



Statement by H. E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Representative of the Holy See  
to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva  
at the *Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Right to Development:*  
*Discussion on International Legal Instruments*

Geneva, 1 May 2019

Mr. Chairman,

The Delegation of the Holy See recognizes the important work done during the previous sessions and acknowledges the Working Group as a platform for genuine dialogue, where many nations offer witness of their commitment to protect and act for our “common home”.<sup>1</sup> As frequently stated by Pope Francis: “*Only together, in patient, judicious, candid and sincere dialogue, can we hope to devise adequate solutions for reversing the trend of global warming and to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty*”.<sup>2</sup>

Any discussion concerning the definition of development should be centred on the main character of the developmental process: the human person. Thus, it is of great importance that we define properly some key aspects related to the concept of development, conceived in its broader sense of human and integral development. Such a definition should aim to take into account all aspects of human life: physical, emotional, social, political, cultural, economic and spiritual.

A holistic approach ensures respect for human dignity and the promotion of development for all people as they strive to achieve their full potential both as individuals and as members of families and local communities. “*It is not just a question of eliminating hunger and reducing poverty... it involves building a human community where men [and women] can live truly human lives...*”.<sup>3</sup> In this regard, my Delegation wishes to reiterate the importance of promoting fully human development, rooted in the unique dignity and identity of every person. “*Because ‘person’ means relation, not individualism; it affirms inclusion not exclusion; unique and inviolable dignity rather than exploitation; freedom not coercion.*”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si'*, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis, Address to the meeting with the Moroccan people, the authorities, with civil society and with diplomatic corps, Rabat 30 March 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 47.

<sup>4</sup> Pope Francis, Audience with the participants in the Convention organized by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development on the fiftieth anniversary of “*Populorum Progressio*”, 4 April 2017.

Since everything is closely interrelated in today's world and given that problems call for a comprehensive vision of all aspects of interconnected global issues, development entails care for both the human person and the natural environment. Thus, to ensure fully the potential of our human family, we need to consider *"integral ecology, one which clearly respects its human and social dimensions"*.<sup>5</sup>

Since integral human development should guarantee a healthy and dignified life, we must acknowledge that *"a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach: it must integrate questions of social justice and fairness in debates on the environment"*.<sup>6</sup> An integral ecology is strictly linked to the notion of the common good, since it demands mutual responsibility: *"each community can enjoy from the earth, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations"*.<sup>7</sup> Among the common duties that will be discussed during this session, we must be able to promote the indispensable values of intergenerational equity, sustainability and environmental preservation.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation is convinced that a "change of attitude" is of paramount importance. In order to address effectively the challenges before the international community, we should design and frame a set of robust policies and instruments, both nationally and internationally. An integral human development approach offers viable models of social integration, which recognize that everyone, irrespective of his or her personal situation, has both a right and a duty to contribute to fair and just societies. *"Genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others."*<sup>8</sup> We look forward to the outcomes of this Working Group session as evidence that the international community has the will to reinforce our solemn commitment to *"leave no one behind"*.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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<sup>5</sup> *Laudato Si'*, 137.

<sup>6</sup> *Laudato Si'*, 49.

<sup>7</sup> *Laudato Si'*, 67.

<sup>8</sup> *Laudato Si'*, 70.