



BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 0508

Lunedì 16.10.2006

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL CONSIGLIO DELLA CONFERENZA DELLE NAZIONI UNITE PER IL COMMERCIO E LO SVILUPPO (UNCTAD) SUI PAESI MENO SVILUPPATI

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL CONSIGLIO DELLA CONFERENZA DELLE NAZIONI UNITE PER IL COMMERCIO E LO SVILUPPO (UNCTAD) SUI PAESI MENO SVILUPPATI

Da giugno ad ottobre 2006, in tre apposite sessioni, si è svolto a Ginevra, presso la Conferenza delle Nazioni Unite per il Commercio e lo Sviluppo (UNCTAD), l'*esame di metà percorso*, cioè la valutazione dell'attuazione delle decisioni prese nel corso dell'ultima Conferenza Generale (São Paulo, giugno 2004).

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento pronunciato dal Rappresentante della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione, S.E. Mons. Silvano Tomasi, il 5 ottobre c.m., circa i criteri che devono orientare l'aiuto allo sviluppo nei Paesi più poveri:

● INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. SILVANO M. TOMASI

Mr President,

The Delegation of the Holy See expresses its sincere appreciation for the steady action of UNCTAD in favor development, especially of the Least Developed Countries and of Africa, the often forgotten continent. In fact, in its historical commitment and in its action UNCTAD has carried out the UN Charter's objective to promote social progress and better standards of life.

1. Lately the world economy grew at a fast rate. More wealth has been produced. In 2006, growth rate is expected to be close to 4% even if interest rates and oil prices have been rising. However, the good performances of the world economy and the benefits of globalisation are not equally distributed among and within countries. The significant growth of recent years is not yet consolidated and several poor countries, mainly in Africa, are still at the margin of the development process.

2. In recent years a number of initiatives have been implemented to alleviate poverty and to enhance growth prospects in LDCs: the launching of the Millennium Development Goals, the work of implementation of the Doha agenda, various debt reduction initiatives and the new Official Development Assistance commitments, to name the most important: all aimed at giving a decisive contribution to poverty reduction and elimination while at the

same time they raised great expectations among people in developing countries.

3. Good will and good planning notwithstanding, concrete results so far have been disappointing. The Doha agenda had a big setback in Cancun and the more recent ministerial conference in Hong Kong has not so far produced a clear agreement on the issues that are crucial for poor countries, such as agricultural subsidies in developed economies. At present sub-saharian African countries are not expected to meet any of the target of the MDG by the required date (2015). Besides, less than half of the eligible countries have succeeded so far in obtaining the maximum debt relief possible. Realistically, then, the UNCTAD's *2006 Trade and Development Report* calls for a "fundamental reorientation of policy" and for a "policy innovation" in order to have a "new focus on poverty reduction".

4. UNCTAD Mid Term Review provides the opportunity to refocus the development effort by reaffirming the spirit of Sao Paulo: "We are committed to the struggle for the eradication of poverty and hunger. Policy instruments and measures, at the national and international levels, should be adopted ... to encourage the creation of opportunities for the poor women and men of the world to have access to jobs and to stable and adequate remuneration." The realisation of this commitment has been pursued by UNCTAD through the three pillars of its action: research and policy analysis, consensus building and technical cooperation, a core of competences proven to be effective for developing countries.

5. It is crucial that research and policy analysis be completely independent and accessible also to LDC. Moreover policy prescriptions following from research should be tailored in terms of both objectives and timing to the needs and capabilities of poor countries.

6. With respect to consensus building UNCTAD has a unique role, being a knowledge-based institution, and as such it should be at the heart of a process that creates among multinational institutions a consensus centred on development.

7. Regarding technical cooperation, it is important that UNCTAD increases its participation in country level development programmes with other UN and multinational organisations in order to improve efficiency in its actions and to implement on the ground its role in consensus building.

8. In pursuing its objectives, UNCTAD should envision development as referred to the human person rather than to the economy in general. In fact, any development strategy has to recognise that its true goal is uplifting the worth and dignity of any woman and man. While these values can be enhanced by raising economic standards, the economic dimension doesn't exhaust them. A person's value and dignity lies in being open to others and in developing in action.

9. Any policy oriented strategy therefore is called to take into account that human capital is central in any development programme. Only educated people can make the most of the opportunities created by globalisation. Education has a much broader meaning than just schooling: it implies the introduction of the individual to the full understanding of reality beginning from his/her traditions and culture.

10. Thus development initiatives should involve much more local communities. A stronger participation of these communities witnesses not only a proactive involvement of people in the development process but also it reduces the risk that globalisation proceeds at the expenses of local traditions.

11. If civil society actors and local communities participate in the design and organisation of aid and development packages, a solution may become available in resolving the "democratic deficit" of the current globalisation process.

12. The fact that the human person is not an island, but a network of relations should make us cautious about recent discussions on labour mobility. In the case of temporary labour migrations, the effects of this experience on family and on societies of origin and destination countries will have to be carefully analyzed.

13. Aid and development packages should be oriented at increasing opportunities for individuals and communities. In this context, the aid for trade initiative is certainly a big step forward since it allows access to the potential benefits of globalisation and trade integration to several countries and peoples.

14. With the person at the center of development and development at the center of the international community agenda, the next step can be what the latest LDC report states: a "development-driven approach to trade rather than a trade-driven approach to development". This new relationship implies a policy shift to "place production and employment at the heart of efforts to reduce poverty".

15. On the other hand, poor countries need to be equipped to make the most of the opportunities coming their way. Besides enhancing human capital, efforts should be conveyed to three well known areas:

16. Health: poor countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, still suffer of terrible sanitary conditions. Without a drastic reduction in mortality rates and increase in life expectancy there will not be the possibility for poor people to take the opportunities offered them.

17. Infrastructures: lack of infrastructures is at present one of the most pressing problems for poor countries, especially in Africa. Without a proper infrastructural framework peoples and governments cannot have access to international markets therefore losing all the potential benefits of trade.

18. Institutions: several poor countries lack the institutional structure needed to accompany the development process. Lack of property rights and widespread corruption are major factors that hamper development. A strong moral aspect cannot be underestimated: people receiving aid cannot allow corruption to destroy the trust of the population in donor countries.

Mr. President,

If we truly care about persons and peoples and their development, the eradication of poverty will not remain a mirage, but a reachable goal.

[01446-02.01] [Original text: English]
