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**UDIENZA AI SINDACI DI VARIE METROPOLI DEL MONDO PARTECIPANTI ALLA PRIMA
"GLOCALIZATION CONFERENCE"**

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Alle 11.45 di questa mattina, nella Sala Clementina del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano, il Santo Padre Giovanni Paolo II ha ricevuto in Udienza i Sindaci di varie Metropoli del mondo, partecipanti alla Prima "Glocalization Conference", ed ha loro rivolto il saluto che pubblichiamo di seguito:

• SALUTO DEL SANTO PADRE

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to meet you, the Mayors of some of the world's most important cities. You are gathered in Rome to reflect on how globalization affects the life of your cities, and on the opportunities it offers for closer ties between them. I am deeply grateful to the Honourable Walter Veltroni, Mayor of Rome, for his kind words of introduction and synthesis.

A city is much more than a territory, an economic productive zone, a political reality. It is above all a community of people, and especially of families with their children. It is a living, historically rooted, culturally distinct, human experience. Those who exercise administrative and political control over it have weighty responsibilities for the common good of the people – human beings graced with inalienable dignity and rights; just as citizens have important duties towards the community.

The ethos of a city should be marked by one characteristic above others: solidarity. Every one of you faces serious social and economic problems which will not be solved unless a new style of human solidarity is created. Institutions and social organizations at different levels, as well as the State, must share in promoting a general movement of solidarity between all sectors of the population, with special attention to the weak and marginalized. This is not just a matter of convenience. It is a necessity of the moral order, to which all people need to be educated, and to which those with influence of one kind or another must be committed as a matter of conscience.

The goal of solidarity must be the advancement of a more human world for all – a world in which every individual will be able to participate in a positive and fruitful way, and in which the wealth of some will no longer be an obstacle to the development of others, but a help.

As you reflect on the many complex issues raised by your Conference, I encourage you to see your task as a unique opportunity for doing good, for improving in real ways the world in which we live. May the Almighty enlighten and sustain your efforts. Upon you and your fellow citizens I invoke abundant divine blessings of harmony and peace.

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