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Presentation of the Credential Letters of the Ambassadors of Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Burundi and Qatar to the Holy See

This morning, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the ambassadors of Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Burundi and Qatar to the Holy See, on the occasion of the presentation of their credential letters.

The following are the Pope's address to the new ambassadors, and a brief biography of each one:

Address of the Holy Father

Your Excellencies,

I offer you a warm welcome and I gladly receive the Letters accrediting you as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your countries to the Holy See: Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Burundi and Qatar. In conveying my greetings to your respective Heads of State, I kindly ask that you assure them of a remembrance in my prayers as they carry out their important service.

While no ideal time exists, you are certainly beginning your new mission at a uniquely challenging moment. When I last gathered with your colleagues in January, the human family was beginning to breathe a sigh of relief, since we were slowly but surely tearing ourselves free from the grip of the pandemic. It seemed as if we could finally return to some sense of normality while keeping in mind the lessons learned over the past two years. Then, the dark cloud of war descended over Eastern Europe, subsequently enveloping the entire world in direct or indirect ways. After experiencing the devastating effects of two world wars and nuclear threats during the Cold War, together with a growing respect for the role of international law and the creation of multi-national political and economic organizations focused on uniting the global community, most people believed that war in Europe was a distant memory. We thought that children would one day ask their mothers: "What is war?" But that is not what happened.

As we saw during the height of the pandemic, however, even a tragedy of this scale can also bring out the best of humanity. Perhaps more than ever before, modern forms of communication have shaken our consciences by presenting in real time vivid and, at times, gruesome images of suffering and death. These same images have also inspired a sense of solidarity and fraternity leading many countries and individuals to provide humanitarian assistance. I think in particular of the many countries that are currently welcoming refugees from the conflict without counting the cost. We have seen families opening their homes to other family members, friends and even to those they do not know.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that there are numerous other conflicts going on in the world that are receiving little or no attention, especially from the media. We are one human family and the degree of indignation expressed, humanitarian support offered and sense of fraternity felt for those who are suffering must not be based on geography or self-interest. For “if every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbour was born in my country or elsewhere” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 125). This applies not only to situations of war and violent conflict but also to other situations of injustice plaguing the human family: climate change, poverty, hunger, lack of clean drinking water and availability of respectable work and proper education, to name a few.

The Holy See continues to work through numerous channels to bring about peaceful solutions to situations of conflict and to alleviate the suffering caused by other social problems. It does so with the conviction that problems affecting the entire human family require a united response from the international community with each member playing a part. Dear Ambassadors, you have a privileged role to play in this regard. You know all too well that war is always a defeat for humanity and runs contrary to the important service that you provide in trying to build a culture of encounter through dialogue and encouraging mutual understanding among peoples while also upholding the noble principles of international law. It is by no means an easy service but perhaps the situations of inequality and injustice that we are witnessing in our world today help us to appreciate your work all the more. Despite the challenges and setbacks, we must never lose hope in our efforts to build a world in which a sense of fraternity and mutual understanding prevail and disagreements are resolved through peaceful means.

Dear Ambassadors, as you now begin your new mission, I offer you my prayerful good wishes and I assure you that the offices of the Holy See are at your disposal in order to address matters of common concern. I cordially invoke abundant divine blessings of wisdom and peace upon you, your families, your diplomatic collaborators and staff. Thank you!

Curriculum vitae of the new Ambassadors

His Excellency Mr. Aamir SHOUKET

Ambassador of Pakistan to the Holy See

Born in 1969, he is married with two children. He has a degree and a master's degree in international relations.

He entered the Foreign Affairs Service in 1994 and has held the following offices: assistant director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1994 - 1999); diplomat at the Embassy in Greece (1999 - 2003); deputy director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2003 - 2004); director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2006 - 2007); diplomat at the Embassy in Bangladesh (2007 - 2010); diplomat at the Embassy in the Netherlands (2010 - 2013); deputy head of Cabinet at the Directorate General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (The Hague) (2013 - 2018); director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018 - 2019); director general at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018 - 2021).

His Excellency Omar Saif Saeed GHOBASH**Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the Holy See**

Born on 4 June 1971 in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, he is married with four children.

He holds a degree in law from the University of Oxford, and in mathematics from the University of London (2005). He has held the following offices: service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (1994 - 1996); service at the Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York (1994 - 1996); ambassador to the Russian Federation (2008 - 2017); non-resident ambassador to Ukraine (2010 - 2013); ambassador to France (2017 -2018); deputy minister of Cultural Affairs (from 2018 - 2021).

Her Excellency Ms. Appolonie NIBONA**Ambassador of Burundi to the Holy See**

Born in Mabawe, Burundi on 28 February 1969, she is married with three children.

She received a licentiate in economics and management from the Free International Institute of Africa (INILAQE) in 2015.

She has held a number of offices, including: various responsibilities and periods of formation at the National Post Office (1994-1995); head of the administrative service of the Institut Supérieur de Gestion des Entreprises (ISGE) (2015-2018); director of the Department of Finance and Fiscal and Monetary Affairs at the Ministry of the Office of the President, head of East African Community Affairs (2018 - March 2021); ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany (from March 2021).

His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Yousef bin Jassim Jabor Al-Thani**Ambassador of Qatar to the Holy See**

Born on 31 October 1969, he graduated in geography and urban planning from the University of Qatar (1992).

He has held the following offices: in the Department of Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1994-2000); third secretary, Embassy in Italy (2000-2004); first secretary, Embassy in Lebanon (2004-2005); assistant director of the Department for Human Rights (2005-2021).
