



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA TERZA SESSIONE SPECIALE DEL CONSIGLIO DEI DIRITTI DELL'UOMO

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Lo scorso 15 novembre, a Ginevra, nel quadro del dibattito che si è tenuto nella Terza Sessione Speciale del Consiglio dei Diritti dell'Uomo dell'O.N.U. sulle violenze che recentemente a Gaza hanno comportato la morte di numerosi civili palestinesi, S.E. Mons. Silvano M. Tomasi, Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Ufficio delle Nazioni Unite e le Organizzazioni Specializzate di Ginevra, ha pronunciato l'intervento che pubblichiamo di seguito:

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. SILVANO M. TOMASI

Mr. President,

1. In its short history, the Human Rights Council has faced tough challenges given the persisting violations of human rights in several areas of the world, violations it has not always been able to address with fairness and consistency because of shortsighted political and economic interests. But a Human Rights Council that does not contribute to change the quality of people's life on the ground, in their daily tasks and normal activities, seriously risks a loss of credibility. To the Delegation of the Holy See it appears that a priority of the Council would be a qualitative step forward in confidence-building, the adoption of a courageous method of real dialogue that enables placing on the table the real problems calling for solution no matter how different at the start are the points of view. On the assumption of such a confidence, the present Special Session can be a constructive occasion. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been caught in a cycle of violence that, as experience shows, leads nowhere. This tragic spiral of suffering must be broken.

2. Two steps are called for. First, the two people involved must recognize each other's humanity and equality and start this process of mutual recognition on a base of justice and respect of fundamental human rights and international and humanitarian law. Peaceful coexistence is possible if justice and reconciliation create the context for collaboration and mutual security. Second, the family of States has a moral responsibility to promote a mentality of peace; to collaborate through practical measures for the elimination of the deep cultural, social and economic roots of violence; to aid and enable the parties involved in pursuing a fruitful collaboration. This

responsibility in the first place is owned to the civilian population, to women and children struck down by unwarranted violence, to young military lives cut short with dreams unfulfilled. Violence never pays and generates new sorrows. Respect of basic human rights, above all the right to life, is not an abstract consideration, but an approach that pays a rich dividend in its political consequences: it makes possible the reaping and enjoyment of the fruits of peace.

Mr. President,

3. In the view of this Delegation, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as a major source of instability in the Middle East, becomes a chain in a vicious cycle that produces instability in the whole region. In turn, such instability makes the situation of the population of Palestine and of Israel much worse and the reaching of peaceful goals more difficult. If the countries engaged in the region and trying to assist in finding a honorable and just solution to the conflict succeed, they would render an important service to the whole world and show once again how the respect of human rights fosters peace and peace sustains the living out of human rights.

Mr. President,

4. Allow me to conclude with the recent words of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI addressing the deterioration of the situation in the Gaza Strip and expressing his closeness to the civilian population asking that God "will enlighten the Israeli and Palestinian Authorities, as well as those of nations that have a particular responsibility in the region, so that they may do all they can to put an end to the bloodshed, increase humanitarian aid initiatives and encourage the immediate resumption of direct, serious, and concrete negotiations."

Thank you, Mr. President

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