

## CHILEAN AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH FOR THE CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY

- His Excellency Archbishop Alain Paul Lebaupin, Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya
- Her Excellency Jacqueline Mendoza, Ambassador of Venezuela to Kenya
- His Grace the Most Reverend Raphael Ndingi Mwana a’Nzeki, Archbishop of Nairobi,
- Professor John Odhiambo, Vice Chancellor of Strathmore University
- Mr Raymond Mutura, Chairman of the steering committee of the Family Congress and of Voice of the Family in Africa
- Mrs Marina Philips-Robben, Secretary General of the International Federation for Family Development

University authorities, honourable guests, ladies and gentlemen,

- I was very pleased when I was first got to know what the organising committee had in store for the promotion of the family through this congress, and when they subsequently extended this invitation to me, to give these opening remarks.
- I am also very grateful to the organisers for arranging this congress and for involving me in it, not only because of the prestige that this institution has had over the years in the country, but also because I share something in common with the organisers, that is that I am a promoter of the family.
- Thanks to God, I have grown up in and around large families. I am the first born together with my twin sister in a family of 12 brothers and sisters, equally balanced with 6 men and 6 women. My wife here is from a family of 9, they are 7 sisters and 2 brothers and I have been blessed to have 10 children, all grown up now and 9 of whom are happily married {the unmarried one is serving society and God as an ordinary layman giving testimony by his work}.
- Between my 9 married children, I have now 54 grandchildren and one great grandson, enough to have 5 football teams.
- I have come to marvellously experience the joy and sharing spirit, the sense of humour and self-giving that is natural to a large family. My children have come to learn how not to be selfish, since none has ever really had anything for him or herself only, as all is commonly shared in large families. After having lived through such experiences with large families, one looks at the day-to-day problems of life with a certain good humour and at great ease.
- {I think that if this was to end my speech, I would have given the essence, tone and maybe a certain direction to this congress, but I will say a bit more.}
- The promotion of the Family HOWEVER is not only about having large families. There is more to it. The family is the most basic and the most important socio-economic unit of the society. In it is a representation and reflection not only of the society but also of the Creator God and therefore there is something in it that cannot just be manipulated at will, be it by science nor by persons. It is about
  - ✓ Protecting it from unjust laws and legislation
  - ✓ Protecting its very nature as it was given by the creator

- In other words, there is something sacred in the family that only its conceiver can change or give direction to. No international body however big or however well represented, no parliament, has a right to change what belongs to the essence of the family.
- Just to highlight an example that shows the consequence of not heeding to this call. It has been shown by history that entire civilisations have been wiped out as a consequence of not respecting the laws of nature regarding the family.
- Protecting and fostering the good of the family goes hand in hand with the promotion and defence of human rights. Failure to do so implies going against the inalienable human rights that are inherent to any human being and therefore constitutes a crime against humanity.
- Fortunately, I come from a society that still has a profound respect for the natural inherent family values, and where for example, large families are not rare commodities. Chile, like Kenya has not fallen to the disgraces of the more developed world regarding this subject.
- This congress is an occasion for brainstorming ideas and forming lasting convictions. Formation is never-ending. It is upon us to be firmly rooted on science, on faith and directed by the right attitudes. We can never assume that we know it all. This congress will show you that there is a lot to learn and a lot that you can do to foster good in the society.
- I can safely conclude by saying that the Family is the future of this world. The success of the economy, the success of science, the success of everything lies not in created things but - as Julian Simon said, in the ultimate resource. Man (and woman of course) is the ultimate resource, and man subsists in a family because man is not an island, isolated from others.
- It is upon us to lobby for the family before Governments, the international bodies and before all men and women of good will, in the office, wherever we find ourselves, to spread the goodness of the family.

**THANK YOU**