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SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA TERZA COMMISSIONE DELLA 62a SESSIONE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELL'O.N.U.

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Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, l'Arcivescovo S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato ieri a New York davanti alla Terza Commissione della 62a Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U. su *Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly*.

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr. Chairman,

At the 1995 Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development, the Member States of the United Nations affirmed the need to address the problem of poverty by attacking its structural roots. They decided to incorporate into their national policies, as an essential element, a sharp reduction of inequality and of the various forms of marginalization and to achieve full social integration.

The international debate following the Copenhagen Summit shifted its focus to the global fight to eradicate extreme poverty centred on achieving the MDGs. It also stressed the conditions required for equity in bilateral and multilateral financial and trade relationships and made special reference to the WTO Doha Round. The debate touched on the problems of external debt, the governance of world finance and the emergencies that generate or aggravate poverty, such as wars, corruption, the trafficking of drugs and human beings.

While this discussion is of utmost importance, it is equally important to reiterate that economic policies cannot be separated from social policies; otherwise, neither one nor the other will reach its respective goal. Indeed, during the last twelve years there has been a clear tendency towards increasing inequality between rich and poor, between developed and developing or underdeveloped countries and within individual nations. Evidently, the greater benefits of global economic growth have not reached, generally speaking, the poorer segments of society.

So far, only a few States have achieved a right balance between success in a global market-driven economy and the preservation, even a fine tuning, of social protection, thus ensuring a person-centred development. Instead, in many cases new forms of poverty in both rich and poor countries have appeared side by side with the more traditional ones mainly characterised by wide income differences. The dearth of means among the weaker sectors of society has led to the loss of social relationships and networks needed to maintain personal integrity and dignity. Such is the case of the elderly left on their own, of the uninsured sick people, of the unemployed and the unskilled, of migrants unable to find work, of women and children suffering from family breakdown, of all those in precarious situations.

The Copenhagen Summit already foresaw the problems that the rapidly globalising economy would provoke if not accompanied by a renewed attention to the social dimension of economic development. Today the world suffers from the unhinging, in greater or lesser degree, of social development from economic progress. Hence the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action continue to be relevant. They indicate the necessary means to overcome marginalisation and to create the conditions for all to benefit from economic development.

While the responsibility for social equity lies primarily with individual Governments, the international community has the duty to cooperate actively in its implementation, both by creating trade and financial conditions favourable to the growth of all national economies and by rejecting conditionalities that would restrict States from adopting policies aimed at helping the less favoured sectors of society, such as the disabled and the elderly. The international community is called to assist States develop such policies, promote a new culture of solidarity and empower the poor to be protagonists of their own development.

Mr. Chairman,

Education is at the basis of all social policies. The value of education goes beyond economic development and the satisfaction of one's basic needs. Education enables individuals and peoples to establish with others relationships founded on mutual respect and friendship and not on coercion. An educated society facilitates the fight against corruption which erodes the possibility of economic growth of the poorest. It also helps create a legal framework which leaves ample space to the rights of property and free enterprise, while safeguarding at the same time the full enjoyment of the social and economic rights of all without exception.

The eradication of poverty and the full enjoyment of the basic social rights by all individuals and of their families is fundamentally a moral commitment. Indeed, the indications and suggestions contained in the Copenhagen Declaration are no more than a translation into the language of international relations of those ethical values that exist in the heart of every man and woman and are enunciated in moral and religious precepts. The eradication of poverty and the full enjoyment of the basic social rights by all must therefore be goals enshrined in all economic and development policies, and be measures of their success or failure.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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