



Statement of Rev. Monsignor John Putzer, Chargé d'affaires, a.i.
Permanent Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International
Organizations in Geneva at the 53rd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council
**Item 2: Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner for
Human Rights on his Annual Report**
Geneva, 20 June 2023

Mister President,

The Holy See takes note of the annual report delivered by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and thanks him for the relevant update provided on the human rights situation in the world and the activity of his office. The Holy See welcomes the High Commissioner's call to close gaps revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic and reiterates the need for more effective collective international actions to address climate change.

The ever increasing number of protracted conflicts and human rights violations throughout the world are alarming and require a consolidated and coordinated response from the international community. As Pope Francis has said, "*[t]he crisis in human relationships and, consequently, the other crises[...], cannot be overcome, unless we safeguard the transcendent dignity of each human person, created in the image and likeness of God.*"¹ Indeed, only through concerted efforts, focused on the promotion of human fraternity and the common good, will it be possible to adequately address such challenges of global concern.

In this regard, the Holy See reiterates the obligation to respect each human life from the moment of conception to natural death as well as the need to avoid ideological initiatives within this Council, including the use of ambiguous expressions that undermine its work and do not contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights. Only by focusing on the specific objectives of the various mechanisms of the Human Rights Council and the concrete needs of individuals, will it be possible to avoid the criticism of polarization of which this Council is often – justly or unjustly – accused.

Mister President,

The millions of people suffering from extreme poverty, modern slavery, climate disasters, and war are calling for help and the international community must not remain neutral. In this regard, the Holy See reiterates its willingness to contribute to the work of this Council in the authentic promotion of fundamental human rights, the common good and the full appreciation of the inherent dignity of every human being.

Thank you, Mister President.

¹ Pope Francis, *Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See*, 8 Feb. 2021