



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
DE IUSTITIA ET PACE

Press Conference to launch the 2016 UNCTAD Report

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President

The UNCTAD 2016 *Trade and Development Report* is entitled “Structural Transformation for Inclusive and Sustained Growth”. Its launch is a meaningful and hopeful occasion. I am happy, as President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, to host this event as an expression of the significant resonance between the Council’s mission and the work of UNCTAD.

Ours is the younger of the two bodies, founded in 1967 at the request of the II Vatican Council. The Council was deeply concerned with “the immensity of the hardships which still afflict the greater part of mankind today.” Therefore Vatican II wanted a Church body “to stimulate the Catholic community to promote progress in needy regions and international social justice.”¹ Everyone would surely agree, that such development should help to overcome *the immense hardships of humankind*; and that such development should *promote progress*, which today must be *integral human development*.

Three years earlier, in 1964, the United Nations established its Conference on Trade and Development to deal with development issues, particularly international trade. The Holy See was present at the founding meeting, and Blessed Pope Paul VI identified the ultimate horizon towards which UNCTAD at its best would always be working, when he declared: “Development [is] the new name of peace.”²

Over the subsequent 52 years, new technologies have broken down traditional borders between nations and opened up new areas of economic opportunity. Moreover, a less polarized political landscape has provided new possibilities for worldwide trade. In addition, economic power has become more dispersed, mostly due to globalization and to

¹ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, § 90. This “body” was to be the future Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

² Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, § 76.

industrialization and rapid growth in East Asia, with corresponding changes in the workings of the international trading system.

But the basic question remains: what kind of trade, growth and development are going to meet the pervasive challenges of poverty, of inequality and lack of progress?

Pope Paul VI defined true development with perfect clarity: true development must foster the development of every person and of the whole person. This means each individual person (man, woman and child), each human group, and humanity as a whole.³

Given the increasing environmental challenges, Pope Francis has extended this fundamental definition to include future generations. “The global economic crises have made painfully obvious the detrimental effects of disregarding our common destiny, which cannot exclude those who come after us. We can no longer speak of sustainable development apart from intergenerational solidarity. Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently.”⁴

Human leadership or governance still seems to have a lot to learn about how to order economic affairs for the welfare of everyone and for the safeguarding of the environment. In the words of Pope Francis:

“With due respect for the autonomy and culture of every nation, we must never forget that the planet belongs to all mankind and is meant for all mankind; the mere fact that some people are born in places with fewer resources or less development does not justify the fact that they are living with less dignity.”⁵

And world governance, including institutions of the U.N. family, need to appreciate the poor, as St John Paul II put it, “not as a problem, but as people who can become the principal builders of a new and more human future for everyone.”⁶

The launching of the 2016 *Trade and Development Report* takes place under the long shadow of the financial and monetary crisis dragging on since 2008. It results from a combination of ethical and technical breakdowns. Have the right lessons been learned yet? It is not evident that the organizations, institutions and decision-makers responsible for ethical and technical breakdowns have acknowledged their role, much less made the necessary repairs. We must do better. Our societies need to find ways of exercising greater corporate, financial and governmental responsibility for the economy and the

³ Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, § 14 quoted by Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*, § 181.

⁴ Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, § 159.

⁵ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, § 190.

⁶ World Day of Peace, 2000, § 14.

environment.⁷ The world economy has been marooned in growth doldrums for the past six years, and this state of affairs is in growing danger of becoming accepted as the ‘new normal’.

Dialogue and cooperation are not easy. But the ‘old normal’ of isolated sectors and competing institutions will not meet the challenges.

“A fair globalization will not come about only through disjointed decisions on trade, or finance, or labour, or education or health policies, conceived and applied independently. It is an integrated phenomenon: it takes integrated solutions and, obviously, integrated policies.”⁸

Integrated policies will require persistence and generosity, with quite different voices being heard: banking, finance, commerce, business, politics ... as well as workers, the unemployed and migrants, youth and the old, and indeed the natural environment.

Nearly 50 years ago, Pope Paul VI enshrined the link between development and peace. Peace is not the mere absence of violence. It bespeaks human fulfilment, integral in all its aspects – material, social, spiritual. Trade and development must aim at the fullest human flourishing if we are ever to have real peace.

Our world is abundant with riches, thanks to the generous Creator. Human survival and prosperity are also thanks to the coordinated human efforts to produce and to trade throughout history and around the globe. Trade is certainly a key driver of development, and fair trade will do much to promote authentic human development.

Let us join in encouraging UNCTAD to fulfil its mission, in taking the *2016 Trade and Development Report* on board. May the report assist UNCTAD and other institutions of international governance to face the great challenges of the coming decades.

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⁷ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Towards reforming the international financial and monetary systems in the context of global public authority*, 2011.

⁸ Juan Somavía and Renato Martino, *The challenge of a fair globalization*, International Labour Organization, 2005, p. 41.