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PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

# **BOLLETTINO**

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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## **INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL SECONDO COMITATO DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELL'ONU SULLO SRADICAMENTO DELLA POVERTÀ**

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SULLO SRADICAMENTO DELLA POVERTÀ

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede, l'Arcivescovo Celestino Migliore, Nunzio Apostolico, ha pronunciato ieri a New York, davanti al Secondo Comitato della 61a Assemblea Generale dell'ONU, sul punto 57 (a): "*Eradication of poverty and other development issues: Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)*":

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

Madam Chair,

Since the 1995 World Summit on Social Development, governments have been committed to the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative. The eradication of poverty is rightly recognized as the cornerstone of the comprehensive development agenda of the United Nations. My delegation, therefore, is pleased to note the success recounted by the Secretary-General in his respective reports on the International Year of Microcredit and the first International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

In this context, it is also pleased to salute the recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Professor Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank. The link between peace and development appears quite evident to those on the ground who must confront the constraints placed on the poor and who know, sometimes from bitter experience, that "development is the new name for peace" (Paul VI).

The first International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, stressing the link between poverty and human rights, takes its inspiration from a meeting of 100,000 people in Paris which took place in 1987 in response to the call by the late Father Joseph Wresinski. It rightly led to the growing acknowledgement at the international level that poverty often stems from the violation of human rights and that the promotion of human rights can help alleviate poverty.

My delegation believes that charity and welfare will always be needed to assist the poorest. Added to them, this

fresh approach links human rights and poverty reduction, making the latter a legal as well as a moral obligation. Like everyone else, the poor have the right to justice, decent work, adequate food, health and education, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other rights found in other international instruments. However, since the poor are many times, by their very condition, excluded from society, their capacity to secure their rights is often very limited. That is why this new international celebration could be significant in raising general awareness and influencing policy makers to put the eradication of poverty at the heart of legal as well as social agendas.

Without going into the work of the many Church agencies and NGOs active throughout the world in the eradication of poverty, during the past year the Holy See itself has organized three international study conferences. The first was on "Women, Development and Peace", which concentrated on the role of women in the achievement of sustainable economic and social development. The second, "Microcredit and the Struggle against Poverty", focused upon ways in which the availability of capital ignited opportunities for economic development and security, given the Church's long time support of microfinance for small entrepreneurs throughout the developing world. In the third, on "Combatting Corruption", the discussion was devoted to ways in which the staggering effects and consequences of corruption could be addressed.

Perhaps it is also worth noting here the right to food and the right to development, especially with a view to the poor of the developing world.

Food, along with water, is surely the most urgent human right after the right to life itself. Food and water can never be considered as extraordinary or as luxuries – they are absolutely basic means of life. Three quarters of the world's countries are states parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which recognizes the fundamental right of everyone to food, clothing and housing, to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and the improvement of both methods of production and those of distribution. In spite of the sometimes Herculean efforts of agencies such as the WFP in the effective and impartial deployment of food aid, national and international machinery still lets many hundreds of millions of people down. Whether food is recognized by states as a right or not, almost a sixth of the world's population goes hungry and a child dies of hunger every five seconds: this is hardly a record of which humanity can be proud.

The right to development is also a contentious issue in places but, again, if we are to help people climb out of poverty, we must use all the means at our disposal, including the application of greater resources, commonly cited as a constraint or as an excuse to dismiss the acknowledgement or vindication of such a right. Even in this case, however, the Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Right to Development recently received the Council's endorsement of its recommendations regarding the realization of the right to development. It is to be hoped that this represents forward momentum on the path towards the vindication of all the human rights of the poor and the eradication of poverty.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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