

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO
THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION ANNUAL AWARD
New York, 29 October 1990

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I am pleased to greet this important milestone in the leading work for human rights of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, and to recognize with appreciation the achievements in the same field of Cardinal Casaroli, whom you honour tonight.

The Foundation and Cardinal Casaroli have frequently been partners in the cause of human rights and particularly in the struggle for religious liberty. This is an important example and reminder of the contributions of non-governmental organizations, individuals, and religious institutions, which, although important in almost all United Nations activities, have been almost uniquely important to the Organization's work to advance human rights.

Cardinal Casaroli has been a constant presence in the work of the United Nations since 1961 on topics as diverse and important as disarmament and consular relations. However, we have especially valued his dynamic efforts on an issue and in a region of great importance to the United Nations: the cause of human rights and especially of religious freedom. As I found in my encounters with him over the years, his commitment to those goals was the result of his profound and deeply rooted respect for human life and the freedom necessary for its growth. He has conducted his campaign for human rights for all, including religious and ethnic minorities, with vigor and imagination from local churches to the Conference on European Security and Co-operation.

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It is therefore most fitting that the Appeal of Conscience Foundation should have chosen to honour Cardinal Casaroli as it marks the twenty-fifth year of its own distinguished history of ecumenical commitment in the service of human rights and religious liberty. We in the United Nations think especially of the Foundation's major and continuing contribution to the development and implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

On this inspiring occasion, I congratulate the Foundation and Cardinal Casaroli on their dedicated service to human rights. In particular, I thank them for their invaluable and constant support to the human rights programmes of the United Nations. We look forward to many future years of this service and support to justice and human dignity.

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TO: RABBI ARTHUR SCHNEIER
PRESIDENT
APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION
119 WEST 57TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10019
FAX: 212-628-2513

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BE HELD 29 OCTOBER 1990.

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