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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA SESSIONE ANNUALE DEL CONSIGLIO ECONOMICO E SOCIALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE (ECOSOC)

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Si svolge a Ginevra, dal 2 al 27 luglio, la Sessione annuale del Consiglio Economico e Sociale delle Nazioni Unite (ECOSOC). Nell'ambito del segmento ad alto livello, dedicato quest'anno al tema "Ruolo del sistema delle Nazioni Unite nel sostegno agli sforzi dei Paesi africani per raggiungere lo sviluppo sostenibile", l'Ecc.mo Mons. Diarmuid Martin, Capo della Delegazione della Santa Sede, ha pronunciato il 18 luglio l'intervento che pubblichiamo qui di seguito:

Mr President,

The Report of the Secretary General, as well as the "New African Initiative", continuously draw attention to the need for integrated initiatives. Integrated initiatives are needed not only to avoid that duplication which still characterises so many international programmes, but to ensure that all our efforts aim at participation and inclusion, and are achieved through an process that is inclusive.

Globalisation will only truly serve the human family if it becomes a process of inclusion. The process of globalisation must enhance respect for the dignity of every individual person. It must foster the unity of the human family. It must serve the responsible stewardship for all of creation which has been entrusted to humankind. A globalisation which is accompanied by widespread exclusion is simply not global.

Globalisation is a fact, but also a challenge. Globalisation can generate great opportunities for creativity and initiative. It makes many of the barriers of the past irrelevant. But globalisation is driven by human persons, it is influenced by their decisions. It is not isolated from wider human aspirations. Globalisation with inclusion can only be achieved by a conscious effort at solidarity, the fruit of concrete decisions on the part of human beings.

To achieve globalisation with inclusion on the international level requires concerted efforts to identify and to overcome those factors which cause exclusion. It requires the establishment of a network of norms and rules, but also of ideals. It requires the realisation that responding to the needs of the weakest is a long term

investment for the good of all, including the strongest and most powerful. Pope John Paul II has stressed that "it is in the interests of the rich countries to choose the path of solidarity, for only in this way can lasting peace for humanity be secured" (*Ecclesia in Africa*, n.114)

The Report of the Secretary General illustrates the need to establish new models of partnership aimed at the inclusion of Africa, and of all Africans, women and men, as protagonists of their own future and as partners in our common search for a vision of development worthy of the human person. We need forms of partnership which will render Africa a strong partner, on an equal footing with any part of the world, in our global endeavours. These partnerships must place poverty reduction at their centre, so that all human persons in Africa can be helped realise the God-given potential they possess.

There is something about solidarity which places it above simple calculation. We cannot build a world order based on solidarity starting out only from a narrow notion of national or economic interest, much less from one inspired by protection of current advantage or domination. Solidarity in the era of globalisation requires a new concept of global citizenship, of global responsibility. It is patently unfair to require the poorer countries to open their markets, while maintaining heavy protection on products in which they have comparative advantage. An open system based on free market and competition should be deeply concerned, even from within its own internal logic, when it sees that Africa's share of the world market is eroding.

In much of our discussion we have addressed Africa's problems. We should also highlight Africa's opportunity, and the immense human and cultural richness which Africa possesses and from which we can all learn. African culture, its rich sense of family and community are under challenge in a global culture at times overly dominated by individualism. Respect for the human rights of every individual person can be achieved most effectively in a culture which also fosters also a sense of responsibility and of sharing.

The strikingly rapid urbanization in Africa, to which the Secretary General refers, also poses cultural and human challenges. Greater efforts must be made to ensure that rural communities are made more sustainable, not just through land-reform, but through investment in the sustainable communities. This means bringing improved health, education and safe water to rural communities. It means investing in food security and in communications infrastructures. Poverty reduction strategies must also be inclusive in the sense that they address the root causes of rural poverty, and enable rural communities to become full participants in the political, cultural and economic life of their country. This is a special duty we have to the youth of rural African communities who have the right to have hope for the future of the communities to which they belong (cf. *Ecclesia in Africa* n.115)

On many occasions, our discussions have touched on the consequences of conflict in Africa. We need a new concerted effort to bring peace to the women, children and men who have known only the horrors of war, in some cases for generations. This is the responsibility of all, both within Africa and outside. It is unacceptable to talk here about peace and not take the necessary steps to construct peace, through the strengthening of secure democratic, participative institutions. It is unacceptable to demand efforts for peace, and at the same time close one's eyes to shameful factors of economic interest which nourish some conflicts, as the Secretary General noted, or worse still to the constant traffic of arms which still flows into conflict or high risk areas.

Only comprehensive, inclusive programmes which are owned by the citizens of the developing countries will achieve a development which is truly sustainable. We must invest in the people of Africa, and have confidence in the fact that they themselves are the first to desire peace, to desire a better and prosperous future for themselves and for the families. They are the one's who most desire a united and thriving continent.

