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Press Release from the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development on the conclusions of the "International Debate on Corruption"

On 15 June in the Vatican there took place the first "International Debate on Corruption" among the current members of an advisory board of the *Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development* dedicated to this global problem, also in its interrelations with mafias and organized crime.

The meeting, organized in collaboration with the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences, was attended by around fifty participants, including anti-mafia and anti-corruption magistrates, bishops, figures from Vatican institutions, States and the United Nations, heads of movements, victims, journalists, scholars, intellectuals, and other ambassadors.

The fight against corruption and mafias, it was said, is a question not only of legality but also of civility. Cardinal Peter Turkson thus described the purpose of the meeting: "we conceived of this meeting to face a phenomenon that leads to the trampling of the dignity of people. Therefore it is up to us, and this Dicastery, to be able to protect and promote respect for the dignity of the person. And for this reason we seek to attract attention to this matter".

Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi then explained that the aim is: "to inform public opinion, to identify concrete steps that can help to arrive at policies and laws that eventually prevent corruption, because corruption is like a woodworm that infiltrates the processes of development for poor countries or in rich countries, which ruins the relations between institutions and people. Therefore, the effort we are making is that of creating a mentality, a culture of justice that combats corruption in favour of the common good".

The group is working to draft a joint text that will guide further work and future initiatives. Among these, at present there is a need to further explore at international level and in relation to the legal doctrine of the Church, the issue of excommunication for corruption and mafia association.