



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
BOLLETTINO

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHL
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 250116c

Thursday 16.01.2025

Audience with members of a Delegation from Albania

This morning, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the members of a delegation from Albania, led by His Grace Haji Dede Edmond Brahimaj.

The following is the Pope's address to those present at the audience:

Address of the Holy Father

*Dear Brother, Haxhi Baba Edmond Brahimaj,
Your Excellencies,
Dear Friends,*

I offer a cordial greeting to this distinguished delegation from Albania and in particular from the Bektashi community, and I thank the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue for making this meeting possible. Whenever religious leaders come together in a spirit of mutual esteem and commit themselves to the culture of encounter through dialogue, mutual understanding and cooperation, our hope for a better and more just world is renewed and confirmed. How much our world needs such hope! The friendly relations between the Catholic Church and Albania and the Bektashi community benefit us all, and I am confident that these bonds will grow ever stronger in the service of fraternity and peaceful coexistence between peoples. In these troubled times, all of us are called to reject the logic of violence and discord, in order to embrace the logic of encounter, friendship and collaboration in the pursuit of the common good. Indeed, our religious convictions help us to embrace more clearly these fundamental values of our common humanity and thus "allow our different voices to unite in creating a melody of sublime nobility and beauty" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 283).

In this regard, I think with gratitude of the many moments of fraternal encounter that have taken place between the Bektashi community and the Catholic Church, such as the Prayer for Peace in the Balkans in 1993 and the 2011 World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi. The inauguration of the Bektashi Temple in Tirana in 2015 was a particularly fruitful moment of closeness and friendship. I am convinced that the Bektashi community,

together with other Muslims, Christians and all other believers in Albania can serve as a bridge of reconciliation and reciprocal enrichment not only within your country but also between East and West. Despite the challenges of the present moment, interreligious dialogue has a unique role to play in the building of that future of reconciliation, justice and peace for which the world's peoples, and especially the young, so ardently long.

Dear friends, please be assured of my prayers and blessing for your important work and for all the beloved Albanian people. I ask you, please, also to remember me in your own prayers. Thank you.
