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Il Santo Padre ha ricevuto questa mattina in Udienza:

Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale dell'India, in Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum":

S.E. Mons. Chacko Thottumarichal, S.V.D., Vescovo di Jhabua;

S.E. Mons. Vincent Michael Concessao, Arcivescovo di Delhi

con l'Ausiliare:

S.E. Mons. Anil Couto, Vescovo tit. di Cenculiana;

S.E. Mons. Symphorian Thomas Keeprath, O.F.M. Cap., Vescovo di Jullundur;

S.E. Mons. Peter Celestine Elampassery, O.F.M. Cap., Vescovo di Jammu-Srinagar;

S.E. Mons. Gerald John Mathias, Vescovo di Simla and Chandigarh.

Giovanni Paolo II ha ricevuto oggi in Udienza:

S.E. Mons. Justin Francis Rigali, Arcivescovo di Philadelphia.

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA III CONFERENZA SUL TRATTATO SULL'INTERDIZIONE GLOBALE DEGLI ESPERIMENTI NUCLEARI (VIENNA, 3-5 SETTEMBRE 2003)

Dal 3 al 5 settembre 2003 si è svolta a Vienna la III Conferenza per facilitare l'entrata in vigore del Trattato sull'Interdizione Globale degli Esperimenti Nucleari (CTBT). Nella mattina di ieri, 4 settembre, Mons. Pietro Parolin, Sotto-Segretario della Sezione per i Rapporti con gli Stati della Segreteria di Stato, ha pronunciato l'intervento di cui riportiamo di seguito il testo:

• INTERVENTO DI MONS. PIETRO PAROLIN

Mr. President,

Let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of this third Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In this important assignment you can count on the full support of the Delegation of the Holy See. It is my duty, first of all, to bring to this Conference the greetings and encouragement of Pope John Paul II who, in sending me here, wishes to renew his appeal for a common and generous effort for peace and security. Peace is a building always under construction, and among those committed to the task is this Organization which, as affirmed in the Preamble of the Treaty, contributes effectively to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, to the process of nuclear disarmament and therefore to the enhancement of international peace and security.

The Holy See, in fact, by ratifying the Treaty on 18 July 2001, intended precisely to advance the promotion of a culture of peace based upon the primacy of law and of respect for human life. At the beginning of the third millennium, the implementation of a system of comprehensive and complete disarmament, capable of fostering a climate of trust, cooperation and respect between all States, would be an indispensable aspect of a practical realization of a culture of life and peace.

Before this Conference the Holy See wishes to express its profound conviction that the time is ripe for the nations of the world to put a definitive end to all nuclear weapons testing. The Holy See, commending Algeria and Cyprus for ratifying the Treaty, adds its voice of support to all efforts aimed at ensuring the entry into force of the Treaty and renews its appeal to all those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible. We call on them whose ratification is needed to take all the necessary steps. They bear a special responsibility and the present moment is a unique occasion to show both courageous leadership and a high sense of political responsibility. Any accumulated delay inevitably increases the risk that nuclear testing will resume and non-proliferation be much harder to sustain. For this reason the Secretary of the Holy See's Relations with States wished to associate himself with the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT of 14 September 2002.

Mr President, as for other sectors of international life, the Holy See is convinced that today, more than ever, close international co-operation and a multilateral approach are essential in order to face the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction to peace and international security. Global security will be guaranteed through

global cooperation within the framework of an authentically multilateral system. However, in order to be effective, multilateralism requires the responsible, honest and coherent cooperation of all the members of the community of nations.

During the 2nd Session of the Preparatory Committee on the NPT held in Geneva last April, the Holy See noted that today an uncertainty is emerging about the commitment to many of the international instruments which for years were considered the pillars of the global arms control and reduction regime. The geo-political situation has changed and certain dimensions of the disarmament scenario may require updating. But it would be a serious mistake to begin to take the current system apart or to allow it to disintegrate. A so-called "peace" based on nuclear weapons cannot be the type of peace we seek for the 21st century! The present state of the non-proliferation regime and of nuclear disarmament indicates that many still believe in the use of force and rely on nuclear weapons. This means, unfortunately, that the force and the primacy of law, as well as trust in others and the will to dialogue, have not yet become priorities.

The Holy See wishes to underline on this occasion the fundamental importance of law as a guarantee of international relations aimed at fostering peace between nations. "International law, a path to peace" is the theme which the Pope has recently chosen for the next World Day of Peace. Humanity faces a crucial challenge and more than ever needs to live in a renewed and authentic spirit of international legitimacy. Unless it manages to equip itself with truly effective institutions to avert the scourge of war, there is a risk that the law of force will prevail over the force of law. The only way forward is to resort to law and institutions capable both of assuring that law is respected, so that conflicts may be avoided without recourse to weapons, and of effectively addressing the causes of potential hostilities.

Mr. President, the Holy See welcomes the moratoria on testing, but such unilateral measures cannot take the place of signature and ratification of the Treaty which offers to the global community the prospect of a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing.

To conclude, Mr President, the Holy See wants to speak for many people of good will who strive to make the world a safer place and not to engage in a new arms race which, as in a chain reaction, will encourage to pursue the nuclear option with the risk of nuclear weapons falling into irresponsible hands. The CTBT invites all of us to have the courage of ambition: to finally free this world of the threat of nuclear weapons. Why should this not be possible? Thank you.

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