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INTERVENTO DELL'OSSERVATORE PERMANENTE DELLA SANTA SEDE PRESSO L'ORGANIZZAZIONE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE NEL TRIBUTATO ALLA MEMORIA DI SUA SANTITÀ GIOVANNI PAOLO II NEL CORSO DELLA 59ma SESSIONE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELL'O.N.U. (NEW YORK, 6 APRILE 2005)

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Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato ieri a New York nell'ambito del Tributo che la 59ma Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U ha voluto rendere a Sua Santità Giovanni Paolo II:

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr. President,

Thank you for opening this morning's session with a special tribute to the late Pope John Paul II. My delegation deeply appreciates your gesture and conveys to you the Holy See's acknowledgement and appreciation for the kind expression of your sympathy.

I would also like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Chairs of the regional groups and to the Permanent Representatives for the statements which cordially echo and skillfully portray the many feats of a mighty man of peace. At the four points of the compass, he transmitted fresh courage and hope to those who are oppressed, the poorest and the weakest throughout the world, with a passion for freedom and solidarity, confronting the drawbacks in different political, economic and social systems. In this, he was guided by a respect for the dignity of the human being, made in the image of God. He strongly believed that it is only by keeping the transcendent in view, that we can remain truly conscious of our place in creation.

During his first visit to UN Headquarters in New York in 1979, John Paul II said that the Holy See attached not only great importance to its collaboration with the United Nations but that, after the birth of the Organisation, it had always expressed its esteem and approval for the historic importance of this "ultimate forum" of international life and contemporary humanity. In particular, John Paul II said that he hoped that the UN, due to its universal

character, would not cease to be an effective place from where to evaluate, in truth and justice, all the problems facing humanity. While visiting the UN in 1995, he suggested that the UN could become a kind of "moral centre where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop a shared awareness of being, as it were, a 'family of nations.'"

At a time when efforts were made to stand at a certain distance from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to set aside some of the contents of this milestone along humanity's difficult road, John Paul II, throughout the 26 years of his pontificate, was one of its most ardent defenders.

As with his predecessors, John Paul II often expressed the hope that the UN and its agencies might become better adapted to their mission. There are many reforms that he felt would be desirable so as to make the bodies associated with the UN more efficient, so that they might serve better the societies, economies and cultures of the world.

He felt that, as globalisation grows, there should be a corresponding growth in sound and effective international organs capable of guiding the world's economy for the common good. While states standing alone are unlikely to achieve such a goal, international organs, backed by real political will, could effectively cooperate with states to do so.

Furthermore, the pope dearly wished to see the UN develop effective procedures other than war to resolve international conflicts. With regard to those that have troubled recent history, John Paul II always advocated the application of international law, placing the rule of law over the rule of force. If the will to work for the common good in this way truly existed, the weakness of some international institutions would rapidly be transformed, to the greater peace and security of all, with the added bonus of great amounts of resources being thus available for development, the acknowledged adjunct to a wise security policy.

Mr President, let me finish by repeating my gratitude for your kind expressions of condolence and for those of the distinguished delegations who have been good enough to do likewise. Thank you.

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