

M E S S A G E

by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

to the World Religious Conference in Tokyo

June 13, 1976

I greet you in expression of my feelings and those of the Egyptian people towards His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan, the government and the friendly people of Japan.

It was a sound idea that made you meet here and gave me the pleasure to extend to you heartfelt greetings and express my sincere hope that your meeting would yield the most fruitful results. It was an idea of noble motives and sublime goals as it brought together hundreds of people from distant parts of the world to make of religions a topic of objective discussion, demonstrating their beneficial and great effects on the life of individuals, groups and nations.

Undoubtedly, though members of this Conference differ in creed, they rally around one aim, namely saving humanity from delusion, extricating it from evils whilst guiding it to the righteous path for its good and welfare, as well as bringing up a new generation of youths to cherish spiritual values and pursue them as a means of dealing with one another and with elderly and more experienced persons; for religions in all their images were but calls for right, good and beauty, an outcry for peace that should be restored to govern relations binding nations and peoples so that each indivi-

dual would feel himself, his family, property and his future secure. He can then function satisfactorily, enthusiastically and optimistically, thus becoming of use to his own nation and to mankind at large.

Religions were a cry for individual and collective freedom, a stimulus for justice and equality, with no injustice in judgement, no arbitrariness in government, and no classes in society, but a general freedom to be enjoyed by all as they breathe air, enjoy absolute justice, and deserve life, so that no one would enjoy utmost wealth while his brother remains hungry and unsheltered, and so that no powerful man would seek further power at the expense of his helpless neighbour.

All religions are sources of good, happiness and wisdom as they are similarly sources of virtuous morals and ideal principles urging virtue and renouncing evil.

Should people adhere to virtues advocated by religions, and avoid prohibited evils: right, justice, tolerance, compassion, cooperation, mercy and peace would prevail. It is only then that the world will be rid of hatred, greed, deception and cruelty. Yours is a unique Conference since it comprises all religions in a brotherly gathering marked by the kindest feelings and most sublime ends.

World peace is desired by every human heart. Religions provided peace, and Islam often emphasized it. There can be no prudent person who favours destructive war to just peace, who does not object to spending millions on futile armament or on needless aggressive war; who tolerates devastation of human civilisation and heritage, or causing wives to become widows and children to become orphans.

It is no wonder then that peace constitutes one of the origins of religions as it is peace which conforms virtues provided in these

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religions, which complies with people's happiness and lastly which is in keeping with the benefits people attain from the work they practise on earth. However this should not be interpreted as religions' call for submission to humiliation, the loss of rights or aggression against others. Religions never meant peace of that sort, for it is a weak peace. Religions call for strength, dignity, and sacrificing souls and property for human rights, as well as for peace based on justice.

Your Conference, your intentions and goals offer me the occasion to appeal to you to support occupied Palestine's right, since rendering millions of Palestinians homeless, depriving them of their legitimate rights, usurping their land and undermining their sanctities, those of Moslems and Christians, is an atrocity that can never be accepted by religion, or admitted by conscience or ignored by a human being who holds his humanity sacred. Thus let there be a substantial support to the Arabs of Palestine in this great Conference of yours. On this occasion, I state before you and as is known to the world that we seek peace, and the glorious October War has proved this fact, wherein we put an end to the so-called theory of the invincibility of Israel.

Furthermore, our peace will never be established without the recovery of every span of our occupied Arab territories. If not so, we shall then be forced to resort to war in order to regain our rights, fearlessly, as a step towards the establishment of just peace.