



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II
A S.E. LA SIGNORA JANINA DEL VECCHIO UGALDE,
NUOVO AMBASCIATORE DI COSTA RICA PRESSO LA SANTA SEDE****

Giovedì, 22 giugno 1989

Your Excellency,

It is with great pleasure that I extend to you my most heartfelt welcome as you present the Letters which accredit you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Costa Rica to the Holy See.

First of all, I express my gratitude for the sincere greetings, because they have given me the opportunity to experience once again the most noble sentiments of closeness and adherence to this Apostolic See on the part of the citizens of your beloved nation. Likewise, I want to thank you for the respectful greeting which you have conveyed to me from His Excellency, the President of the Republic.

Your Excellency made reference to the vocation to peace, which has been a distinctive value of Costa Rica in its democratic journey. In this regard, I can never forget how your Government – through the initiative of your President, Dr Oscar Arias Sanchez – played a notable role in the meeting of Esquipulas II and later in that of Alajuela, which concluded with an agreement signed by the five countries of Central America, for the purpose of establishing a peaceful destiny for that region.

The Holy See has seen this plan with great interest and follows very closely the continuing developments, with sincere hopes that dialogue will be fostered and the obstacles that hinder the authentic progress of those peoples will be overcome, always avoiding the temptation to have

recourse to any form of violence.

In the aforementioned document, *Esquipulas II*, there is an absolute affirmation that «peace and development are indispensable». Recalling the well-known expression of Pope Paul VI, we could even say that the two realities are inseparable, because «development is the new name of peace» (*Populorum Progressio*, 76). Yet it is only when this development is full and harmonious, that is, when it promotes the fulfilment of the whole person and of each and every person in all his dimensions, then it helps the person to be open to the Absolute, who «gives to human life its authentic meaning» (*ibid.*, 42).

In the last instance, development also becomes a constitutive element of peace, by the mere fact that it contributes to the attainment of what is good for the person and for the human community. Consequently, by means of an authentic development one can promote a lasting peace. But in order to have this, it is necessary to create an awareness of solidarity that will lead to an integral development in so far as it protects and safeguards the legitimate rights of the individual, in harmony with the demands of the common good of the nation.

Since solidarity offers an ethical basis for the adequate orientation of human and social relations, development, in turn, enables the realization of that mutual help in such a way that all can live more fully within that healthy pluralism and complementarity, which are signs of an authentically human civilization. This dynamism certainly leads to that harmonious «*tranquillitatis ordinis*» of which St Augustine speaks to us, and which constitutes and assures true peace.

In Costa Rica, as well as in the other sister countries of Central America, there is a young generation that fervently desires peace and social progress. It is necessary to meet the expectations of the new generations, who are particularly sensitive to the signs of the times, by means of some political and social decisions. These will help to make clear and to prove that peace will not be achieved until security, imposed by arms is replaced gradually by a security based on a juridical, social and economic order. This will strengthen the bonds of solidarity and the common destiny to which the sister peoples of Central America are called. It is a responsibility which no State can avoid. In this sense, Pope Paul VI was quite explicit: «Peace cannot be limited to a mere absence of war, the result of an ever precarious balance of forces. No, peace is something that is built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice among men» (*Populorum Progressio*, 76).

In this regard, the Holy See – together with the other representatives of the international community who have seen in the agreement of *Esquipulas II* a horizon of hope for Central America – encourages all those measures that are directed towards the attainment of a stable peace in the entire region. Only a sincere climate of dialogue and reconciliation, which may also allow so many persons who have been displaced by the effects of violence to return home, and which, at the same time, will promote a determined democratic process, will make it possible to

create some channels of participation based on justice and freedom, which are absolute prerequisites for peace and development. At the same time, there is an urgent need for measures that are oriented to guarantee the inviolability of persons, and which respect the freedom and security of their lives.

The Holy See looks with satisfaction at the efforts that the Government of Costa Rica is making for the maintenance and implementation of the agreements signed by the political representatives of Central America. At the same time, it renews its appeal that the international community may offer its contribution in the spirit of solidarity, oriented towards the overcoming of the obstacles of an economic order which render very difficult the development of the region. The Church in Costa Rica, on its part, will continue tirelessly in its vocation of service to man, citizen and child of God. For this reason, the bishops, priests and religious communities, in accordance with the mission entrusted to them, will make every effort to promote and stimulate everything that can further the common good and brotherhood among men.

While expressing to you my best wishes for the happy fulfilment of your high office, I invoke on Your Excellency and on your distinguished family, on the authorities who have entrusted that mission to you, and on all the beloved citizens of Costa Rica, the constant protection of the Most High.

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