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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL SECONDO COMITATO DELLA 58a ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SU INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Il recente insuccesso della V Conferenza Ministeriale dell'OMC (Cancún, settembre 2003) ha messo in evidenza, una volta in più, la mancanza di una visione dei rapporti economici internazionali in cui il bene comune e l'offerta di possibilità di sviluppo a tutti gli uomini primeggino sulla ricerca di egemonie nazionali e la promozione degli interessi dei più potenti. Facendo riferimento a tale precedente, nell'ambito dei lavori del Secondo Comitato della 58a Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite, il Capo della Delegazione della Santa Sede, S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, è intervenuto per ricordare nuovamente i criteri etici che devono essere alla base degli scambi economici internazionali.

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento di S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore:

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr. Chairman,

The primary purpose for the Holy See's participation in international forums, is to help promote the dignity of the human person and contribute to the common good of the entire human family. In the area of economic relations, and specifically in trade matters, the Holy See advocates an equitable and just system, which fosters the dignity and integral development of the human person.

There is no doubt that markets are at the centre of the economy and that, to a large extent, equitable international markets are the solution to many of the problems of the less developed countries. But markets by themselves do not solve every social problem, including those related to unemployment and abject poverty. At times, and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, it may be necessary for governments to play a more important role in the economy. Thus, the relationship between government and markets should be viewed as complementary rather than competitive or even antagonistic. The principle of subsidiarity should always be respected and applied increasingly.

The removal of artificial restraints on the flow of goods and to some extent, also of services, can have a stimulating effect on the economy and lead towards greater efficiency and economic growth. Nevertheless, change can be disruptive and social distortions may occur that can have negative effects, especially in the economies of the less developed countries; distortions that may require government measures to ease the hardships and sufferings primarily of the poor and forestall a possible recession. International trade rules should not hinder the ability of governments to adopt such measures.

Trade policy needs to be organized in a way that it contributes to the sustainable economic development. On their part, the less developed countries must also take the necessary steps to avoid corruptive and unethical practices which, in the past, have affected negatively their development process and the well-being of their populations. Otherwise, the positive benefits of a well ordered international trade system would not be felt by the poor of the less developed countries. The Holy See is always supportive of all efforts made by the international community that are geared toward the well-being of every member of the human family.

The recent Ministerial meeting that took place in Cancun on 14 September 2003, seems to have put in jeopardy the optimism that prevailed at Doha among the countries in the process of development. The expectation among the poor countries that the richer ones would reduce trade-distorting farm support, slash tariffs on farm goods and eliminate agricultural export subsidies did not occur. Neither were the industrial tariffs on textiles cut nor were developing countries' concerns on special and differential treatment and on implementation addressed.

Given the tense situation that prevailed during the Cancun meeting, the possibility of compromise between the rich and poor countries became extremely difficult. It is to be hoped that the events of Cancun will not jeopardize the possibility of building in the near future a strong and more just multilateral system in the areas of trade and development.

Let me conclude these remarks by stating that "models that are real and truly effective can only arise within the framework of different historical situations, through the efforts of all those who responsibly confront concrete problems in all their social, economic, political and cultural aspects, as these interact with one another" (Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, #43). With regard to such a task, the Holy See wishes to reiterate its position which recognizes the positive value of the market and of enterprise, but which at the same time points out that these need to be oriented toward the common good.

What is needed is a greater degree of international solidarity among all the nations of the world and an abandonment of those group interests that can promote their own selfish objectives while disregarding the common good. At the same time, corruptive practices, both in developed and developing countries, must be curtailed so that the fruits of trade and a healthy development can be enjoyed by all sectors of society - rich and poor - and not only by the privileged few. This is the challenge that all nations, in a spirit of solidarity, are obliged to share.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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