



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI TO THE FIRST AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF UPPER VOLTA*

Thursday, 24 January 1974

Mr. Ambassador,

We are happy to receive today, in the person of Your Excellency, the first Ambassador of the Republic of Upper Volta to the Holy See, and to address particularly fervent wishes to you for the success of your mission.

This Mission begins, it can be said, under favourable auspices. The local Church, under the responsibility of the episcopal Conference of Volta and its president, dear and venerated Cardinal Paul Zoungrana, has always engaged in dialogue with the Authorities of the State, particularly when certain present-day problems arose; it will continue to do so loyally. We ourselves cherish an excellent memory of the visit that His Excellency General Sangoulé Lamizana paid us seven months ago. Now he sends you to continue these promising relations permanently and staunchly at the Vatican. In this context, thanking you for the very kind words you have just uttered, we owe it to ourselves to express our confidence in the future.

We hope, in fact, in the wisdom of your country and its rulers. Like other nations making great progress, but at grips with serious economic difficulties – the cruel example of the drought occurs to everyone – like other nations that have recently assumed control of their own destiny and find themselves up against the urgent task in the present world circumstances, of developing all their resources, we trust that Upper Volta will become a model of balance, moderation, political maturity, and harmonious progress for all the strata of the population, of social justice and opening to the spiritual values of impartial religious freedom.

If the powerful of this world have the important duty of giving all countries the help desired for the attainment of these aims, the Church, too, which draws her only riches from Christian Revelation, asks nothing better than to assist them. In words that deeply touched us, you yourself recalled this contribution: her appeals for international solidarity and cooperation, the foundation of numerous

centres of promotion and assistance, and her works in favour of the formation of the young, without any distinction. This disinterested service is part of her role. She knows that men are hungry not only for bread, nor even for instruction, but for education to responsibility and brotherhood, wisdom, dialogue with the Invisible.

We take this opportunity to acclaim the courageous efforts of our Catholic sons in Upper Volta. They eagerly desire to be able to continue their magnificent testimony. We ask the Lord to bless them and also to watch over the whole people of Volta, its rulers, and the person of Your Excellency, whom we assure of all our support in the exercise of your high functions.

*ORa n.6 p.2.
