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Letter of the Cardinal Secretary of State to the current Chairperson of the Assembly of the African Union for the 30th Summit of the African Union

The following is the Letter sent by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin to the President of the Republic of Guinea, Alpha Condé, current Chairperson of the Assembly of the African Union for the 30th Summit of the African Union, on the occasion of the 30th Summit of the African Union, taking place in Addis Ababa from 27 to 29 January 2018:

Letter of the Cardinal Secretary of State

To His Excellency Alpha Condé

Chairperson of the Assembly of the African Union

Your Excellency,

His Holiness Pope Francis extends warm greetings to you and to the Representatives from various countries who have gathered in Addis Ababa to attend the High Level Event organized by the African Union with the support of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). He wishes to assure all of you of his prayerful support as you discuss the advances made in implementing the *Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*.

As ways are sought to eradicate hunger in the African Continent, we are aware that the “Commitment to Ending Hunger by 2025” is determined, among other things, by climate change and its effects on agricultural activities, as well as by the increase of conflicts destabilizing large areas of the Continent. We must ask ourselves, however, what role a lack of solidarity plays in this tragic situation, in which millions of lives are at stake.

The increasingly difficult situation in Africa requires a renewed focus and cooperation on behalf of those peoples

who, for various reasons, cannot satisfy their basic human needs. The dignity of every human person rightly demands that barriers to the attainment of these needs be overcome through the determination of all people, in particular with respect to the principles of distributive justice, to allocate resources through suitable strategies and projects. This includes full support for the measures taken by the African Union in close cooperation with the FAO. The hungry can no longer wait, nor should they settle for inadequate action.

Pope Francis encourages a return to the spirit of the *Malabo Declaration*, which inspired a vigorous call for renewed action to free African peoples from the menace of hunger through agricultural activity and food production in every country, and through efficient cooperation among all African Governments and intergovernmental organizations. This objective requires the involvement of states and international institutions from other continents to ensure global solidarity and responsibility.

A shared and tangible implementation of the *Declaration* is needed in order to guarantee that your efforts are not disregarded by particular interests or seen as an undesired consequence of unjust policies or mechanisms which impede a just access to the fruits of the earth. As His Holiness stressed during his recent visit to the FAO: "There is a need for broad and sincere dialogue at all levels, so that the best solutions can emerge and a new relationship among the various actors on the international scene can mature, characterized by mutual responsibility, solidarity and communion" (*Address on the occasion of World Food Day*, 16 October 2017).

Pope Francis asks Almighty God to bless the work of all those who promote development and who join their efforts to eradicate famine and poverty in Africa, and he prays that every man, woman and child will truly benefit from the abundant resources of creation.

Your Excellency, I hope that this meeting will prove most fruitful, and I extend my own cordial best wishes for the occasion.

Card. Pietro Parolin

Secretary of State
