



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA QUARTA COMMISSIONE DELLA 60a SESSIONE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELL'O.N.U. SUL PUNTO 33: "QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION"

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Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, l'Arcivescovo S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato ieri a New York nel corso della Quarta Commissione della 60a Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U. sul punto 33: "*Questions relating to information*":

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr. Chairman,

The Holy See recognises the right to information and its importance in the life of all democratic societies and institutions. The exercise of the freedom of communication should not depend upon wealth, education, or political power. The right to communicate is the right of all. Freedom of expression and the right to information increase and develop in societies when the fundamental ethics of communication are not compromised, such as the pre-eminence of truth and the good of the individual, the respect for human dignity, and the promotion of the common good.

Furthermore, new technologies have an important role to play in the advancement of the poor. As with health and education, access to the wealth represented by communications would certainly benefit the poor, as recipients of information to be sure, but also as actors, able to promote their own point of view before the world's decision makers.

Given the ever increasing ease of access to information of every possible kind, the Holy See also stresses the need to protect the most vulnerable, such as children and young people, especially in the light of the increase of content featuring violence, intolerance and pornography.

Perhaps the most essential question raised by technological progress is whether, as a result of it, people will

grow in dignity, responsibility and openness to others.

In this context, the Holy See has set up a unique continent-wide initiative called the Digital Network of the Church in Latin America (*Red Informatica de Iglesia en America Latina* – RIIAL) which promotes the adoption of digital technologies and programmes in media education, especially in poor areas. The success of this project has drawn the attention of the Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication in the Mediterranean and in the World (OCCAM) and other international organisations. The Holy See also supports the continued promotion of the traditional role of libraries and radios in formation.

It is to be hoped that the Second Phase of the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), to be held in Tunis shortly, will lead to further concrete efforts to build a more inclusive digital society which will reduce the widespread "info-poverty". It would be well if a new dynamic were created which goes beyond the political and commercial logic usually at play in these fields.

My delegation believes that the Information Society should be one endowed with the ability, capacity and skills to generate and capture new knowledge and to access, absorb and use effectively information, data and knowledge with the support of information and communication technology. Already in society there are many "agents of meaning" or "knowledge workers", such as the family, schools, the State, opinion makers and leaders, not to mention religious institutions.

Knowledge is essential in establishing presence in the international marketplace, and is key to participating in the global economy of which the Internet is an increasingly important vehicle. Moreover, knowledge should be recognised in its role in the development of information and communication technology. At the same time, there is a fundamental need to develop an ability to discern information received, given the enormous sea of information available. This process can flourish only where there is a recognised hierarchy of values.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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