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# **BOLLETTINO**

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## **INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA 60MA SESSIONE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE SULLE STRATEGIE CONTRO IL TERRORISMO**

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STRATEGIE CONTRO IL TERRORISMO

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, il Nunzio Apostolico S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato ieri alla 60ma Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U. su: "*Informal consultations of the plenary on a counter-terrorism strategy*":

### **• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE**

Mr President,

My delegation welcomes the timely debate of the report now before us, in the context of the current impasse in consultations on the Convention on terrorism. We also support all efforts intended to overcome difficulties still impeding progress on this important juridical instrument.

Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Secretary-General's report rightly contain a clear condemnation of terrorism based on the assumption that no cause, no matter how just, can excuse or legitimize the deliberate killing or maiming of civilians and non-combatants.

Terrorism often takes root in the cultural fragmentation underlying tensions and divisions that unfortunately we have seen even in the UN in recent weeks and months. The Holy See therefore remains prepared to take part in this important debate with a view to finding common ground on which nations can build effective counter-terrorism strategies.

At the start of this year, Pope Benedict XVI addressed Catholics and all women and men of good will, inviting them to link their efforts to reflection, cooperation, dialogue and prayer, intended to overcome terrorism and build a just and peaceful coexistence in the human family.

Given his conviction that, in analyzing the causes of the contemporary phenomenon of terrorism, consideration should be given not only to its political and social causes but also to its deeper cultural, religious and ideological

motivations, the Pope's invitation has already brought about a mosaic of debates, initiatives and experiences both in academe and at the grass roots level throughout the world. My delegation is therefore pleased to note that the Report before us incorporates a cultural and religious component in its global strategy.

Representatives will recall how the UN dedicated the year 2001 to dialogue among civilizations and how, last November, the Secretary-General launched the Alliance of Civilizations. Not long ago, a Tripartite Forum on inter-religious dialogue and cooperation for peace was also launched to bring together Governments, the UN system and civil society. My delegation hopes that good use should be made of this new interest in the UN in cooperation among religions and in building bridges between cultures and civilizations. Undoubtedly, religion has an enormously positive potential when given the chance.

The Holy See is willing to support initiatives that encourage believers to be agents of peace and join all those who would be builders of our peaceful coexistence. Moreover, when religion's true nature is rightly understood and lived out, it can become part of the solution rather than the problem, because it will promote humane engagement and regard for the dignity of others, to the common good of us all.

This Organisation should therefore encourage religions to make this important contribution on their own terms: that is, religions are called to create, support and promote the precondition of every encounter, every dialogue, and of every understanding of pluralism and cultural difference. That precondition, Mr President, is the dignity of the human person.

Our common human dignity is a true precondition because it comes before every other consideration or methodological principle, even those of international law. We see it in the "Golden Rule", found throughout the religions of the world. Another description of this concept is reciprocity.

Encouraging awareness and experience of this common heritage within and among religions will surely help in the translation of this positive vision into political and social categories which will, in their turn, inform the juridical categories linked to national and international relations.

My delegation is also gratified to see the way the question of incitement to terrorism has been dealt with in the report before us. We all know that the skilful use of the internet and mass media make terrorism a transnational, globally coordinated phenomenon, requiring therefore an equally powerful, globally coordinated solution.

In this context, we renew our support of Security Council resolution 1624 which both condemned "in the strongest terms the incitement of terrorist acts" and repudiated "attempts at the justification or glorification (*apologie*) of terrorist acts that may incite further terrorist acts". Measures to confront any actor or entity whatsoever that financially support intolerance or ethnic and religious hatred are essential to a global strategy.

The political, social and economic exclusion of immigrant communities stokes the frustration of young people and has led to breakdowns in order in some places; but the demand for a just solution to these questions remains a legitimate one. By resolving such questions, swiftly and justly, nations can rob terrorists of the oxygen of hatred and of grievances, real or imagined, by which they attempt to legitimize their evil deeds and recruit the impressionable.

Although how to stop the use of day to day materials against soft targets is often the more difficult problem to solve, denying terrorists weapons, including WMD, is obviously part of the struggle. In this context, my delegation welcomes Security Council resolution 1673 on non-proliferation. We also agree that it must be the common goal of states to secure, and wherever possible eliminate, nuclear, biological, chemical or radiological weapons and implement effective domestic and export controls on dual-use materials related to weapons of mass destruction.

Furthermore, it appears that bioterrorism is a grave but seriously under-addressed threat. As we have seen in other theatres of action, the cost of doing nothing could far outstrip the cost of a major initiative now to

strengthen public health systems' capacity to cope with such a terrible eventuality. As the report points out, important investments now in this field could in the meantime also have positive spin-offs in the general quality of healthcare available.

Finally, Mr President, counter-terrorism must be characterised by denying the moral high ground to terrorists. This is just one reason why the treatment of terrorists and suspects should be according to international humanitarian norms in a struggle which is ultimately one for hearts and minds.

Thank you, Mr President.

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