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INTERVENTO DELL'OSSERVATORE PERMANENTE DELLA SANTA SEDE PRESSO L'ONU ALLA SECONDA RIUNIONE PREPARATORIA DELLA SESSIONE SPECIALE SULL'INFANZIA

INTERVENTO DELL'OSSERVATORE PERMANENTE DELLA SANTA SEDE PRESSO L'ONU ALLA
SECONDA RIUNIONE PREPARATORIA DELLA SESSIONE SPECIALE SULL'INFANZIA

È in corso di svolgimento a New York dal 29 gennaio al 2 febbraio 2001 la *Seconda Riunione Preparatoria* della Sessione Speciale sull'Infanzia delle Nazioni Unite (Settembre 2001).

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento pronunciato ieri 31 gennaio dall'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, S.E. Mons. Renato Raffaele Martino:

Madame Chairperson:

Eleven years have passed since leaders of the world gathered for the World Summit for Children. Once again, the Holy See joins other States in reviewing the progress that has been made regarding the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children.

The Holy See welcomes the draft document. My Delegation hopes that the success of the Millennium Summit, held just this past September, will help to provide a spirit of good will as the United Nations focuses special attention on the needs of children, especially those situations that might keep them from enjoying their human dignity and rights. The Holy See also looks forward to the opportunity to participate in the substantive discussions that will lead to the adoption of the outcome document.

At this time, the Holy See notes three specific elements taken from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children which must have their proper place in the final document to be adopted:

1. The promotion and protection of the right to life as well as the human dignity and rights of the child, before as well as after birth [CRC Preamble, Para 9];
2. The fact that the family is the basic unit of society, and "has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and

protection of children from infancy to adolescence" [Plan of Action Para 18] and thus "should be afforded necessary protection and assistance so that it can duly assume its responsibility within the community " [CRC Preamble Para 5]. Accordingly, it is critical that children's rights must at all times be seen in the light of parents' prior right [UDHR Art 26 (3)] " to provide in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child" [CRC Art. 5];

3. The outcome document must include strong statements concerning sustainable development, debt relief and the eradication of poverty. These issues, which touch upon every aspect of the lives of more than a billion of the world's children, especially basic health care, nutrition, and housing; peace, security and stability; opportunities for education; and the promise for a brighter future, must be discussed.

Madame Chairperson, there have been many successes during the past eleven years, but there are also many shortfalls and goals that have not been met.

The last line of the *Provisional Outcome Document* reaffirms the commitment of the United Nations to serving the best interests of humanity through serving the best interests of the world's children.

Pope John Paul II voiced that same commitment in his *Message for the World Day of Peace* (1 January 2001) when he stated: Dear young people of every language and culture, *a high and exhilarating task* awaits you: that of becoming men and women capable of solidarity, peace and love of life, with respect for everyone. Become craftsmen of a new humanity, where brothers and sisters - members all of the same family - are able at last to live in peace. When it comes to children, the Family of Nations can no longer afford to say that we tried or we wanted to. The outcome of this Special Session must include our commitment to forever be a world of hope, a world of resolute action and a world of achieved goals.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

[00187-02.01] [Original text: English]
