

3 December 2015

Your Holiness,

I would like to express my congratulations to you on your successful first visit to Africa. I also wish to express my regrets that I was not able to meet with you on your first stop in Kenya, due to conflicting obligations associated with the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, where I am optimistic that we will make concrete progress. I share your deep concern that we are at a critical juncture in advancing the global climate agenda. I believe that the seriousness of this moment is not lost on world leaders gathered now in Paris.

It is extremely significant that your first visit to the African continent included a pivotal stop in the Central African Republic, which faces continued insecurity and fraught intercommunal relations in its effort to consolidate peace. My Special Representative in the Central African Republic has shared that, with the spontaneous reactions of all Central Africans rallying behind your visit, irrespective of their religious affiliation, there was a palpable sense of restored confidence in the genuine desire of the people to live together in peace and move beyond intercommunal differences. Your visit to the country, particularly to the Mosque in the 'PK5' neighbourhood, generated a great sense of hope that the world remains deeply invested in securing a peaceful future for the Central African Republic. I express my deep gratitude to Your Holiness for this symbolically important visit that demonstrates your unwavering commitment to interfaith dialogue. I assure you that the United Nations will continue to work to facilitate an enabling and secure environment to bring the deep-rooted conflict in the Central African Republic to an end.

As South Sudan approaches two years since the eruption of the current civil conflict which has cost far too many lives and entailed untold suffering in this new nation, I also express my gratitude to you for your effort to overcome the stalemate in the peace process through meeting privately with President Kiir. I am hopeful that President Kiir, as a devout Catholic, was moved in his meeting with Your Holiness to put an end to the conflict and to selflessly pursue peace and stability that independence should have brought to his people. Your continued engagement, and that of your Representative, to support the South Sudan peace process would be most appreciated in the months to come as it enters a critical time.

His Holiness
Pope Francis
Vatican City

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IS-10542



Your tireless efforts to bring individuals and communities of different religions, faiths and social backgrounds together in our common quest for peace, reconciliation and tolerance are admirable. In a world of increasing inequalities, enduring poverty, unprecedented displacement and exploitation of religion by violent extremists, your leadership provides a unique moral compass. I look forward to pursuing our common objectives of interreligious dialogue and understanding, and protection of human rights for all.

Please accept, Your Holiness, the assurances of my highest consideration.

With deepest respect,


BAN Ki-moon

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

REFERENCE:

3 December 2015

Excellency,

The Secretary-General would be grateful if you could kindly forward the enclosed letter to His Holiness Pope Francis.

A copy of the letter is enclosed for your information.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'E. Mulet'.

Edmond Mulet
Chef de Cabinet

His Excellency
Archbishop Bernardito Cleopas Auza
Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer
of the Holy See to the United Nations
New York



URGENT

To: CDC (through ODSG),

As per SG's request, please find attached, for your approval and his personal signature, a letter to His Holiness Pope Francis.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AM'.

Political Unit
3 December 2015