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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL SECONDO COMITATO DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE CIRCA I RAPPORTI TRA CULTURA E SVILUPPO

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NAZIONI UNITE CIRCA I RAPPORTI TRA CULTURA E SVILUPPO

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento pronunciato il 17 ottobre scorso, dinanzi al Secondo Comitato della LVII Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U., da S.E. Mons. Renato R. Martino, Capo Delegazione della Santa Sede, sul tema dei rapporti tra cultura e sviluppo:

● INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. RENATO R. MARTINO

Mr. Chairman,

The Holy See is pleased to join in the discussion of the relationship of culture, in all its aspects, to development. In this, my Delegation welcomes the *Note by the Secretary General*, transmitting the *Report by the Director General of UNESCO*.

Recently, His Holiness Pope John Paul II stated, "...the reprehensible terrorist attacks of 11 September last, and the many preoccupying situations of injustice throughout the world, remind us that the Millennium just begun presents great challenges. It calls for a resolute and uncompromising commitment on the part of individuals, peoples and nations to defend the inalienable rights and dignity of every member of the human family. At the same time, it demands the building of a global culture of solidarity which will find expression not simply in terms of more effective economic or political organization but more importantly in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation in the service of the common good."¹

The *Report* before us outlines "The principles concerning the impact of culture on the relevance, success and sustainability of development policies."

But what are those principles that help to address UNESCO's cross-cutting issues of "poverty eradication, especially extreme poverty and the contribution of information and communication technologies to the development of education, science and culture and the construction of a knowledgeable society"?

They must be based upon the recognition of the human dignity, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and respect for cultural differences and uniqueness. That foundational understanding then leads to the human solidarity that promotes social cohesion and deeper appreciation of the "the common heritage of humanity".

The Holy See bases this statement on the words of Pope John Paul II, "Only God's love, capable of making the men and women of every race and culture into brothers and sisters, can make painful divisions, ideological contrasts, economic disparities and the violent abuses that still oppress mankind, disappear."²

This echoes the statement made by the Holy See during the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development: "The fact that the earth and all its resources are part of the "common heritage of all humanity" creates the understanding which fosters interdependence, stresses responsibility and underlines the importance of the principle of global solidarity. This reality becomes the foundation of sustainable development by directing the moral imperatives of justice, international cooperation, peace, security, and the desire to enhance the spiritual and material well-being of present and future generations."

These are not just good ideas or best wishes for the future. Nor can they be seen as only the responsibility of one group, organization or agency. Nor can the discussion centre around only protecting culture from those principles of development that may impact upon it. Instead the discussion must focus on finding the means to allow culture to complement development as development must complement culture.

The United Nations recognizes how that process works. We have had discussions on the Culture of Peace, we have had dialogues among civilizations and we work to protect cultural heritage. We come together to discuss problems from a full range of subjects.

These discussions must continue. The United Nations system provides an excellent venue for those discussions and the exchange of ideas. In the words of Pope Paul VI, "This Organization represents the obligatory path of modern civilization and world peace".³

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation hears again and again that "the world is dramatically changed". It has indeed changed. But the basic good, the human dignity, dreams and aspirations continue to drive the people of the world, especially those searching for a better life for themselves and future generations.

If this is the goal and purpose of today's discussion then let it conclude with a focus on a better future for all mankind while appreciating the various cultures that make each of us unique.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Pope John Paul II, *Address to H.E. Mrs. Kathryn Frances Colvin*, 7 September 2002.2 Pope John Paul II, *Message for World Mission Day*, 18 May 2002.3 Pope Paul VI, *Address to the Twentieth Session of the General Assembly*, 4 October 1965.[01642-02.01] [Original text: English]
