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Declaration of the “ad interim” Director of the Holy See Press Office, Alessandro Gisotti

In the Sala Bologna of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, from 9.00 to 13.00 today, a restricted Inter-dicastery Meeting was held, focusing on the theme of countering abuse of minors. This meeting represents a first concrete effect of the Meeting on “The Protection of Minors in the Church”, which was concluded yesterday. The meeting was attended by, along with some superiors of the Secretariat of State and heads of dicasteries particularly engaged with the theme, the organizing Committee and moderator of the Meeting, Fr. Federico Lombardi, S.J., who focused on the development and first reactions to the Meeting, and on the follow-up.

First and foremost, emphasis was placed on the need for the Meeting, which was strongly desired by Pope Francis. It was also shown that the event must now be followed by concrete measures as the People of God have strongly requested. In this context, the fundamental principles that inspire the documents and the task force, announced in the final press conference of the Meeting, were illustrated. These initiatives, it was affirmed, will have to be communicated in the clearest, timeliest and most detailed way possible.

In the free interventions by the dicastery heads, who reiterated their commitment to following the example of Pope Francis in the fight against abuse, emphasis was placed on the need to listen to the victims as a starting point for this commitment. Other points underlined were: the greater involvement of the laity on this front and the need to invest in formation and in prevention, making use of consolidated experience in this field. Finally, it was highlighted that the progress of the follow-up to the Meeting should be confirmed at with meetings at inter-dicastery level, in the name of synodality and synergy.