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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA 57ma CONFERENZA GENERALE DELL'A.I.E.A. (AGENZIA INTERNAZIONALE DELL'ENERGIA ATOMICA)

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Pubblichiamo di seguito il testo dell'intervento che il Segretario per i Rapporti con gli Stati, S.E. Mons. Dominique Mamberti, ha pronunciato ieri a Vienna durante la 57ma Conferenza generale dell'Agenzia Internazionale dell'Energia Atomica (A.I.E.A.):

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. DOMINIQUE MAMBERTI

Mr. President,

I have the honour of conveying to you, Mr. President, and to all the distinguished participants in this 57th General Conference of the IAEA the best wishes and cordial greetings of His Holiness Pope Francis.

The Holy See welcomes and congratulates Brunei Darussalam and Commonwealth of the Bahamas on becoming members of the IAEA family.

I would also like to extend special greetings and congratulations to H.E. Dr. Yukiya Amano, on his reappointment as Director General of the Agency. I wish you, Dr. Amano, and through you to the Agency, a lot of success in coming years.

Mr. President,

The Holy See has always appreciated the initiatives, efforts and projects undertaken by the Agency aiming at the improvement of the life conditions of countless members of our human family throughout the world. Since its foundation the IAEA has had among its aims «to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world [... and to] ensure, so far as it is able, that assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose» (IAEA Statute, Art. 2).

One of the main tasks of the Agency is to ensure that nuclear energy is used not only peacefully but also safely. Safety remains one of the greatest challenges in the use of nuclear power. The Holy See follows with attention the efforts and initiatives of the Agency to promote and strengthen a global nuclear safety culture by means of assistance in establishing legally binding international agreements, non-binding safety standards and the provision of safety services.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

Last July, during his trip to Brazil on the occasion of the XXVIII World Youth Day, Pope Francis made "an appeal to those in possession of greater resources, to public authorities and to all people of good will who are working for social justice: never tire of working for a more just world, marked by greater solidarity! [...] The culture of selfishness and individualism that often prevails in our society is not what builds up and leads to a more habitable world: rather, it is the culture of solidarity that does so; the culture of solidarity means seeing others not as rivals or statistics, but brothers and sisters. And we are all brothers and sisters!" (*Visit to the community of Varginha/Manguinhos, 25 July 2013*).

In the spirit of Pope Francis's words and of the culture of solidarity, I would like to commend the Agency for its technical cooperation activities, a great example of practical and concrete solidarity with those in need, taking into account that it is the well-being of the human person which is and should be at the center of all scientific research and development and never a means to an end.

The assistance provided in the fields of medicine, especially for the treatment of cancer and other non-communicable diseases, diagnostic radiology and nuclear medicine, helps numerous people particularly in those regions, unfortunately still so many, where the modern forms of diagnosis and medical treatment are not yet available on a large scale and where rural populations often lack access to it. Reaching out to those in need through a variety of concrete ways of assistance is one of the most important parts of the Agency's work and it reveals one of the best sides of human nature.

The Agency's efforts in the area of agriculture, in the fight against diseases and animal pests, in nutritional and food security and safety, in improving soil fertility and combating soil erosion and land degradation, in isotope applications for exploring water resources and addressing pollution problems in some large cities, have brought positive results in many cases and certainly should be continued. The latest initiatives related to the impact of ocean acidification on fisheries and aquacultures, the theme of this year's Scientific Forum, certainly deserve no less attention.

Technical cooperation activities, however, are not a one way road: the experiences of past years show that in order to be fruitful in the long run the participants of such activities should adapt these projects to their own regions, develop them further and hand on their knowledge to neighbouring countries where similar problems occur. Thus, this kind of technical cooperation across borders is able to address fundamental issues with a deep impact on the social, economic and humanitarian situation of many societies testifying to a true spirit of solidarity and the pursuit of the common good.

Mr. President,

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Papal Encyclical "*Pacem in Terris*" of Blessed Pope John XXIII. Just as the words of this solemn and landmark document were valid in the midst of the nuclear arms race of the second half of the last century, so too do they contain an important message for our world today. Let me share with you some of Pope John's thoughts:

"There is a common belief that under modern conditions peace cannot be assured except on the basis of an equal balance of armaments [...] If one country is equipped with atomic weapons, others consider themselves justified in producing such weapons themselves, equal in destructive force. Consequently people are living in the grip of constant fear. [...] While it is difficult to believe that anyone would dare to assume responsibility for initiating the appalling slaughter and destruction that war would bring in its wake, there is no denying that the

conflagration could be started by some chance and unforeseen circumstance [...]. Hence justice, right reason, and the recognition of man's dignity cry out insistently for a cessation to the arms race. [...]. Nuclear weapons must be banned. A general agreement must be reached on a suitable disarmament program, with an effective system of mutual control [...]. Everyone, however, must realize that, unless this process of disarmament be thoroughgoing and complete, and reach men's very souls, it is impossible to stop the arms race [...]. Everyone must sincerely co-operate in the effort to banish fear [...]. True and lasting peace among nations cannot consist in the possession of an equal supply of armaments but only in mutual trust" (*Pacem in Terris*, 110-113).

Even though written 50 years ago, these words seem to reflect the beginning of the 21st century, where there are still States possessing nuclear weapons, not all of which are signatories to the NPT, while the possibility of nuclear terrorism is very real. We should ask ourselves whether we really live in a more secure and safer world today compared with that of a few decades ago.

Mr. President,

The Holy See shares the thoughts and sentiments of most men and women of good will who aspire to a total elimination of nuclear weapons. Hence, we would like to use this opportunity to renew our call upon the leaders of nations to put an end to nuclear weapons production and to transfer nuclear material from military purpose to peaceful activities. We need universal and unconditional adherence to and implementation of the NPT, as well as of the CTBT, which is an important instrument to achieve this goal, apart from its potential civil and scientific application through its International Monitoring System. Global security must not rely on nuclear weapons. Moreover, the Holy See, having signed the Additional Protocol some time ago, intends to support this significant legal instrument which aims at guaranteeing greater international transparency.

In this perspective, we should recognize that the core activity of verification is becoming more and more crucial in the efforts of the international community to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is important that verification is done through impartial, international inspections, because only such activities can generate credibility and bring about good results. However, to make the world more secure, verifying the actual situation in the nuclear area is not enough: we need to reinvigorate the nuclear disarmament process, including real progress in nuclear weapons dismantlement.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are essential also from a humanitarian point of view. On the occasion of the First and the Second Sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the Holy See co-sponsored the Joint Statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, expressing its deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any possible use of these weapons. In this context we would like to commend the Norwegian Government for hosting a Conference last March on this issue, which deserves serious consideration and greater dedication by all, and we welcome the offer of the Government of Mexico to hold a follow-up meeting to continue the discussion on this extremely important matter.

Mr. President,

My Delegation would like to underline the Holy See's deep concern about the recent tragic developments in the Middle East and restates its strong support for the efforts to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are the best example of trust, confidence and affirmation that peace and security are possible without possessing nuclear weapons. Moreover, the conclusion by all the States in the region of the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement and Protocols would represent a great contribution to the security of the entire region.

As for the most recent developments in negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme, my Delegation would like to reiterate that the Holy See is firmly convinced that the present difficulties can and must be overcome through diplomatic channels, making use of all the means that diplomacy has at its disposal, and considers it necessary to overcome the various obstacles which objectively impede mutual trust.

Mr. President,

At the difficult crossroads at which humanity finds itself – a crossroads characterized by an increasingly strict interdependence on the economic, political, social and environmental level – one should ask: does the use of force represent a sustainable solution in time? It seems, in fact, only to increase mutual distrust and to refer to a distorted sense of priorities that commits significant resources in a short-sighted way. The temptation to face new situations with old systems must be rejected. We must redefine the priorities and hierarchies of values by which to mobilize resources towards objectives of moral, cultural and economic development, since development, solidarity and justice are nothing other than the real name for peace, for a lasting peace in time and space.

Thank you, Mr. President!

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