

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

6 June 2014

Her Excellency Ms. Dilma Rousseff,
President of the Federative Republic of Brazil

Your Excellency,

In response to your kind invitation, we take pleasure in sending the following message on the occasion of the opening of the 2014 World Cup.

We extend our heartfelt greetings to the people of Brazil as they welcome the representatives of so many countries to their homeland for a celebration of sporting prowess. Few occasions can claim to embrace so wide a cross-section of humanity, comprising peoples of varied ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. It is clear to every observer that the sport that has brought these nations to Brazil is only strengthened by the marvellous diversity of the participants. To rejoice in this fact is to reject prejudice in all its forms. Truly, nothing is more striking about this extraordinary footballing spectacle than its capacity to reflect the global culture that has emerged in this age. And in summoning together the nations in friendship, it powerfully suggests that collaboration and common endeavour are possible in all things.

Humanity today is bound together in a global civilization. As the world advances in its organic evolution, let it reflect at this moment on the many qualities that the Brazilian people so admirably embody. For the path to peace will require expansive hearts, a passion for progress, unbounded creative energy, great resilience, a strength forged from diversity, and minds enlightened by the spirit of the age and inspired by the quest for justice. The peoples of the world are as variegated flowers in one splendid garden. Is any nation more fit to demonstrate this simple but essential truth than Brazil? In the vibrant, interwoven colours of this land the world can imagine its own dazzling future possibilities.

A sporting contest, even one on such a scale as this, cannot obscure the severity of the challenges that confront humankind. But in the weeks to come, we hope that observers everywhere—especially the youth of the world—will take heart from the many examples of teamwork, fair play, valour, and earnest striving that are sure to surface in the tournament. God willing, they will aspire to show those same qualities in their lives, in service to their communities, and in the promotion of peace. Whether labouring for the elimination of every trace of racism and discrimination, championing the equality of women and men, or seeking to advance justice, the efforts of every member of the human family are necessary. Constructive change is possible everywhere. Man, woman, youth, and child—all have an essential contribution to make.

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We anticipate a time when competition among the nations may be a phenomenon chiefly witnessed in the sporting arena, whereas interactions on the global stage will be dominated by cooperation, reciprocity, and mutual support. We pray that this present occasion will redound to the honour of the great nation of Brazil as hosts and that the event will inspire not only passing fellowship but lasting solidarity among all who participate and the countless millions who spectate.

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