



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Fortunatus Nwachukwu, Apostolic Nuncio,
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other
International Organizations in Geneva at the
75th World Health Assembly - Agenda Item 3 General Discussion
“Health for Peace, Peace for Health”
Geneva, 22-28 May 2022

Mr. President,

The Holy See urges careful attention, profound commitment, and effective action to achieve the aim expressed by the theme for this 75th World Health Assembly: “Health for Peace, Peace for Health”. In his Message for the 55th World Day of Peace, observed on 1 January 2022, Pope Francis recalled that his predecessor, St. Paul VI, identified “integral human development” as “the new name for peace”¹.

At a time of heightened tensions, my Delegation notes, with much regret, that despite carefully articulated global and regional declarations and accords, “... the deafening noise of war and conflict is intensifying ... diseases of pandemic proportions are spreading, the effects of climate change and environmental degradation are worsening, the tragedy of hunger and thirst is increasing, and an economic model based on individualism rather than on solidary sharing continues to prevail.”²

Mr. President,

If this global gathering of public health authorities and experts truly wishes to strive towards the dual goal of lasting peace and health, we must “... reject the language of division, often based on fear and mistrust, and [to] avoid embarking on paths of no return.”³ In this same regard, my Delegation recalls the alarm raised by St. Paul VI that “a person cannot love with offensive weapons in his hands⁴”, since “[..] when we yield to the logic of arms and distance ourselves from the practice of dialogue, we forget to our detriment that, even before causing victims and ruination, weapons can create nightmares”⁵.

¹ Pope Francis, Message for the Celebration of the 55th World Day of Peace, 1 January 2022.

² *Ibid.*

³ Pope Francis, Appeal for Peace, International Meeting of Prayer for Peace: “No One is Saved Alone. Peace and Fraternity”, Rome, 20 October 2020.

⁴ St. Paul VI, Address to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 4 October 1965.

⁵ Pope Francis, Meeting for Peace, Hiroshima, 24 November 2019.

Mr. President,

As a foundational pillar in our efforts, “a comprehensive commitment on the part of the international community is necessary, so that the entire world population can have equal access to essential medical care and vaccine [..] and governments and concerned private entities [need to] demonstrate a sense of responsibility, developing a coordinated response at every level [..], through new models of solidarity and tools to strengthen the capabilities of those countries in greatest need.”⁶

Mr. President,

To achieve true and long-lasting peace, we must allocate appropriate resources to integral human development, education, and health. As members of one human family, let us collectively invest in life and peace, not in instruments of death and destruction.

Thank you.

⁶ Pope Francis, Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See, 10 January 2022.