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Briefing from the deputy director of the Holy See Press Office on the 18th meeting of the Council of Cardinals

The deputy director of the Holy See Press Office, Paloma García Ovejero, this morning gave a briefing on the eighteenth meeting of the Council of Cardinals with the Holy Father, the full text of which is reproduced below.

The Council of Cardinals met with the Holy Father for three days: Monday 13, Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 February. All members of the Council were present. Pope Francis was absent on Monday for the second part of the morning session, for the “ad Limina Apostolorum” visit of the bishops of Costa Rica, and this morning for the general audience. However, he will be present at session no. 105, to be held this afternoon. On Monday and Tuesday the Cardinals concelebrated Holy Mass with the Pope.

On 13 February, after the first consultations, the Cardinals issued the following declaration through the Holy See Press Office:

“The Council of Cardinals today began its thirteenth session of work. At the beginning, Cardinal Oscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga, coordinator of the group, after greeting the Holy Father, thanked him on behalf of all the Members for his words during the Christmas greetings to the Roman Curia on 22 December 2016, acknowledging his encouragement and guidance for the work of the Council.

In relation to recent events, the Council of Cardinals pledges its full support for the Pope’s work, assuring him at the same time of its adhesion and loyalty to the figure of the Pope and to his Magisterium”.

The working sessions took place from 9.00 a.m to 12.30 p.m., and from 4.30 to 7 p.m., and were dedicated to further considerations on the various Dicasteries of the Curia: in particular, discussions continued regarding the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (Propaganda Fide), the Congregation for the Oriental Churches; and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

The Cardinals began to examine the “Diaconate of Justice”, and therefore a significant amount of time was devoted to the Tribunals: the Apostolic Penitentiary, the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, and the Tribunal of the Roman Rota.

The Council also studied, in these days, the process for the selection of candidates to the episcopate.

Cardinal George Pell reported on the work of the Secretariat for the Economy with a view to the full implementation of the economic reform requested by the Holy Father, with particular attention to staff training activities and human resources.

The Prefect of the Secretariat for Communication, Msgr. Dario Edoardo Viganò, presented the current stage in the reform of Holy See communications, or rather the amalgamation of Vatican Radio and the Vatican Television Centre in the Dicastery entrusted to him. Meetings with the Secretariat of State, the Secretariat for the Economy, the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See and the Labour Office have been undertaken to accompany this new phase of reform. Furthermore, a plan was presented for the restructuring of radio frequencies and the new policies for the world of social networks. Finally, the project for the initiation of reform of the Vatican Publishing House was considered.

The next meeting of the Council of Cardinals is scheduled to take place on 24, 25 and 26 April 2017.
