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Intervention of Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher on the occasion of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development

The following is the statement made by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations of the Secretariat of State, at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development, which took place in New York on 18 and 19 September 2023:

Intervention of Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher

**Statement by H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher,
Secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations of the Holy See, at the High-Level Political
Forum on Sustainable Development
under the auspices of the General Assembly
18 – 19 September 2023**

Leaders' Dialogue 6

“Mobilizing finance and investments and the means of implementation for SDG achievement”

Mr. Co-moderator,

In his address to the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Pope Francis described the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as “an important sign of hope.” [1] At the same time, he warned about the danger of resting “content with the bureaucratic exercise of drawing up long lists of good proposals – goals, objectives and statistics.”[2] Halfway to 2030, the type of hope that the international community is called to keep alive and deliver on is an active one: a hope that “makes things happen and is life-changing.”[3]

In this regard, this SDG Summit must not serve as a platform for abstract declarations that simply “assuage our

consciences,”[4] rather, we must use it to scale up efforts and accelerate progress to “shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path.”[5] This means, first and foremost, taking concrete actions to address the greatest challenges of our time, in particular war and conflict, poverty and hunger, violence, social exclusion, climate change and environmental degradation, and the pervasive “throwaway culture”[6] in the name of which, “persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when poor or disabled,” and are discarded as “ ‘not yet useful’ – like the unborn, or ‘no longer needed’ – like the elderly.”[7]

Progressing on the sustainable and resilient path we have embarked on in 2015 also requires forward-looking measures that see beyond immediate benefits and focus on “the kind of world we are leaving to future generations,”[8] “its general direction, its meaning and its values.”[9] In this regard, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is not simply a matter of mobilizing more resources and designing more effective tools to overcome the many technical challenges that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals entails. Instead, it is primarily a matter of committing to and delivering on a new model of development that has the human person at its center, is geared towards the common good, and grounded in ethical principles of justice, solidarity, and shared responsibility.

In conclusion, the Holy See is of the view that the success of this SDG Summit and ultimately of our journey towards a future in which the inherent dignity of every person is respected, the needs of the poor and those in vulnerable situations are met, and a harmonious relationship with the environment is restored, depends on our genuine commitment towards multilateralism “as the expression of a renewed sense of global co-responsibility, a solidarity grounded in justice and the attainment of peace and unity within the human family.”[10]

Thank you, Mr. Co-moderator.

[1] Pope Francis, Address to the seventieth session of United Nations General Assembly, 25 September 2015.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter, *Spe Salvi*, 2.

[4] Pope Francis, Address to the seventieth session of United Nations General Assembly, 25 September 2015.

[5] A/RES/70/1, preamble.

[6] Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Fratelli Tutti*, 18.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Laudato si'*, 159.

[9] Ibi, 160.

[10] Pope Francis, Address to the seventy-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, 25 September 2020.
