



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO MR AHMAD QUREI, PRIME MINISTER  
OF THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY\***

*Thursday, 12 February 2004*

*Mr Prime Minister,* I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican. Your presence brings back vivid memories of my pilgrimage to the Holy Land, during which I prayed fervently for peace and justice in the region. While signs of hope have not been altogether absent, unfortunately the sad situation in the Holy Land is a cause of suffering for all. No one must yield to the temptation of discouragement, let alone to hatred or retaliation. It is reconciliation that the Holy Land needs: forgiveness not revenge, bridges not walls. This demands that all leaders of the region follow, with the help of the international community, the path of dialogue and negotiation which leads to lasting peace. Upon you and your people I cordially invoke an abundance of divine blessings.

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