



AFRICAN FARMERS SEND MESSAGE TO SYNOD

Request Aid in Optimizing Agricultural Resources

ROME, OCT. 1, 2009 (Zenit.org).- In a conference on the ecology and development of Africa, farmers, scientists and scholars came together to send a message of appreciation and appeal to the upcoming synod of bishops.

Participants in the Sept. 24 congress, titled "For a Green Revolution in Africa: Development Is the New Name of Peace," sent the conclusions of this meeting to those who will participate in the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, which begins Sunday in Rome.

The letter affirmed that "from the point of view of raw materials the Lord could not be more generous, but paradoxically Africans continue to be the poorest of the planet."

"Food scarcity, economic underdevelopment, lack of investments and infrastructure create situations of degradation and favor the rise of emigration and armed conflicts," it continued.

The message offered several points to be taken into consideration in the synod, in order to help the African people "to avoid despair, to foster hope and to build reasons for an articulated and integral development."

Among these points, the congress participants stressed the need to invest in education, especially for women who often have limited access to schooling.

They underlined the need for policies that promote family unity and stability.

The letter called for aid in helping Africans make use of agricultural technology that will help them to optimize their resources, particularly owners of small farms.

It stated that these farmers should have access to the most advanced technologies, to varieties of high-yield crops, prepared seeds, fertilizers, but also greater services and training.

The congress participants underlined the importance of promoting research and development projects in the continental agricultural field, giving the incentive to new generations to study and work in their native countries.

They affirmed the great prospects in the field of plant biotechnologies, applied not only in the improvement of seeds and their enrichment, but also to the production of medicines and vaccines.

The letter concluded by emphasizing the need to found growth on a culture that is based on the person, the family and development, as indicated in the human ecology elaborated by the Pontiffs.

The congress was organized by the Regina Apostolorum university and the European University of Rome, with the sponsorship of Italy's National Research Council.