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- ◆ **Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher alla Riunione di Alto-Livello sulla Copertura Sanitaria Universale**

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher, Segretario per i Rapporti con gli Stati e le Organizzazioni Internazionali della Segreteria di Stato, ha pronunciato ieri a New York alla Riunione di Alto-Livello sulla Copertura Sanitaria Universale:

Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher

Statement by H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher,

Secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations of the Holy See,

at the High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (21 September 2023)

Mr. President,

"Health is not a luxury; it is for all." [1] Yet, despite progress in expanding access to quality and affordable healthcare, it remains out of reach for far too many, particularly in developing countries. Achieving universal

health coverage requires strategies and resources, including support for health workers, to realize each person's fundamental right to quality healthcare,[2] including the poorest and those living in rural areas.

The effects of poverty, such as hunger and malnutrition, inadequate housing, and unsafe working conditions, increase vulnerability to disease while making it harder for the poor to get the necessary care they need. Moreover, it is deeply troubling that healthcare costs have caused half a billion people to experience or fall deeper into extreme poverty.[3] For that reason, ensuring affordable, universal access to quality healthcare cannot be separated from broader development efforts, particularly social protection, education, and decent work.

Mr. President,

Faith has inspired many efforts to care for the poor and vulnerable around the world. In some places, faith-based organizations are the only healthcare providers. Approximately one quarter of all healthcare facilities worldwide are Catholic, and were "created precisely to care for those no-one wanted to touch"[4], often in challenging situations. In light of this, the Holy See's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development launched in 2021 an initiative on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in Catholic healthcare facilities. Projects are now underway in different parts of the world, and will help to reduce the spread of infectious disease and end preventable maternal and newborn deaths. [5]

Mr. President,

I wish to underline that faith-based healthcare also witnesses to the inalienable dignity of the person, which must be at the center of efforts to achieve universal health coverage, by focusing on healing and accompanying each person in his or her totality.

In doing so, we cannot ignore the danger of an increasingly consumerist approach, where doctors act as mere service providers to wealthy clients, fulfilling and profiting from their individual desires. Such tendencies can create a certain contempt for the poor, the sick, the unborn, the disabled and the elderly, forgetting that human beings are fragile, dependent and limited in their corporeality.

To that end, the Holy See pledges to continue its efforts in promoting universal health coverage, in particular, "to answer above all to the healthcare demands of the poorest, the excluded and those, who for economic or cultural reasons, see that their needs are not met"[6].

Thank you, Mr. President.

[1]Pope Francis, *Address to representatives of the National Federation of the Associations of Medical Radiology Health Technicians and Technical, Rehabilitation and Prevention Health Professions*, 16 January 2023.

[2] Cf. Pope Francis, *Message on the XXXI World Day of the Sick*, 11 February 2023.

[3] Cf. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/12/12/more-than-half-a-billion-people-pushed-into-extreme-poverty-due-to-health-care-costs>.

[4] Pope Francis, *Address to members of the Religious Association of Social and Health Institutes (ARIS)*, 13 April 2023.

[5] Cf. <https://www.humandevlopment.va/en/progetti/wash-water-sanitation-higiene.html>

[6] Pope Francis, *Address to members of the Religious Association of Social and Health Institutes (ARIS)*, 13 April 2023.

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◆ **Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher al Summit of the Future**

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher, Segretario per i Rapporti con gli Stati e le Organizzazioni Internazionali della Segreteria di Stato, ha pronunciato ieri a New York al *Summit of the Future*:

Intervento di S.E. Mons. Paul Richard Gallagher

Statement by H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher,

Secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations of the Holy See,

at the Summit of the Future (21 September 2023)

Mr. Chair,

“The future has a name, and its name is hope.”[1] As we contemplate the grandiose project of a “Summit of the Future”, we should perhaps begin by asking ourselves: what is our hope and where is it rooted? Our answers will not be so different: in God, our faith or belief, our families, our culture and our tradition. Hope “speaks to us of something deeply rooted in every human heart, independently of our circumstances and historical conditioning.”[2] From those roots grows the promise of a brighter future for the whole human family, for “all serious and upright human conduct is hope in action.”[3]

One of the greatest political achievements of the last century was this very Organization. Devastated and divided by war, States recognized in 1945 that the only way forward for the world was to tread the path of multilateralism. Three years after the foundation of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, lighting what was—in the words of Pope St. John Paul II—a lamp that could “show the way to freedom, peace, and solidarity.”[4]

The Holy See has consistently reaffirmed the importance of the United Nations placing hope in its activities. At the same time, Popes have not shied away from highlighting the pressing need for reform of the Organization “so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth.”[5]

The Summit of the Future now presents the occasion to appraise our progress on the path laid out in the foundational documents of the UN, and to identify what shape possible reform might take. This collective endeavour should not drown in platitudes, but rather lead to agreement on effective strategies to ensure the collective well-being, safety, security and prosperity of our nations and peoples. Undertaken in the spirit of true multilateralism, this calls for the pursuit of consensus, “to avoid power being co-opted only by a few countries and to prevent cultural impositions.”[6]

Furthermore, in drawing up the “Pact for the Future”, we should be guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[7] seizing the outcome of the Summit as an opportunity not to redraft the 2030 Agenda but to strengthen our efforts in the fight against poverty and in the promotion of prosperity, inspired by the hope for a more just world.

Many are the challenges to overcome in the present, but Pope Francis reminds us that “we [...] are called to unite as a family that is stronger than the sum of small individual members.”[8] United as one human family, may we choose to embrace hope, for “hope is the door that opens onto the future.”[9]

Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair.

[1] Pope Francis, Video Message on the occasion of the TED Conference in Vancouver, 26 April 2017.

[2] Pope Francis, Address to students at Fr. Félix Varela Cultural Centre, Havana, Cuba, 20 September 2015.

[3] Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Spe Salvi*, 30 November 2007, N. 35.

[4] Pope Saint John Paul II, Address to the 50th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, 5th October 1995.

[5] Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, 29 June 2009, N. 67; and Pope Francis, Encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, N. 173.

[6] Pope Francis, Encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, N. 173.

[7] Cf. A/RES/76/307, Modalities Resolution for the Summit of the Future.

[8] Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 3 October 2020, N. 78.

[9] Pope Francis, Video Message on the occasion of the TED Conference in Vancouver, 26 April 2017.

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