

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
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Vatican, 19th December 2018

In His Encyclical *Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis stressed the importance of strengthening responsibly the policies related to climate change, which is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods (see inter alia n. 181 and 23-26).

Global leaders gathered in Katowice for COP 24 struggled to find the will to set aside their short-term economic and political interests and work for the common good. After a long and complex debate, they have found a consensus on the rulebook for the implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted in 2015. We are grateful to the leaders from States and other stakeholders who contributed to this multilateral dialogue and the writing of the rulebook. The consensus on the final document, rather complex and technically detailed, represents a confirmation of the commitments made three years ago in Paris and of the significance of multilateralism.

Unfortunately, we must also note that the rulebook does not adequately reflect the urgency necessary to tackle climate change, which “represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day” (LS, 25). Moreover, the rulebook seems to downplay human rights, critical in reflecting the human face of climate change, which affects the most vulnerable people on earth. Their cry and that of the earth demand more ambition and greater urgency.

The Holy See Delegation, led by the Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, explained that advancing the dignity of the human person, alleviating poverty by the promotion of integral human development, and easing the impact of climate change through responsible mitigation and adaptation measures go hand in hand. We need a just transition period with all parties assuming their respective responsibilities according to the principle of equity.

As the IPCC Special Report issued in October 2018 distressingly indicated, we are called to limit responsibly the average global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Therefore, we encourage much greater ambition in delivering Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and stronger mechanisms toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions, managing the decarbonisation of the current fossil fuel-based economy, transparently sharing the way each nation implements its commitments, addressing the issue of loss and damage, ensuring solid financial commitments, and promoting education in sustainability, responsible awareness, and lifestyle changes.

Faith and reason must come together enabling us to make positive choices in our lifestyles, in how our economies are run, and in building a true global solidarity necessary to avert this climate crisis.

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