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MESSAGGIO DEL SANTO PADRE BENEDETTO XVI AL PRESIDENTE DELLA REPUBBLICA DEL KENYA E PRESIDENTE DI TURNO DELLA CONFERENZA INTERNAZIONALE SULLA REGIONE DEI GRANDI LAGHI, IN OCCASIONE DEL 2° VERTICE DELLA MEDESIMA CONFERENZA

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Il 14 e 15 dicembre ha avuto luogo a Nairobi (Kenya) il 2° Vertice della Conferenza Internazionale sulla Regione dei Grandi Laghi. Vi hanno preso parte i Capi di Stato e di Governo di undici Paesi della Regione, come pure quelli di altri Stati limitrofi e associati.

La Santa Sede vi ha partecipato con una Delegazione guidata da S.E. Mons. Luigi Travaglini, Nunzio Apostolico, in qualità di Inviato Speciale, e formata da S.E. Mons. Alain Paul Lebeaupin, Nunzio Apostolico in Kenya, Capo Delegazione Aggiunto, e dal Rev.do Julien Kaboré, Segretario della medesima Rappresentanza Pontificia.

Il Santo Padre ha voluto rendersi presente all'importante incontro con un Messaggio a firma del Cardinale Segretario di Stato, diretto a S.E. il Sig. Mwai Kibaki, Presidente della Repubblica del Kenya e Presidente di turno della medesima Conferenza.

Pubblichiamo di seguito il Messaggio del Santo Padre a firma del Cardinale Segretario di Stato:

• MESSAGGIO DEL SANTO PADRE

To His Excellency

Mr MWAI KIBAKI

President of the Republic of Kenya

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has been informed of the Second Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region taking place in Nairobi. He has directed me to convey to you, Mr President, and to all the Heads of State and Heads of Government gathered for this important event, his cordial greetings and the assurance of his prayers for the success of your meeting.

At the First Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, held two years ago, the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Stability, Democracy and Development was signed. His Holiness gives thanks to Almighty God for this important step forward and for the principles adopted in the Declaration which call for a greater commitment to achieve peace and stability.

Those attending this Conference are motivated by the awareness that precious time, energy and resources have been invested in armed conflicts that have left behind widespread devastation and caused detrimental setbacks. Countless people of the Great Lakes region have suffered too much and for too long. Accordingly, the present Summit is called to take up again the challenge and satisfy the long-suffering populations' yearning for lasting peace by signing and bringing to fulfilment the Pact on Security, Stability and Development. The four aspects envisaged in this plan (peace and security, democracy and good government, economic development and regional integration, social and humanitarian promotion) are interwoven and mutually inclusive. None of these human achievements can subsist, in a lasting and genuine form, without the support of the others. They will require from all those involved – authorities and citizens alike – generosity, courage and perseverance.

The Catholic Church attaches great importance to the values enshrined in these proposals and for many years has dedicated her untiring commitment to them. His Holiness is confident that the Catholic community will continue to do so with generous zeal, in cooperation with members of other religions and all men and women of good will. By engaging responsibly in public life they give clear expression to a particular form of fraternal charity.

His Holiness encourages all the Delegations present at this Conference to assume courageously their historic responsibility. His prayers will accompany them as they seek to agree upon and put into place the concrete measures that would decisively discourage any recourse to violence, and foster the only rational and human alternative to war: negotiation and dialogue. He is confident that on the basis of a genuine and stable peace, the Great Lakes Region with its human and natural resources, and the support of the international community, can overcome its present difficulties and offer its people the genuine hope of a dignified future.

Placing this noble aspiration in the providential hands of the Almighty, the Holy Father is pleased to extend to you, Mr President, to the Heads of State and Government and to all present at the Nairobi Conference, God's abundant blessings of well-being and peace. To these sentiments of His Holiness, I add my own personal greetings and good wishes.

From the Vatican, 5 December 2006

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone

Secretary of State

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