



The Holy See

*Message of His Holiness Paul VI
to H.E. Mr. Gamani Corea, Secretary-General of UNCTAD IV**

From the Fourth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development assembled in Nairobi, the peoples – especially the poor – are awaiting decisions which will bring rapid and effective remedies to their most urgent needs and which in attitudes and structures will develop new relationships between nations, thus permitting all of them to contribute to greater solidarity in international life.

We join our voice to these appeals. We express the deep and confident desire of seeing emerge from your assembly both important activities and new motives of hope for humanity. Since your last Conference in Santiago, the international crisis has amassed sufferings and anxieties. Famine has ravished various regions. Unemployment is sapping energy. Inflation is profoundly disturbing trade relationships. The debts of developing countries are reaching overwhelming and discouraging proportions.

This situation does not, however, find you unprepared. Thanks to the laborious efforts of the preceding conferences in Geneva, New Delhi and Santiago, which were patiently continued in the intervals between the sessions, a coming to awareness has occurred. The causes of the problems are better known to you in their complexity, which is at one and the same time political, technical, social, cultural and moral. The desire for vast and coordinated action has broken forth beginning with certain convictions that are now widely shared. Courageous decisions based on worldwide solidarity are both necessary and possible, and all are summoned to share in the attainment of this solidarity.

Is it not a particularly encouraging sign to note that the younger and weaker nations have shown that they are more and more resolved to mobilize their own resources - human as well as material - in order to develop their personality and to engage it responsibly in the creation of closer-knit and more solid networks of solidarity? What we wrote almost ten years ago in our Encyclical on the Development of Peoples we repeat with increased conviction: "Worldwide solidarity, ever more

effective, should allow all peoples to become the artisans of their own destiny... The younger or weaker nations ask to assume their active part in the construction of a better world, one which shows deeper respect for the rights and the vocation of the individual. This is a legitimate appeal; everyone should hear it and respond to it." (No. 65)

Our conviction is nourished on the comforting spectacle of the best experience of individuals and peoples. It is rooted in faith in God «who has willed that all people should make up a single family and that they should deal with one another in a spirit of brotherhood» (Gaudium et Spes, 24). The earth has been given to them to share so that they may cultivate it, so that they may manage and multiply material goods in a responsible manner, so that they may impress on them the mark of their own human personality and bring about exchanges of goods between individuals and peoples that should become a constant process of personal advancement in solidarity.

The management of the earth's resources is thus at the centre of your discussions. You have the legitimate ambition of building trade networks which will ensure more remuneration, more stable and more equitable prices for all, especially for those who are the poorest. To arrive at this point it is necessary that these endeavours, this dialogue between rich countries and less favoured countries, should be inserted within the higher perspective of the individual destination of this world's goods, of the interdependence of peoples, and of co-responsibility in the organization of trade exchanges in the interest of all. This is why it is necessary for you to rekindle incessantly, both personally and through collective effort, the flame of your convictions: material riches exist so that people can have food, clothing, housing, education, and so that assisting one another and developing their solidarity they may build truly fraternal communities which experience true joy in living.

We address this message to you, Mr. Secretary-General, in the name of the Gospel which, revealing to people the depth of their divine vocation, frees within them irreplaceable forces and an irreplaceable light to orient and sustain their efforts for more humanity in the world - efforts on behalf of that which we have called «the civilization of love». Invoking upon the participants of UNCTAD Conference assembled at Nairobi an abundance of divine blessings, we ask Almighty God that they may find in the wearisome work which will be theirs the joy of opening up together new ways of hope for the peoples of the world.

The Vatican, 28 April 1976.

*ORa n.21 p.2, 3.

Paths to Peace p.248-249.

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