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Pope: Church Is a Willing Partner With Civil Authorities

Underlines Contribution of Religion to a Healthy Society

VATICAN CITY, JUNE 9, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)) - The efforts in recent years of Christian communities, including the Catholic Church, have helped Ghana make impressive gains in economic, social and political life, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope stated this in a letter he hand-delivered today to the new ambassador from Ghana to the Holy See, Geneviève Delali Tsegah, upon acceptance of her credentials.

The Holy Father also received the credentials of Stefan Gorda of Moldavia, Narciso Ntugu Abeso Oyana of Equatorial Guinea, Henry Llewellyn Lawrence of Belize, Hussan Edin Aala of Syria and George Robert Furness Troup of New Zealand.

After addressing the entire group of new diplomats, the Holy Father presented letters to each individually, which addressed the specific nations they represent.

The Pontiff noted the importance of religious freedom in his letter to Tsegah: "A democratic society that fosters freedom of religion and freedom of worship, and that appreciates the presence of religious institutions that strive to rise above political interests and are instead motivated by faith and moral values, understands that there is much to gain through these freedoms for the positive growth of all the country's institutions."

He added that a healthy cooperation between secular and religious interests benefits society "by combining the demands of macroeconomic progress and scientific knowledge with religion's perennial wisdom and understanding of man and society."

"[The Church] is a willing partner with civil authorities," the Pope said, "wherever she is able to fulfill her mission untrammelled, in the light of Gospel values."

Social solidarity

Benedict XVI wished Tsegah, a wife and mother of four and seasoned diplomat, a positive outcome for the current constitutional consultation. A successful consultation would allow Ghana's legislative and administrative framework to "consolidate a culture of responsible and active participation in the development of the country in freedom, justice and solidarity."

The Holy Father also expressed the hope that the country would administer its abundant natural resources in a non-exploitative way and in accordance with the principle of social solidarity, caring for poorer citizens who are unable to provide for themselves: "In this sense, may your country give

an example in establishing effective instruments of solidarity, to the true enrichment of all members of society."

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