatriots, assuring them of my fervent good wishes. I am deeply grateful for the cordial messages you bring me from your respective Heads of State; please be kind enough to reciprocate, conveying my respectful greetings and best wishes for them and the important mission they are called to fulfil.

2. During my Jubilee pilgrimage in the footsteps of St Paul to Greece, Syria and Malta, I closely followed the dramatic events in the region of the Middle East. I would like once again to make the most of the presence of a large number of diplomats to renew more forcefully my appeal for peace on all the continents, inviting those in charge of social life to take courageous decisions that will engage people to take the path of peace and reconciliation with determination. The peace and security of individuals and communities are essential goods. It is impossible to envisage a country building its future disregarding the surrounding peoples or its own cultural and ethnic diversities. All local, national and international authorities must join forces to resolve at last the conflicts which have already taken a toll of too many innocent victims. The role of diplomacy is particularly important in this context. I therefore make a heartfelt appeal for the commitment of all the diplomatic services to negotiating a solution for the different conflicts and hotbeds of tension that exist on the different continents. A commitment of this kind would help restore confidence and

hope to the peoples who have been subjected to situations of instability for too long.

3. As you begin your mission to the Apostolic See, I offer you my most cordial good wishes. I ask the Almighty to pour out an abundance of his Blessings upon you, the members of your families, your staff and the peoples who live in the nations you represent.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly edition in English n. 22 p.4.*

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