

MESSAGE

by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT
to the All Africa Churches Conference

February 18, 1976

Mr. President,

I welcome you to the land of Egypt, blessed by all the prophets and saints. This land which opened its heart and mind to the light of the divine messages, illuminating its life and shedding light on its way, the same way it is pursuing with faith in God and self-confidence, with hope and work in order to assert the dignity of man.

The Nile Valley opens its arms to welcome a select group bearing the message of the Orthodox Church, conveying love, fraternity and humanity, capable of asserting righteousness and justice and aiming to peace in a world, greatly in need of love and peace.

When we receive you and welcome the convening of your Conference in our country, we receive brothers to whom we are linked in struggles past and present, against imperialism, racial discrimination and exploitation, and which rid our Continent from the vestiges of imperialism, and which faced the challenges of backwardness and turned towards horizons of economic progress, social transformation and international cooperation for prosperity.

However, the elimination of imperialism by means of the African liberation movements during this century, proved to the people of the Continent that material progress is not sufficient for satisfying mankind and securing spiritual peace; that it is essential for material progress to be coupled with and guided by unshakable faith in God. Inspiration from divine teachings should be obtained to shed light on the perception of man and to consecrate the values of brotherhood, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, loyalty and pride in the humanitarianism of man.

These values have served to hold together our people with links of national unity, a unity that bolstered the Egyptian people throughout the history of their struggle.

Our sons, Christians and Moslems alike, who engaged in the liberation war of October 1973 were inspired by the same values ; they were the great example of valour and tenacity. Some of them died and will be resurrected along with the righteous and the saints.

On this occasion, it is necessary to record with appreciation and esteem the stand of the people and nations of the African Continent. In support of the Arab right, during these battles, they hastened to sever their relations with Israel, in condemnation of its expansionist and hostile attitude, and in assertion of the values of right and justice.

Our people knows that their victories in confronting the challenges that obstruct their course are derived from :

- 1) Faith in God, his Prophets and His Holy Books.
- 2) Faith in our country, its future and dignity.

Our country is also aware of the fact that there is no way to liberate our lands save by adhering to national unity, no way to

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deepen social justice save by greater solidarity and equal opportunities.

Support of world peace and progress is the responsibility of all people. The peace we seek is a peace based on justice, which guarantees liberation of all the Arab land, including Jerusalem, the city of the divine religions the sacredness of which should be preserved against those who violate them. A peace that also guarantees the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in a homeland wherein to live, a country secured by history and ratified by the international charters and organisations.

Being an African country, we are under the obligation to support the sister African countries in their struggle against racial discrimination, for the realisation of freedom and self-determination.

I do not doubt for a moment that members of this august assembly will examine these causes with objectivity and impartiality.

Brothers,

Welcome to Egypt, the meeting point of civilizations and religions, the land of love, unity and the partner in the struggle of the Arab nation and the African Continent for freedom and progress.

Welcome to you amongst people who will be happy to receive you and will consider your Conference as an embodiment of fraternity and a consolidation of its efforts for the sake of peace.

My best wishes for success.