



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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◆ **Statement of His Eminence Card. Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State - High-level Summit on peace for Ukraine Switzerland (15-16 June 2024)**

Nei giorni 15-16 giugno 2024, la Santa Sede, accogliendo l'invito congiunto della Presidente della Confederazione Svizzera, Viola Amherd, e del Presidente dell'Ucraina, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, ha partecipato come osservatore alla Conferenza di alto livello per la pace in Ucraina, tenutasi in Svizzera. Essa è stata rappresentata dal Segretario di Stato, Card. Pietro Parolin, accompagnato dal Nunzio Apostolico in Svizzera, S.E. Mons. Martin Krebs, e da Mons. Paul Butnaru, ufficiale della Sezione per i Rapporti con gli Stati e le Organizzazioni Internazionali della Segreteria di Stato.

In linea con la natura propria della Santa Sede e la sua qualità di Osservatore e seguendo la prassi di non sottoscrivere dichiarazioni congiunte, la Delegazione della Santa Sede si è astenuta dalla firma del Comunicato finale, mentre ha espresso sostegno alle conclusioni del Vertice, secondo quanto dichiarato nell'intervento che il Card. Parolin ha pronunciato durante la Sessione plenaria finale.

The Holy See welcomes the convening of this High-level Summit on peace for Ukraine, co-hosted by Switzerland and Ukraine. It is an event of global importance, carefully prepared by Ukraine, which, while making enormous efforts to defend itself from aggression, has also worked continuously on the diplomatic front, eager to achieve a just and lasting peace.

In the face of war and its tragic consequences, it is important never to give up, but to continue to seek ways to end the conflict with good intentions, trust and creativity. This is the message Pope Francis conveys, particularly to the rulers of nations, with his ongoing appeals for peace in Ukraine. It is important to reiterate that the only

means capable of achieving true, stable and just peace is dialogue between all the parties involved. The Holy See expresses its hope that the diplomatic effort currently being promoted by Ukraine and supported by so many countries will be improved, in order to achieve the results that the victims deserve and that the entire world is hoping for.

In accordance with its nature, the Holy See is participating as an Observer, paying particular attention to the respect for international law and humanitarian issues. With regard to the first aspect, it wishes to reaffirm the validity of the fundamental principle of respect for the sovereignty of each country and for the integrity of its territory.

The Holy See expresses great deal concern for the tragic humanitarian consequences and is especially committed to facilitating the repatriation of children and encouraging the release of prisoners, especially seriously wounded soldiers and civilians.

The reunification of minors with their families or legal guardians must be a paramount concern for all parties, and any exploitation of their situation is unacceptable. It is therefore imperative that every available channel is strengthened to facilitate this process. In addition, the Holy See participates as an observer in the work of the International Coalition for the repatriation of Ukrainian children from Russia. Furthermore, it maintains direct contact with both the Ukrainian and Russian authorities with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of the ad hoc mechanism created following the visit of Cardinal Matteo Zuppi to Kyiv and Moscow, with a view to resolving concrete cases.

With regard to prisoners, both civilian and military, there is a great of concern over the periodic reports of non-compliance with the Geneva Conventions. In particular about the Fourth Convention, which most directly concerns civilians, and the difficulty of creating, together with the International Red Cross Committee, a Joint Medical Commission that could assess the situation of prisoners of war in need of urgent medical care. Despite all the challenges, the Holy See remains committed to maintaining regular communication with the Ukrainian and Russian authorities, and remains prepared to assist in the implementation of potential mediation initiatives that are acceptable to all parties and benefit those who have been affected. At the same time, the Holy See encourages countries and other members of the international community to explore ways of providing assistance and facilitating mediation, whether of a humanitarian or political nature. We trust that by supporting these efforts, we can help to find consensus and ensure the timely implementation of these projects.

On behalf of Pope Francis, I wish to confirm his personal closeness to the tormented Ukrainian people and his unwavering commitment to peace.

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