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SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA 63ma SESSIONE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE DAVANTI ALLA TERZA COMMISSIONE SULLA PROTEZIONE E PROMOZIONE DEI DIRITTI DELL'UOMO

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Il 28 ottobre scorso, in occasione della 63ª Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite a New York, l'Ecc.mo Mons. Celestino Migliore, Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso le Nazioni Unite, ha pronunciato nella Terza Commissione sulla protezione e promozione dei diritti dell'uomo l'intervento che riportiamo di seguito:

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr Chairman,

The upcoming 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls us, especially within this Third Committee, to continue the work of the framers of this Declaration to find means for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all peoples.

Over the past sixty years, notable progress has been achieved in a number of areas. Yet, still today, individuals are unable to exercise even some of their most basic rights. At the centre of these rights is the fundamental right to life, from the moment of conception to natural death. It continues to be violated under various pretexts and in all corners of the globe. Last year this Committee, for the first time, called for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. This resolution marks a welcome step towards a fuller respect of the right to life, however, it is only the beginning of the necessary efforts which must be undertaken to create a society in which life is respected at all stages of development.

It is incumbent upon States to protect the lives of their citizens, however, greater renewal at all levels is needed to form a society in which the recognition of human dignity and human rights are at the core rather than a consequence of our policy decisions.

In this era of greater economic interconnectedness, effort must be made to ensure consistent focus on a human-centred approach to development. Around the world, millions of children lack access to the very ways and means which will assist them in shaping a better future for themselves and their community. The lack of access to basic healthcare, education, food, water and development prevents people from exercising their fundamental human rights.

The current global economic collapse highlights and will surely exacerbate the plight of the so-called "bottom billion", a figure which due to the present aggravating conjuncture is on a constant rise. These persons will have their right to food impinged by the global food crisis. With the governmental spending focused upon fixing the financial meltdown, social sectors such as education and healthcare will be further downsized and underfinanced. While the economic crisis is presenting a number of challenges for the entire global community, as we begin to create measures to fix the economic collapse, we must not lose sight of those who live with little hope for a decent future. To this end, the report of the independent expert on human rights and extreme poverty rightly recognizes that in addressing the plight of the bottom billion, the realization of human rights and the elimination of extreme poverty are mutually reinforcing endeavours.

Finally, Mr Chairman, we take this opportunity to welcome the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities inasmuch as it will enhance the dignity and rights of disabled people. It is my delegation's hope that as States accede to this instrument, the fundamental right to life which stands at the heart of this Convention be respected and promoted for all people with disabilities at every stage of life. It is only then that this Convention can serve not only to promote greater respect for persons with disabilities but more importantly, to foster greater respect for all people regardless of their physical or mental ability.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

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