



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA PLENARIA DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELL'ONU SUL PUNTO 69 (A): "STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS"

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA PLENARIA DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELL'ONU SUL PUNTO 69 (A): "*STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS*"

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede, l'Arcivescovo Celestino Migliore, Nunzio Apostolico, ha pronunciato ieri a New York davanti alla Plenaria della 61a Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite sul punto 69 (a): "*Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations*":

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Madam President,

My delegation would like to add its voice in expressing deep concern for the destruction caused by recent man-made and natural disasters. In every case, these disasters have served to reaffirm preeminent value of humanitarian law and the consequent duty to guarantee the right to humanitarian aid to suffering civilians and refugees. From hurricanes to earthquakes, from drought to war, the past year has shown that all people and all countries are susceptible to the catastrophic effects of disasters and that a coordinated emergency response is crucial in preventing the loss of life, rehabilitating communities, and establishing long-term redevelopment strategies.

That is why we believe that it remains vitally important to shed light upon humanitarian situations that have not gained international headlines and remain critically under-funded. We welcome efforts to highlight these forgotten crises and efforts to secure funds for essential life-saving activities.

As is well known, the Holy See, through the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* and organizations such as *Caritas Internationalis*, is active in non-partisan humanitarian assistance in all corners of the globe. As the 2004 Tsunami, the 2005 Pakistan earthquake and the hurricane season of the same year demonstrated, concern for our neighbours transcends the confines of national communities and has increasingly broadened its horizon to

the whole world.

These chambers have heard many discussions about the different aspects of globalization, but if this phenomenon has one particularly positive aspect, it is its potential to marshal an array of means for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The welcome and growing globalized response to humanitarian emergencies requires coordination that carefully balances efficiency with respect for the autonomy of the different humanitarian actors.

To this end, there remains little doubt that coordination of relief activities in emergency situations is essential and that the United Nations should play a coordinating role. However, it is not the principle of coordination but its modalities that need to be constructively adapted to meet the needs of all people and agencies. Humanitarian organizations have specific characteristics, qualifications, and empathies that they bring to their work which, in view of the cumulative goal before us, we would do well to respect. Coordinators should play a fundamental role in the collection and dissemination of information, in creating contacts with local authorities and in giving advice to humanitarian organizations. Further, collaboration between Coordinators and humanitarian agencies is important in order to formulate agreements and policies which respect the specificities and mandates of the humanitarian agencies while allowing them to continue to operate constructively within a given circumstance.

With a view to creating a fully comprehensive and respectful cooperation, a set of criteria appear to be required. First, any coordinating system must respect the independence and autonomy of humanitarian organizations. Second, the coordinating body must not simply favour large humanitarian organizations but should also allow competent medium and small organizations to have a legitimate role in relief. Third, the United Nations bodies must not detract from the ability to act or the effectiveness of NGOs in the field, especially those well acquainted with the peoples in question and their needs. These principles could help ensure that a multifaceted response to humanitarian crises remains available in all disaster areas.

In the area of funding, the recent establishment of the Central Emergency Response Fund's (CERF) grant facility promises to be an important element in ensuring that reliable emergency relief money is available upon short notice. It is to be hoped that the Emergency Relief Coordinator will harmonize CERF's activity with that of other inter-governmental and non-governmental emergency relief funds in order to allow for the effective employment of resources. Further, large relief funds, such as CERF, should not limit the ability of civil society and faith-based humanitarian relief organizations to attract private and governmental donations.

The Holy See looks forward to participating actively in the debate on this very important question because, through the exchange of ideas and best practices, the most effective means for alleviating suffering and rebuilding communities can and must be found.

Thank you, Madam President.

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