



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

N. 0035

Giovedì 20.01.2005

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA PLENARIA DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SUL PUNTO 39: "STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/59/L.58)"

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Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, il Nunzio Apostolico S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato martedì 18 gennaio scorso alla Plenaria della 59ma Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite sul punto 39: "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: draft resolution (A/59/L.58):

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr President,

My delegation would like to express once again its deepest condolences to the concerned countries and to add its support for those measures intended to strengthen emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, as well as prevention, in the wake of the Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster.

Since the very start of the emergency, His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second has expressed his deepest sympathy. He has committed the agencies of the Catholic Church to act in a genuine gesture of solidarity to all people without exception in each nation touched by this enormous tragedy.

Our institutions and the Papal Representatives present in the affected countries went into action immediately.

Firstly, they gave out food and clothes as well as sheltering the affected populations. Tragically, it has become clear that the most affected group has been young children, of whom at least fifty thousand were swept away, but there are also tens of thousands left orphaned. For this reason we are placing special emphasis upon ways to bring help to surviving children in the zones worst affected.

In cooperation with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, a very long list of Catholic agencies is already using funds from throughout the world, amounting to nearly five hundred million dollars, some of which is going into

emergency aid and the rest into longer term projects through our local networks. NGOs and other faith-based organisations in the field now need to be allowed to work directly with the populace; while the aid from multilateral funds should be distributed equitably between the affected regions without political, ethnic or religious bias, as well as in dialogue with the different stakeholders.

The extraordinary impact of the power of nature in a radius of thousands of miles has elicited an equally extraordinary response from the peoples and governments of the whole world in an outpouring of sympathy and solidarity rarely seen in recent times. Such a swift and practical expression of global solidarity is surely a sign of the fundamental decency of the peoples of the world. It is clear that there exists - regardless of the things that separate us - a deep sense of our shared humanity and fragility in the face of such terrible events.

It seems clear that this is an emergency whose aftermath is going to last through the medium and long term, and so it is to be hoped that the solidarity of private citizens and governments alike will not die down once the world recovers from the initial shock of the calamity.

Mr President, as well as strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction mentioned in the resolution before this Assembly, the world's nations should seize this opportunity and the good will generated by the world's peoples so as to further important humanitarian goals on the broader agenda at this time. There is now a sense of humanitarian momentum and we should not let it slip by. So too, we owe it to all concerned to redouble efforts that will bring a rapid and just political solution in those areas still suffering from conflict.

Moreover, some have expressed concern that the Tsunami disaster might distract attention from other issues, especially the concerns of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and this year's review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is well known that twenty-five million people throughout the world still suffer bitterly due to largely man-made wars, disasters and mismanagement. My delegation earnestly hopes, therefore, that this year will be one in which solidarity will be the hallmark of the political agenda in a way that will help all nations refocus on ways to achieve the development goals agreed upon at the start of this Millennium.

Finally, Mr President, my delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate all those who have been so rapid and generous in their response to the Tsunami disaster, including the Secretary-General and the members of the agencies of this Organisation. It now falls to the United Nations to become once again a great driving force, dedicated, courageous and humanitarian, as it is in the best moments of its history.

Thank you, Mr President.

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