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Alle ore 12.00 di questa mattina, nell'*Aula Giovanni Paolo II* della Sala Stampa della Santa Sede, ha luogo una

Conferenza Stampa di informazione e aggiornamento da parte del Pontificio Consiglio *Cor Unum*, insieme ad alcuni principali organismi caritativi, sulla situazione e l'intervento della Chiesa nel Corno d'Africa. Intervengono: l'Em.mo Card. Robert Sarah, Presidente del Pontificio Consiglio *Cor Unum*; S.E. Mons. Giorgio Bertin, O.F.M., Vescovo di Djibouti, Amministratore Apostolico «ad nutum Sanctae Sedis» di Mogadiscio (Somalia); Mons. Giovanni Pietro Dal Toso, Segretario del Pontificio Consiglio *Cor Unum*; il Sig. Michel Roy, Segretario Generale di *Caritas Internationalis*; il Sig. Kenneth F. Hackett, Presidente di *Catholic Relief Services*. Sono presenti inoltre i rappresentanti di alcuni organismi caritativi cattolici operanti nella zona e un delegato dell'Arcivescovo di Canterbury.

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento dell'Em.mo Card. Robert Sarah; il testo del Messaggio inviato dall'Arcivescovo di Canterbury, Sua Grazia Dr. Rowan Williams e una nota informativa:

### ● INTERVENTO DELL'EM.MO CARD. ROBERT SARAH

Cari amici,

questa conferenza stampa vuole essere di informazione e di aggiornamento; è promossa dal Pontificio Consiglio *Cor Unum* che presiedo, insieme ad alcuni rappresentanti di organizzazioni caritative. Siamo reduci, questa mattina, da una riunione sulla situazione e l'intervento della Chiesa nel Corno d'Africa e vogliamo ora condividere con voi alcune informazioni e considerazioni.

La questione è molto cara al Santo Padre. Ne ha parlato tra i primi in ambito internazionale lo scorso 17 luglio. Ha ripetuto due giorni fa nell'Udienza generale di mercoledì la sua preoccupazione e il suo appello alla comunità internazionale.

Ovviamente noi parliamo per la Chiesa cattolica. Chi mi seguirà darà alcune indicazioni più precise sulle attività svolte e sui progetti da realizzare. In via generale posso dire che c'è stato un forte coinvolgimento delle Chiese locali. Le più coinvolte localmente, in Somalia, Kenia, Etiopia e Gibuti, hanno offerto accoglienza ed aiuto alle vittime. Il Santo Padre, tramite *Cor Unum*, ha sostenuto questo sforzo locale con quasi 400.000 US \$ in primi interventi.

Poi risultano interventi di diversi organismi, che ci verranno presentati. Non voglio dimenticare che in diversi paesi si sono svolte collette speciali nelle chiese; a noi risultano: Italia, Germania, Svizzera, Francia, Irlanda e altri.

La presenza qui di un delegato dell'Arcivescovo di Canterbury ci dice della preoccupazione congiunta e dello sforzo congiunto delle comunità cristiane. Vi verrà letto un messaggio che lo stesso Arcivescovo ha inviato per questa occasione. Si tratta di una significativa testimonianza di una carità che ci unisce e di cui ci facciamo portatori.

Tutto questo sforzo ci dice peraltro la vitalità che la fede produce e che si manifesta in questi frutti di condivisione, di amore, di compassione, di attenzione all'altro, di aiuto e di promozione della persona umana, a qualunque razza o religione appartenga. Questa azione è una conseguenza derivante dalla nostra fede che diventa operante nell'amore (cfr. *Gal* 5,6; DCE 31; 33).

Come Presidente di *Cor Unum* vorrei ringraziare tutti i membri della Chiesa per il loro impegno. Vorrei anche comunicare fin da ora tre riflessioni, rivolgendomi anche a chi sta in seconda linea, cioè a tutte le persone di buona volontà che vorrebbero fare qualcosa, ma la lontananza geografica o umana da quella emergenza umanitaria ed anche il non sapere cosa fare concretamente, li induce lentamente a dimenticare il problema.

La Chiesa cattolica continuerà a fare la sua parte e cercherà ancora la collaborazione con le altre comunità cristiane per svolgere una parte attiva nel risolvere il dramma umanitario che si sta consumando nel Corno d'Africa. Mi rivolgo a tutti i fedeli perché non dimentichino i loro fratelli così provati. La riunione di oggi dice che la risposta della Chiesa è sì realizzata da diversi soggetti, diocesi, agenzie, associazioni, missionari e istituti

religiosi, ma che è unitaria. Essa risponde al desiderio del Papa di testimoniare la carità di Cristo e di tutta la Chiesa verso l'uomo sofferente. Dove soffre l'uomo, Dio gli sta vicino.

Riprendo l'appello del Santo Padre alla comunità internazionale. Purtroppo spesso avvertiamo che i meccanismi che governano l'azione internazionale sono improntati alla ricerca dell'interesse di singole nazioni. Prevalgono gli aspetti dell'egoismo anche nella politica internazionale. Dobbiamo lasciarci ispirare a svolgere una politica che abbia a cuore veramente il bene comune. Solo la ricerca del bene comune permette che non ci siano vincitori e vinti, carnefici e vittime, sfruttatori e affamati. Deve prevalere una visione dell'uomo e della società dove al valore economico viene riconosciuta l'importanza che gli spetta, ma non la decisione ultima sul bene e sul male.

Infine dobbiamo tornare al cuore della questione dello sviluppo, che è l'educazione. Infatti, cosa si sta giocando oggi nel Corno d'Africa? Qual è la peculiarità di questa emergenza umanitaria? In essa ci sono tutti gli ingredienti drammatici che sono presenti in analoghe crisi: un evento catastrofico - in questo caso la lunghissima siccità -, la mancanza di infrastrutture sanitarie, l'insufficienza di personale qualificato per gestire situazioni di emergenza, l'instabilità politica, la corruzione, la povertà endemica del territorio, la mancanza di lavoro. Ma c'è una cosa particolare che mi preoccupa e rischia di pregiudicare il futuro di questa parte del continente africano, ed è questa: i milioni di sfollati che stanno vagabondando alla ricerca di sopravvivenza diventeranno domani profughi, clandestini, senza patria, gente che non ha una casa, un lavoro, una comunità. Una intera generazione rischia di essere perduta.

In Africa, come in ogni parte del mondo, un elemento fondamentale che riunisce una comunità di persone è la scuola: dove c'è una scuola, dove c'è educazione, c'è un futuro possibile, ci sarà un lavoro domani, si formeranno delle famiglie.

Per questo vorrei oggi lanciare un appello, innanzitutto ai cristiani: impegniamoci per costruire scuole! Superata questa emergenza, dobbiamo intervenire nella formazione. Qui c'è una chiamata speciale per la Chiesa, madre ed educatrice come forse nessun'altra istituzione. Altre sono forse più adatte e preparate per contribuire a ricostruire le case e le infrastrutture sanitarie necessarie a rendere dignitosa la vita di questi milioni di sfollati. Ma noi dobbiamo impegnarci specialmente per l'educazione e la formazione delle coscienze rette.

Fin da ora faccio un appello: una scuola in ogni villaggio! Lo dico da africano: uniamoci nello sforzo di aiutare il Corno d'Africa a dare educazione, istruzione, cultura ai propri figli!

Vi ringrazio.

[01386-01.01] [Testo originale: Italiano]

**• MESSAGGIO DELL'ARCIVESCOVO DI CANTERBURY** Message  
to His Eminence Robert Cardinal Sarah and the Delegates  
at the meeting on the food crisis in the Horn of Africa  
convened by the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum" in Rome on 7 October 2011

Your Eminence, beloved Brothers and Sisters, Dear Friends

It is an agonising indictment on the world to find ourselves once again staring into the face of famine: the human face, the face of the young and the vulnerable who die on the journey to find food, where communities are shattered, and deprived of their means of survival. In the face of those who hunger and thirst we discover the face of Christ.

In the 1980s we said, 'Never again' - so it must be with renewed passion and commitment that we seek effective and enduring responses to end the intolerable scandal of recurring famine in our world. It is a privilege to be invited to bring an Anglican perspective to this meeting of major charitable organisations convened by the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum". My prayers are with you, as you seek to raise renewed awareness of the disaster

in the Horn of Africa and identify solutions to emerging challenges.

This crisis demonstrates the crucial importance of connecting humanitarian action and development interventions, to help build the resilience of communities to withstand and recover from shocks, man-made and natural, including conflict and climate change. Faith communities have a distinctive role to play in this: they are present as an integral part of local communities long before a crisis emerges, and they remain during the emergency and beyond, after the humanitarian agencies have left. They are therefore an essential component of the architecture of community resilience. As we have witnessed in the Sudan peace process, collaboration between faith communities is also central to peace building in nations.

Once again, many lessons can be learned from this crisis: the importance of preparing and strengthening the capacity of communities to prevent or mitigate disasters and to cope with future, and often predicted, emergencies; the importance of an early warning system which is backed up by the international capacity and funds for an early response; the importance of building on viable existing structures in communities and strengthening accountable governance. In August, the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa convened an ecumenical meeting in Nairobi to discuss the current emergency and responses from the faith communities. Their resolutions included collaborative action to open up the humanitarian space to reach vulnerable communities within Somalia. They also focused on the need for an integrated regional strategy to help pastoralist and marginalised communities to develop secure livelihoods. The Anglican Church of Kenya has also highlighted the urgency of getting seed to the areas bordering the crisis, so that subsistence farmers can plant this month and prevent the emergency spreading. These issues reflect crucial aspects of the short and long-term solutions to the crisis. I am therefore pleased to be able to send a director of Christian Aid, Mr David Pain, as a delegate to this significant meeting. The Anglican Churches in Great Britain and Ireland are sponsoring churches of Christian Aid. The Anglican Church of Kenya is also a long-standing Christian Aid partner. They are working closely on the humanitarian response through the ACT Alliance and on the long term development solutions to the food crisis in the Horn of Africa. I witnessed some of this vital work on my provincial visit to the Anglican Church of Kenya in June this year. Therein lie seeds of hope. It is my hope and prayer that this meeting will bring fresh energy and focus to the crisis, that it will establish new opportunities for ecumenical collaboration and that it will lead to actions which deliver tangible and enduring impact in vulnerable communities — so that they can say with confidence, alongside a committed international community, 'Never again'. *From Lambeth Palace, 5 October 2011* [01387-02.01] [Original text: English] • **INTERVENTO DEL SIG. KENNETH F. HACKETT** Good morning. Having lived and worked in this part of Africa for over 35 years I am deeply saddened to witness again a tragedy of biblical proportions that is unfolding. I thank the Holy Father for calling the Church's and the world attention to the plight of hungry and distressed people across the Horn. Catholic Relief services, working with the local Church and the Caritas organizations at the Diocesan and national level, as well as other Catholic, Non Catholic and host Governments we have been helpful in bringing short and long term interventions to communities and families in distress. In an immediate response to the situation facing the people of the Horn, including both Somalis both in Somalia and those who have had to flee the country for safety and survival in neighboring countries we have committed to expand our long term development and assistance Programs over the next 12-18 months. This is over and above and in addition to the many programs that reach to millions of people. All of this is done with and through the local Church and other associate agencies and groups both national and International in the countries that comprise the Horn. As Bishop Bertin has mentioned the problems in Somalia are complex, pervasive and persistent. There solutions demand intelligent, sophisticated, thoughtful and persistent attention. The international community basically gave up on Somalia in 1993. It was placed in the category of "Failed State" and was placed in the category "must be contained" rather than "must be doubly engaged" because the solutions are complicated. Now almost twenty years later the consequence are visible. Our call is for a focus, determined, engagement for a just peace in Somalia. In its neighbors we know from years of experience that investments in improved water, sanitation, agriculture research, and applications can make a powerful difference in the lives of the poor Africans in the rural areas. Never has this been clearer than now. We can point to villages and communities where investments in water, improved sanitation, improved and tested agricultural practice, better access to credit, and a focus on woman as important breadwinners has shown that while there in a bad drought the resilience of communities who have been engaged by the Church in some improved scale interventions have shown themselves to be more resilient to the impact of this drought. But the problems persist, our contribution while significant cannot bring about a full solution. But likewise we have seen the negative impacts of where the full and free practice of religious freedom has been curtailed by governments and groups that their people suffer. In the year 2011/2012 in is a mark of shame on us as a people that hundreds

of thousands are allowed to suffer and die of hunger, disease and deprivation because it is difficult or complicated for us as more wealthy. While millions in my country suffer from job lay offs, loss of jobs, homes and income, I can only expect that their compassion for those who suffer at death's door after weeks of journey under the harshest of conditions could not be underestimated. Your prayers, your engagement and your generosity are most appreciated. [01389-02.01] [Original text: English] • **INFORMATIVE NOTE ON THE EFFORTS AND COMMITMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**

**What is the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa?** In Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and surrounding countries, a severe drought, conflict and lack of governments have led to massive numbers of people going hungry. Famine has been declared in several districts of Somalia. Because goats and cattle are dying of thirst and starvation, people who herd livestock are losing their source of food. Particularly in Somalia, hundreds of thousands of children are malnourished. This present situation represents the peak of a long-term process.

**What are people doing to overcome this situation?** Hundreds of thousands of Somalis have left their country, often on foot, for refugee camps in neighboring Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen and Djibouti. They are fleeing starvation and armed conflict. Herdsmen are moving farther into new territory to graze their livestock, encroaching on land traditionally used by other communities. In some parts of the region, local fighting has broken out over water and grazing. Villagers are cutting down trees to sell for fuel or are migrating to already overburdened cities where it is very difficult to find work. Herdsmen are selling off livestock to buy food, which damages their future livelihoods. The late and erratic rain has changed the yield times for crops, leaving farmers confused as to when they should plant.

**How many people are affected?** According to a 30 September report by the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 13 million people in the region are in need of emergency assistance. Particularly in Somalia, hundreds of thousands are at risk of death without urgent intervention. In Ethiopia, due to the combined drought, crop and livestock losses, millions of people will not have enough to eat or enough water for the next 3 to 6 months. In detail, the number of persons involved in this serious humanitarian crisis is: -Somalia: 4 million people of a population of 7.5 million -Ethiopia: 4.6 million people of a population of 80 million plus 280,000 refugees -Kenya: 3.75 million people of a population of 40 million plus 560,000 refugees -Djibouti: 147,000 people of a population of 885,000 with over 19,000 refugees

**What is the Catholic Church doing?** The Catholic Church is present in the Horn of Africa, not only with the direct support of Pope Benedict XVI given through the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum", but also through the international Catholic organizations that operate in the front line in Eastern Africa. These include: - World-wide collection of funds - Local Catholic dioceses and parishes - National charitable organizations like Caritas Somalia, Caritas Kenya, Caritas Djibouti and Caritas Ethiopia are involved in operations in support of the population together with numerous local partners. - Caritas Internationalis and several of its members such as CRS, Caritas Italiana, Caritas Germany, Caritas of England – Wales (CAFOD), Caritas Luxembourg, Trocaire, SCIAF, Caritas Spain, Caritas Mexico, and several members of Africa. - Manos Unidas - Malteser International from the Sovereign Order of Malta - Jesuit Refugee Services - Several religious orders and congregations and other Catholic organizations such as the Vincentian family. There are also other charitable agencies from the Anglican and Protestant communities doing relief work in the areas. The current contribution of the Catholic Church entities will exceed 60 million Euros.

**How are they actually helping people during the emergency?** - Food aid and nutritional supplements for children - Supplies of tents, medicines and first aid - Providing water for peoples, animals and crops - Improving hygiene and sanitation - Support to the medical system and health care - Assistance to the most vulnerable including children, the elderly and people with disabilities - Distribution of seeds and veterinary supplies - Spiritual and psychological care

**Will things get better?** If the rains in autumn 2011 are good, the situation will improve. In some locations, the demand for water trucking has been reduced, because it is no longer needed. However, it will take time and also support from the international community to help drought-affected families recover from the loss of livestock and of one or two crop seasons.

**What are the challenges for the near future?** The situation will remain serious in the coming months: the aid is not sufficient, and the month of October is crucial, because it is normally a period of precipitation, but the irregularity of rainfall in recent months may indicate an additional period of drought. The current situation is not due exclusively to lack of water, but it is also generated by violent conflicts, a weak central government, corruption, the insecurity of land tenure and a continued lack of basic services. The refugee camps are overcrowded with great problems regarding security, aid distribution and health issues. In addition, there is the problem of refugees who continuously shift towards the borders of neighboring states, usually with a regular high mortality rate, especially among children. The local population who welcomes the refugees should also be supported.

**What are the medium- and long-term interventions to stabilize and resolve the situation?** Disaster risk-reduction measures are needed to reduce people's vulnerability to future droughts, including: - Developing water sources such as wells or cisterns etc.; - Making agricultural investments including water management, soil fertility and drought-resistant seed varieties to ensure future supplies; - Improved rangeland management and veterinary services for animal

herders- Envisaging appropriate training for the population- Strengthening political structures **What can we do to prevent this situation in the future?** Following the indications of the Holy Father it is important that the international community strengthen the efforts to give peace and stability in the area of the Horn of Africa. Formation at all levels, stability of families and communities, concrete paths towards peace and reconciliation are part of this process. The Catholic Church, following the teaching and example of Jesus Christ, is engaged in all these issues in a spirit of Ecumenical and Inter-religious dialogue. [01388-02.01] [Original text: English]

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