

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 0484

Mercoledì 06.10.2004

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL TERZO COMITATO DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SU SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (ITEM 94a)

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL TERZO COMITATO DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SU *SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY* (ITEM 94a)

Pubblichiamo di seguito il testo dell'intervento pronunciato ieri, 5 ottobre, dall'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, davanti al III Comitato della 59ª Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U. sul tema "Social Development including Questions relating to the World Social Situation and to Youth, Ageing, Disabled Persons and the Family" (item 94a):

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr. Chairman,

In the United Nations, we often hear about development in general but perhaps more should be made of social development specifically. Once we reflect on the objectives of this noble organization, we come to realize that human beings are at the center of all that we do. Their social development is in line with and has a vital role in establishing peace and security.

In the course of time, some forces of globalization have aggravated the insecurities associated with poverty and vulnerability. The youth, the ageing, disabled persons, indigenous peoples, migrants, women and the family have all been sidelined to varying degrees and have become more prone to poverty. Economic progress does not suffice in itself, but should be accompanied by socio-political progress which will assure that a part of the general benefits have a social purpose. In this sense, policy frameworks and developmental plans, both national and international, should create an enabling environment which in turn will lead to social integration, access to basic social services, education and primary health care, sustenance of the family, the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, so that all become owners of their own development.

We are reminded of the drive to implement social development by some important declarations issued in the UN

during the past decade.

My Delegation is gratified to find them throughout the documents from Copenhagen to Johannesburg, because we believe in development focused on the human person and in development which realizes human capacity. Such a vision involves moving from assistentialism to empowerment. It means moving away from a policy in which people or groups are considered the object of intervention, to one in which they become the protagonists of their own development. Making them the center of concern should also include the recognition of their capabilities and potentials.

Mr. Chairman, allow me to focus on some particular issues concerning social development:

The social policies for the protection of vulnerable individuals will make sense and will be effective in so far as they are capable of strengthening natural social groups – the small communities and the family – as well as in the measure that they generate a sense of responsibility in civil society towards vulnerable sectors. One must also recognize the social nature of children, the elderly and the handicapped. Only the creation and empowerment of a diversified social network, which begins with the family and is seen at different levels throughout society, will empower those as yet unprotected.

The Holy See once again calls attention to the protection of the family. My delegation is firmly convinced that: "Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family." In this context, my delegation robustly participated in the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family which it viewed as a most significant occasion to continue the discussions that will help strengthen the role of the family in today's world.

The Holy See is actively engaged in the current work to draft a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, and looks forward to the drafting of a Convention that will further protect the rights of those concerned. What is at stake is nothing less than the right of those individuals to be full members of society. The work on this Convention must become the vehicle by which we take into account the authentic interests and concerns of disabled persons. In a society rich in scientific and technical knowledge it is now possible to do more in the various ways required by civil coexistence: from biomedical research for preventing disabilities, to treatment, assistance, rehabilitation and a new social integration. This convention is being drafted in favor of the disabled, so that they may fully participate in the right to life, something which must be guaranteed to all.

I can assure delegates that the Holy See will continue to work for a better future for all, through recognition of that human dignity which we all share.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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