



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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DICHIARAZIONE DELL'OSSERVATORE PERMANENTE DELLA SANTA SEDE ALL'O.N.U. DAVANTI ALLA SESSIONE ANNUALE DELLA COMMISSIONE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SUL DISARMO

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Pubblichiamo di seguito la dichiarazione del Nunzio Apostolico, S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, alla Sessione annuale della Commissione sul disarmo (1° aprile 2003):

• DICHIARAZIONE DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation joins in congratulating you on your election to chair this important Commission. We also extend our best wishes to the other members of the bureau.

Months ago, the Holy See Delegation stated before the First Committee of the 57th Session of the UN General Assembly that *the old policies of nuclear deterrence, which prevailed during the Cold War, must lead now to concrete disarmament measures, based on dialogue and multilateral negotiation, which are essential values in the disarmament process. Through the instruments of international law, they facilitate the peaceful resolution of controversies, help better mutual understanding and foster a climate of trust, cooperation and respect between all States. In this way they promote the effective affirmation of the culture of life and peace, which is based upon the values of responsibility, solidarity and dialogue.*

These words seem that more significant today when the world once again finds itself listening to the mounting rumble of arms. We are confronted by two opposing perspectives: the first is based on the conviction that conflicts can be resolved through a determined and broad-based willingness to negotiate effectively in light of the ways and wisdom of the law; the second perspective maintains that, in the face of elusive and re-emergent threats, force is more efficacious and direct. However, the latter appears to only reduce international cooperation in disarmament rather than enhance it, inducing negative repercussions on multilateralism. A clear message in favor of the force of law and not the law of force should emerge from this substantive session.

We have come to this forum with a precise objective: to sustain ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament, as well as the practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. The techniques of mediation, negotiation and verification are all being advanced today. The arms control system appears to have worked effectively and to have brought significant results these last decades. It only needs strengthening to better solve new challenges and meet new threats. Therefore the Holy See wishes to reiterate its support to the principles and to the effective implementation of the objectives laid down in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as well as in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The extraordinary mobilization of men and women that we see almost everywhere, in these very days, indicates that the cause of peace is making great progress in the conscience of humanity. It shows increasingly, as a felt aspiration among peoples to live in security, in justice, in hope and in a culture of peace, which, - it is good to remember this - is centered on the value of the human being and on the respectful dialogue and co-existence between peoples.

The awareness of the most emphasized interdependence among nations and of the risks of reciprocal destruction requires a major accent on multilateralism, which, far from putting an undue emphasis on force or selective treaty enforcement, requires all the States and individuals to enforce decisively the laws and procedures that have been established towards nuclear disarmament and the elimination of the threats posed by conventional arms.

This is the moment that each one of us, aware of the gravity of the present situation when law must be chosen to prevail over force, must be animated by a profound sense of responsibility toward the disarmament process. The most effective way to make every member of the international community comply with its own commitments appears to be the clear willingness on behalf of everyone and of all States to comply with their own commitments within treaties and between them in a genuine spirit of multilateralism.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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