

The Little Town of Araceli (San Paulo), 26th April 1998

## Message to the Youth for a United World

Dear Youth for a United World,

I know that you hoped to receive a message from me that would contribute towards the success of United World Week.

What subject have I chosen to speak on? There couldn't be a better one than your very own goal of achieving a united world.

Is it reasonable to talk about a united world? Is it possible to imagine a united world? Can we hope that the attention we give and the energy we use will one day play a significant role in reaching such an objective? Or is it a utopia, something unattainable and fantastical, as some people might think?

Many signs today point to the fact that the world is heading towards this goal.

First of all, there is the conviction that unity is a sign of the times. This means that those who are particularly able and competent in discerning the times we live in confirm that the world is moving towards unity.

Some of you may remember that I too have spoken about this very often, examining the religious aspect in particular.

Today's drive towards unity, however, does not only involve the religious field, but also the political world.

Apart from the United Nations, where almost all the states of the world are represented, there is the Organization of African Unity in Africa, for example, that is, an association of African states.

In Asia there are various associations of states like the Islamic Conference Organization which includes 53 Muslim countries; the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and others.

In America there is the Organization of American States (of North, Central and South America), and the Latin American Integration Association.

In Europe we have the Organization for European Economic Cooperation which also includes the countries of Eastern Europe, and the European Union.

In addition, many wise people from different cultures in the world have expressed their thoughts on this subject. I would have liked to quote them but I don't have access to them here in Brazil, from where I am sending this message.

I found some thoughts by the most recent Popes. Besides being authoritative, the Popes are also holy, and so what they say can be of interest to everyone in the world.

Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI have very similar ideas.

In *Populorum Progressio*, Paul VI says: "Who cannot see the need to reach, by degrees, the establishment of a worldwide authority that can act effectively on the juridical and political levels?"<sup>1</sup>

The present Pope expressed himself in these terms at our Genfest '90: "Truly, this seems to be the perspective emerging from the multiple signs of our times: the perspective of a united world. This is the great expectation of people today, the hope, and at the same time, the great challenge for the future. It is evident we are moving towards unity at an ever increasing speed."

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1 *Populorum Progressio*, n. 78.

My dear young people, you are striving and working for a united world.

What are you doing to reach this goal? You are involved in activities which, although meaningful, might appear very small in comparison with your proposed objective. When you are older, perhaps some of you will be more directly involved in the various organizations which contribute to building a united world.

Although all these activities and efforts will be very helpful, I don't think that any of them will play a determining role in reaching this goal.

Instead, the deciding factor in the journey towards unity we are involved in, is that of giving a soul to the world. And this soul is love. You must start a revolution of love around you, in all the countries you are living in.

Today it is not enough to organise charity or welfare programs, although through such activities we can give to others out of love. Today we must "be love", that is, we must feel what the other person is feeling, live the other, the others, and aim at achieving unity in accordance with our spirituality which, like a fire, has already been enkindled in varying measures, thanks to you too, all over the globe.

John Paul II also said at the Genfest '90: "Be aware - and I say it again - that the path towards a united world, which is the path of peace, is founded on building relationships of solidarity, and solidarity has its roots in charity" (in love).

Thus we must build relationships of unity, which have their roots in love.

You must live out this love first of all among yourselves, so as to reach the point of living it with many, many others, wherever you go: with the people you meet every day, and with those who determine the course of events, in various institutions, and in big and small organizations around the world... everywhere. Only then will they fulfill the purpose for which they were established; only then will we truly work for a united world.

Take courage, then, youth for a united world. You are following the most fascinating and splendid ideal on earth.

And you are not alone!

You, who are proud to be called Christians, know that by acting in this way, Christ is among you.

Each and every one of you, of every belief and creed, knows that unity is strength.

Go ahead then, begin or continue with your characteristic enthusiasm and determination.

I, all of us, are with you... for the final victory, whenever God wills.

But who will gather if no one sows? This is your task now at this time in history. And all things considered, there are promising signs that the goal you are living for is not far-off.

*Chiara Lubich*