



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD  
TO THE HOLY SEE\***

*Thursday, 14 December 2000*

*Mr Ambassador,*

1. I am pleased to welcome you for the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Chad to the Holy See.

I thank you for your kind words, as well as for the good wishes you have expressed to me on behalf of the president, H.E. Mr Idriss Deby. I would be grateful if you could convey my best wishes to him, for himself and for the accomplishment of his office at the service of the people of Chad. I also pray the Almighty to support the commitment of all your compatriots to live in peace and mutual understanding, so that all can benefit from a dignified and peaceful existence.

2. In your address, Mr Ambassador, you told me of the efforts your country is making to enable the whole of society to progress towards a pluralist democracy that respects the fundamental human rights and to build a State of rights with solid foundations. By effectively guaranteeing to individual human beings and groups living conditions based on justice and mutual respect, the necessary ways will be found to preserve social interaction and harmony permanently.

To guarantee stability and security, the new economic horizons which are unfolding for your country must first of all help to satisfy the people's basic needs and eliminate inequalities between individuals and between regions. It is right, however, that the benefits of development, desired by all the people of Chad, be not limited to the legitimate increase in material well-being but enable people, families and society to be truly fulfilled in all their human and spiritual dimensions. If all, especially the most underprivileged, are permitted to lead a decent life in conformity with their

human vocation, threats to peace will recede and it will be possible to establish supportive and enduring social relations among all the nation's members.

3. I am glad to know that your country wishes to make a renewed contribution to the service of peace in the region. At the time when we are entering a new millennium, it is more and more urgent that the whole of Africa engage with determination on the paths of peace and reconciliation, so that violence, to which so many innocent peoples fall prey, will cease at last. The many conflicts that tragically continue to wound the continent must make everyone understand, as I have already had the opportunity to stress, "that the moment has come to change direction, decisively and with a great sense of responsibility" (*Message for World Day of Peace 2000*, n. 8).

Moreover, fraternal meetings and sincere dialogue between believers and particularly between Christians and Muslims, are urgently necessary "for nurturing that hope of justice and peace without which there will be no future worthy of humanity" (*Address to the Interreligious Assembly*, 28 October 1999). Thus to maintain and develop a spirit of trust and collaboration among all citizens, it is essential that civil and religious leaders contribute to reinforcing the conditions in which true religious freedom can be exercised.

4. I know that, in your country, the Catholic community which participates in many ways in the development of the nation and in its coherence, is respected and appreciated by those responsible for civil life and by the entire people. Through its commitment to serving all the people of Chad without distinction it means to witness effectively to the message of peace and reconciliation it has received from Christ. It also hopes to collaborate with all people of good will, so that the sacred value of the life of every human being can be recognized and respected and that everything opposed to life or offensive to human dignity will disappear. In working to increase justice and solidarity, the Church desires to give the men and women of today signs of hope for their future and for that of their children.

May I be permitted, Mr Ambassador, to extend a cordial greeting through you to the Bishops of Chad, as well as to all the members of the Catholic community. I hope that the Jubilee year, now drawing to a close, will bear abundant spiritual fruits so that the faithful may be increasingly fervent disciples of Christ and generous witnesses of God's love for humanity. Together with all their fellow countrymen may they contribute to building a united and fraternal nation in which each one feels fully accepted and respected!

5. At the time when your mission is beginning, I offer you my best wishes for the noble task that awaits you. I assure you that you will always find here an attentive welcome and cordial understanding among those who work with me.

I wholeheartedly invoke an abundance of divine Blessings upon Your Excellency, upon the people of Chad and upon their leaders.

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