



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

24 January, 2012

Your Holiness,  
Pope Benedict XVI,

It is with the deepest respect and appreciation that the members of my Cabinet and I received your truly inspirational message issued on the occasion of the 45th World Day of Peace, 1 January 2012.

Please accept our most sincere gratitude for communicating a truly timely and relevant message, inviting the people of the world to unite, to educate and seek peace, to be builders of peace, and to exchange dialogue.

Your message urges us to honestly face the diverse crises which have loomed large over the world in the last restless year. There is great light in the world rooted in people - in their cultural, spiritual and communal grasp of knowing themselves, of respecting other human beings. The more we act in concert - living, working and serving together with dignity- the greater natural light will shine forth from all peoples and nations, in every generation.

I am also aware of your inspirational message on the Day of Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer for Peace and Justice in the World on 27 October 2011, in Assisi, Italy, with the world's religious and spiritual leaders. Be certain, I thoroughly appreciated your call for all to be "Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace".

Your extraordinary guidance encourages us all as ordinary human beings. For myself, it provides some of the needed hope and inspiration I seek as a President of the United Nations General Assembly. In working to build a truly united global partnership, I am continuously encouraging world leaders, global institutions, and communities everywhere to find common ground, to shape safe spaces for mediation and understanding. I believe there is no conflict amongst peoples, whether two persons or two nations, which cannot move from

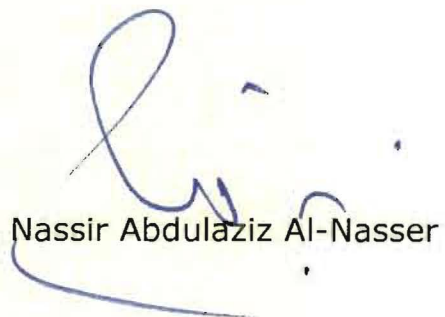
darkness into light, from despair into hope. Indeed, it is imperative that religious leaders like you, and the many others we humbly hold in the highest regard, be heard carefully, widely, wisely.

For the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, one of my core pillars as President is strengthening the peaceful settlement of disputes, particularly through mediation. I am also working closely with Member States to advance dialogue among different faiths and religions, for the purpose of fostering peace and understanding. To this end, the United Nations and the world will celebrate World Interfaith Harmony Week on 1-7 February 2012. For at our core, beyond borders and boundaries, we all share our humanity. As the Holy Quran says: "We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other, not that ye may despise each other."

It would be an extraordinary privilege to have an opportunity to enter into further dialogue with you and eminent leaders from your own Holy See diplomatic corps, as well as your Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. We certainly hold your Nuncio and Permanent Representative to the UN, Archbishop Francis Assisi Chullikatt, in the highest esteem.

May the promise of this New Year of 2012 bring to you and the universal Catholic community every good gift from Heaven.

Most respectfully yours, I am,



Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser