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MESSAGGIO DEL SANTO PADRE AL NUNZIO APOSTOLICO A CIPRO, S.E. MONS. PIETRO SAMBI

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Pubblichiamo di seguito il Messaggio che il Santo Padre Giovanni Paolo II ha fatto pervenire al Nunzio Apostolico a Cipro, S.E. Mons. Pietro Sambi:

To The Most Reverend Pietro Sambi

Apostolic Nuncio to Cyprus

I am pleased to learn that you will be present at the Meeting convened in Nicosia, Cyprus, by the Cultural Foundation of the Holy Monastery of Kykkos, *Archangelos*, in collaboration with the Department of Communication and Mass Media, Cultural Section, of the *Panteion University* in Athens, and I ask you to convey to the organizers and all taking part the assurance of my prayerful support and encouragement.

The theme of the Meeting, dialogue between religions and cultures, is most timely. It carries with it the challenge to foster practical ways of improving understanding among peoples, and thus forms the basis upon which to face many of the problems burdening the human family at the beginning of this millennium. The tyranny of injustice, egoism and prejudice can only be defeated by a far-reaching resurgence of the human spirit in individual hearts and in relations between the peoples of the world. It is my heartfelt prayer that the Meeting in Nicosia will show that there is no basis, either in theory or in practice, for any discrimination between individual and individual or between people and people; all share the same human dignity and the rights which flow from it (cf. Second Vatican Council, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, 5).

At Assisi, the town of Saint Francis, many leaders of the world's religions gathered on 24 January last to pray for peace and to commit themselves to serving the cause of peace. They wished to show that genuine religious belief is an inexhaustible wellspring of mutual respect and harmony among peoples; indeed it is the chief antidote to violence and conflict. This is also the message that came from the interreligious encounter involving the three monotheistic religions convened last December in Brussels by the Ecumenical Patriarch, His Holiness Bartholomew I, on the theme *Towards Peaceful Co-Existence and Collaboration Between Monotheistic*

Religions, and from the declaration ratified on 21 January in Alexandria by Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders from the Holy Land.

These events, and the convictions which they expressed, are signs of genuine hope. I am confident that the present Meeting in Cyprus will further strengthen dialogue among religions and cultures as an essential part of the search for peace in the world. I therefore ask the Lord to pour out his blessings upon the participants, and I assure them of the Catholic Church's irrevocable commitment to this cause.

From the Vatican, 6 March 2002

IOANNES PAULUS II

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