



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. 0649

Giovedì 06.12.2007

**INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA CONFERENZA DELLA CROCE ROSSA E DELLA
MEZZALUNA ROSSA (GINEVRA, 26 - 30 NOVEMBRE 2007)**

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Si è da poco conclusa a Ginevra la 30^a Conferenza Internazionale della Croce Rossa e della Mezzaluna Rossa, sul tema "Insieme per l'Umanità".

S.E. Mons. Silvano M. Tomasi, C.S., Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Ufficio delle Nazioni Unite e delle Istituzioni Specializzate a Ginevra, ha pronunciato nel corso dell'importante incontro l'intervento di cui riportiamo il testo:

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

Madam President,

1. Beyond the tragedies and shortcomings of man made conflicts, tensions and natural disasters, defacing the dignity of every person, a realistic and long range solution to enhance humanitarian protection rests on the realization that the human family is really one. Solidarity within the human family finds concrete expression in collaborative action and in openness to dialogue and partnerships, a perspective summed up well in the theme of our Conference, "*Together for Humanity*". Among today's global concerns, this *30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent* has singled out for our discussion four particularly threatening developments: pandemics, international migration, urban violence and environmental degradation. The Mission of the Holy See recognizes in these challenges a reminder that coexistence among social and political communities, and the construction of a peaceful world order, are only possible on the basis of upholding the fundamental value of every person's human dignity.

2. The four areas that call for our immediate attention have serious humanitarian consequences for contemporary society as well as future generations. The will to work together to find adequate solutions for all cannot be shirked since upon it depends the material and ethical survival of humanity. Partial solutions that neglect a group of countries or a part of the national community are myopic, besides being unjust and unacceptable. A sound globalization will include the humanitarian imperative and thus avoid the uneven reality of the creation of regions of prosperity and peace and regions of poverty and conflict. When this happens, it is a

political as well as an ethical failure.

Madam President,

3. It is only on the basis of such values that the *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* in all its components can muster the forces necessary to establish effective and lasting partnerships, respectful of differences and appreciative of the talents of each. In this context, the Holy See and the numerous Catholic aid agencies and organizations are ready to work together with other countries and parties in order to offer the international community the wide experience acquired alongside the most vulnerable in every corner of the world.

It is also vital to realize that the solution to complex problems and emergencies concerning all of humanity are not only of a technical nature and cannot be reduced to mere assistance. In

this instance, however, victims, both direct and indirect, deserve particular attention and care. In fact, it is the most vulnerable who suffer the worst from natural disasters, conflicts and violence, from the consequences of underdevelopment, poverty and pandemics. These persons, their families and communities, have rights and we need to do everything to respect them. Moreover, they deserve our human closeness, our psychological, moral and spiritual support, not as condescending pity, but as the expression of our solidarity. We constitute together one human family. Aid should be given as self-aid in order that local people may strengthen their own capacities and in this way fully exercise their freedom and responsibility.

4. My Delegation takes good note of the Resolutions before us and it hopes in particular that the implementation of the *Memorandum of Understanding and the Agreement on Operational Arrangements* between the *Palestinian Red Crescent Society* and *Magen David Adom*, signed in 2005, may soon be fully implemented. It supports any new effort directed at family reunion and at re-establishing lost contact and information about family members due to conflicts and disasters. It favours the adoption of a legally binding instrument for the prohibition and elimination of cluster munitions. It sees with satisfaction the return of the ICRC to the issue of protection of people caught up in population movements and in different degrees vulnerable to discrimination, marginalisation, and family separation. Humanitarian and human rights instruments have been developed, but the political will and the very complexity of the phenomenon of human mobility stand in the way of an adequate implementation especially when intergovernmental conferences and events keep prioritizing only economic and production dimensions of migrations leaving in the shadows the fact that they are persons, with inalienable dignity and rights, even when they are kept in detention camps and centres.

5. The different religions alongside other institutions can and must play a positive role. For its part, the Holy See has promoted initiatives of inter-religious dialogue, which it considers a fundamental component in the construction of peace and the realization of the common good. As it had pledged in 2003, it has organised an inter-religious scholarly event to promote the defence of human dignity and the respect of humanitarian law in case of armed conflict. It looks forward to further initiatives to promote the ethical foundation of humanitarian law and the defence of human dignity also in the case of armed conflict with non-State actors.

Madam President,

The exemplary approach of the Red Cross and Red Crescent rests on the ability to break down barriers and to build bridges across conflicting partners, aware of the common humanity binding us and that demands we move forward to the future together. The international community has the responsibility to prevent conflicts, provide protection, and to build peace and a world in which a decent life is possible for the present and future generations.

[01755-02.01] [Original text: English]

