



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - P.Iva n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)

Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)

Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

International Solidarity, Development and MDG8

International Solidarity and Right to Development: Keys for Achieving MDGs through Global Partnership (MDG8)

Side event at the 18th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council - 14th of September, 2011

Speech from Maria Mercedes Rossi- APG23

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (Community of Pope John XXIII) is a Catholic faith based organisation with Special Consultative status at ECOSOC since 2006, founded in the early '60, in Italy, by Fr. Oreste Benzi, a Catholic Priest.

The members of the Association are committed to sharing their life directly with the people living in poverty and/or socially excluded and marginalised. As a result of this, we try to remove the causes of injustice, social exclusion, violation of human rights and conflicts of various kinds. The Association is based in Italy but is present in 27 countries across 5 continents.

The Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII is committed to promoting the so called “society of “Gratuitousness”, a society that is based on the awareness that everything (hearth, people, resources etc.) is a gift , a society that is based on the values of being, sharing and relating, where the least, the disabled, the marginalised set the pace of the human family’s march.

“Sharing life” is something different from simply serving or helping. It implies to develop a sense of belonging, of being a family that puts together joys, sorrows, struggles, achievements and failures. It makes you to shift from sympathy to empathy, to feel the violations of the human rights of your brothers and sisters as your own.



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - P.Iva n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)

Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)

Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

Being continuously at grass root levels especially in Sub-Sahara Africa with the people living in extreme poverty, with those affected by famine and malnutrition, those who don't have access to quality health care and social services, those infected and affected with HIV/AIDS, children on the streets etc. urges us to raise awareness on the fact that the gap between the rich and the poor, and between wealthy and impoverished countries, is unbearable and extremely unjust; on the fact that when the debate is raised on sustainable development, we, people living in wealthy countries, should raise to ourselves also another question: are we sustainable for the poor of the world?

This compel us to advocate for a world where the human rights of every one may be respected, fulfilled and protected.

These are the reasons why, in our contribution to the work and objectives of the United Nations, we give high priority, among others, to the issue of International Solidarity to be recognised as a human right.

We think that the debate on the recognition of the right of international solidarity is paramount for helping the human race to become a human family according to the United Nation Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. (Articles 1 and 28).

To build a better world based on international solidarity is possible in spite of the present worldwide scenario: it is a matter of our personal choices as individuals and political will of governments, of turning from being imprisoned into fear. intolerance and individualism to opening up to hope, mutual acceptance and awareness of being a global community.

Now days, many signs (natural disasters, pacific revolutions seeking democracy, climate change and multiple crises,) tell us that we should go into the direction of building a new world social order.

I have been in Zambia for 20 years, working as a missionary medical doctor and I have seen many examples of solidarity, especially among the people living in poverty.

Zambia still ranks among the least developed countries and is still hardly hit by HIV/AIDS in spite of all the progresses made in the last two decades. At the time when antiretrovirals were not available and the first community based



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - P.Iva n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)
Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)
Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

home care programmes were initiated, I met and work with hundreds of community volunteers that every day were visiting the sick in their homes and were distributing food assistance while lacking themselves food at home to feed their children.

In our Rainbow project for orphaned and vulnerable children, where we carry out micro-credit schemes to poor families, we witness on daily basis the solidarity going on among those families.

In religious and /or lay communities, in many experiences born within the civil society, there are numerous and creative examples of fraternity and solidarity.

We firmly believe that International Solidarity and the Right to Development are interlinked, mutually reinforcing, and are both keys to the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 8 on Global Partnership for Development, which is, in turn, crucial to the realisation of all the other MDGs.

International Solidarity, the Right to Development and MDG8 shift the paradigm of international cooperation and assistance from a vision of mere charity and moral obligation, to an affirmation of solidarity rights and social justice.

Our globalised and interconnected world reveals contradictions of economic, cultural and technological progress that offers immense possibilities to a fortunate few and leaves millions of others not only on the margins of progress, but in living conditions far below the minimum demanded by human dignity.

Globalisation is an on going mechanism, that is not good or either bad in itself, it depends from the way we use it. It could be a trigger for the integral development of this planet.

It could help to reduce the differences which divide rich and poor countries and it could help to promote a greater exchange of knowledge and scientific discoveries. Above all, it could be the way to create an equal distribution of resources.

The current process of globalisation, unfortunately, has a significant number of driving forces behind it that are, indeed, damaging: prioritising profit at any cost



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - P.Iva n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)
Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)
Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

and with every means over the dignity and human rights of individuals; unregulated markets; financial speculations; some privatisation; asymmetric global markets; excessive consumption of goods; an economic model that, in spite of all the evidence of its failure - unveiled by the current economic crises - is still centred upon the chase of unlimited growth.

Such globalisation risks to be socially catastrophic, environmentally unsustainable, geopolitically destabilising, lethal to cultural diversity and democratically unacceptable.

Creating a different globalisation which centres on the integral development of mankind and puts profit in its proper place, which is that of a basic functional instrument, would probably be the right way to resolve the many problems which trouble our planet today.

Therefore, it is the conflict between a society based on the human rights and centred on human beings and a society based on profit that must be solved. In the current globalisation, international cooperation can be more a form of palliative care than prevention and cure, most notably when it neither tackles the root causes of the unbalance between developed and developing countries nor removes the structural obstacles that generate poverty worldwide.

The current tragedy occurring in the Horn of Africa where almost 12,000,000 people are at risk of death due to a combination of drought, rising food prices and conflict, is a clear example of this scenario.

Currently, the international community is rightly mobilising to assist those populations with emergency relief, but this tragedy was there already for many years¹ and its exacerbation could have been prevented if interventions to eliminate the root causes of such a situation would have been put in place earlier.

At the onset of the most recent global economic and financial crisis, governments of wealthy countries were able to raise trillions of dollars in a matter of months to resuscitate ailing banks.

¹ UNICEF report 2008.



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - P.Iva n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)
Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)
Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

Global military spending continued to increase while funds for international cooperation remained static or were reduced. And yet, except for few countries, the majority of States are still far from keeping the promise of giving 0.7% of GNP to Official Development Assistance.

According to the UN Millennium Summit Declaration “the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people [...] Thus, only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable”.

Only the principle of solidarity in connection with the principle of subsidiarity² can make possible a process of globalization “fully inclusive and equitable”.

There is a great need to rethink global economy and build up an ethical, just, more democratic financial architecture that pursues the common good of humanity and ensure the respect of human rights of everyone.

People living in extreme poverty need actions and not words: they have not the luxury to wait, they die. They are people whose human rights are violated.

Especially in view of expanding global interdependence, it is imperative to recognize that human rights are a shared responsibility between all members of the international community, States and non-states actors.

To provide the Right to Development with a legal binding framework and/or international and national policies for its implementation, to recognise International Solidarity as a right, to effectively use the monitoring system offered by the indicators for MDG8, will be further important steps towards the realisation of a new, more human and responsible social and international order.

Among the States of the United Nations family, there is a broad consensus on recognising the importance of the principle of International Solidarity: some

² Subsidiarity is an organising principle that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority.



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - P.Iva n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)
Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)
Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

regional groups, such as the European Union, have endorsed solidarity together with subsidiarity as guiding principles on which States act accordingly; the UN General Assembly approved the Declaration on the Right to Development.

Nevertheless, when debating the eventual recognition of solidarity as a right, and the implementation, by providing legal bindings instruments, of the right to development, the consensus is infringed, with the developing and emerging countries on one side and the developed countries on the other.

We are fully aware that the political debate on these issues is difficult and quite controversial: it implies a harmonisation of significant differences among countries in terms of ideological and cultural point of views, historical backgrounds, political and economic power.

Nevertheless, the plea of the poor for a more just world must be heard.

Resolution A/HRC/RES/15/13 states: “ideally, solidarity should be preventive rather than simply reactive to massive irreversible damage already caused, and must address both natural and man-made disasters”. We fully concur with this affirmation.

In fact, a solidarity that is ante-factum, or preventive, has the potential to address the core need for justice and equity at the national and international levels.

Finally, in terms of enhancement of global partnership, we would like to invite Member States to consider the proposal of “twin-ship” forwarded by Mr. Ritzki, the previous Independent Expert on International Solidarity and Human Rights³.

This idea can imply the creation of a system of strategic partnership between a developed and a developing country which have different but complementary needs and can work together for mutual benefit and outcomes in economic, political, social and humanitarian development.

³ A/HRC/15/32.



associazione

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII

associazione internazionale di fedeli di diritto pontificio – www.apg23.org

Ente Ecclesiastico Civilmente Riconosciuto con D.P.R. n. 596/72
C.F. 00310810221 - **P.Iva** n. 01433850409

Sede legale: Via Mameli, 1 - 47921 Rimini (RN)
Sede amministrativa: Via Valverde, 10/B - 47923 Rimini (RN)
Tel. 0541/909700 - **Fax** 0541/909701

We have already examples of such a partnership between cities, universities etc. This can be a practical way to achieve MDG8 and implement the Right to Development in the spirit of International Solidarity.

There is a proverb in the Bemba language, one of the local languages of Zambia that says: **“Umucinshi wa nseba kwimina pamo” “The strength of the small birds is to start flying together”** .

All countries are small birds in front of the threats faced by the world now days...let us start flying together to save our world. Thank You.