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## **Intervention of the Cardinal Secretary of State at the Second Holy See – Mexico Conference on International Migration”**

The following is this morning’s intervention by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin at the Second Holy See – Mexico Conference on International Migration”, held at the Casina Pio IV:

### **Intervention of the Cardinal Secretary of State**

Mr. Secretary Videgaray,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I cordially welcome you, Mr. Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, and all the distinguished delegates, speakers and participants gathered here, to participate in this meeting that expresses the common interest of the Holy See and the United States of Mexico for the issue of migration.

At the beginning of this Conference, an ideal continuation of the one that took place in Mexico City in 2014, held at the proposal of the Mexican Chancellery and in which I had the honour of participating, we had the opportunity to listen to the message of the Holy Father, who - I am convinced - it will be a sure inspiration for the work that will follow.

Today, unfortunately, we see that increasingly pressing and complex challenges characterize the migration phenomenon, while many of the problems that we are discussing in our time still remain without an adequate response. To these challenges [as we have heard] as response was sought, in 2016, by the member states of the United Nations with the New York Declaration, undertaking paths of dialogue, consultation and negotiation, both in the area of responsibility that each one has about the protection of refugees, and in the shared management of the migratory phenomenon in general.

These are ongoing processes that, we hope with Pope Francis, can lead to reverting the logic of the globalization of indifference, replacing it with the globalization of solidarity, which, attentive to the needs and the just expectations of the indigenous peoples, will also be able to help those who, in the human family, find themselves in a state of need and in situations of vulnerability.

While consultations for the adoption by the United Nations of a Global Compact on Refugees are underway in Geneva, this time the focus has been on the parallel negotiation process currently underway in New York for the adoption, under the auspices of the United Nations, of a Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which involves the Heads of the Permanent Missions of Mexico and Switzerland as co-facilitators.

It is a difficult task, considering that the international climate has objectively changed since 2016, due to the unwillingness of many countries to reconcile the just demands of national sovereignty with the urgent need to respond globally to those who are forced to leave their own country because of wars, violations of human rights, natural disasters or conditions of extreme poverty.

As it is a human phenomenon, migration challenges everyone, not only because of its magnitude, but also “because of the social, economic, political, cultural and religious problems it raises, and the dramatic challenges it poses to nations and the international community” [1].

However, there is a growing tendency to adopt political agendas that oppose the arrival of migrants even before their right to protection is established. On the other hand, the migration issue requires, on the part of the States, a strong political and humanitarian commitment to maintain the obligations accepted at the international level. It is, therefore, indispensable that the States have the support of a multilateral system, which today needs to be strengthened and reformed, to accompany what the Church would define as “the signs of the times” and to face effectively and adequately the challenges of our time.

While a certain distrust among the members of the family of nations easily leads to the search for closures of national borders and policies based solely on emergency management, there is however a dimension of humanity that no one can afford to ignore.

The Holy See participates actively in these processes of seeking an agreement on the shared management of migrant and refugee situations, not to interfere in the decisions that belong to the States – which as Pope Francis has also affirmed, have different capacities and possibilities for reception, based on their political, social and economic situation – but to recall the principles of humanity and fraternity; the only ones that guarantee harmonious relations. To ignore them, we are all aware, would lead to a regression with respect to the principles that found the international community, the reciprocal relationship between the States and the social cohesion of each country.

If on the one hand every person is granted the right to emigrate, on the other hand there is also a primary right to remain in the country in conditions of security and dignity. Therefore, it is necessary to defend, first of all, the right of every person not to be forced to emigrate and to respect their rights in their homeland, actively cooperating in their development. The factors that force people to leave their homes and countries contribute to disorderly, unpredictable and dangerous migratory flows. It is evident, for example, that wars, especially with the uncontrolled trade in arms and the terrible plague of corruption that sustains it, prevent any social and economic progress for generations, and drive people to leave.

Therefore, it is essential that international cooperation defend the right of each person to remain in his or her own homeland. When this is not possible, collaboration between States is more than necessary during the entire migration process. Indeed, while the status of migrants influences their possibilities of requesting better protection and specific services, there is, nonetheless, a basic level of treatment to which all are entitled, based on respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms. This refers to access to basic social services (such as health, education, justice and sufficient housing) and involves, albeit differently, all the countries involved, whether they are of transit, arrival or repatriation.

It is from this dimension based on the recognition and protection of human dignity and human rights of all immigrants that we intend to continue speaking on this occasion, especially from the point of view of the work taking place in New York.

At the same time, however, we can not forget the contribution that the phenomenon of migration offers to the history and development of nations, nor should we neglect the media that influence the perception of public opinion in this regard. The Holy Father reminded us of this last year, in his message to the first Symposium on Human Mobility and Development, when he asked that work be carried out in two directions: the “information policies” and the “[policies] to promote development in countries of origin”. Indeed, for migrants and the societies that host them to be safe and to thrive, the conditions for sustainable development and responsible communications are equally necessary.

The future Global Compact on Migration will act as a common, global, favourable and indicative framework for international migration. Although it will not be binding, its authority will depend on the good use that is made of it. The Holy See and Mexico have good reason to hope that the Pact may contribute to making international migration safer, more orderly, more regular and more responsible, without neglecting any migrant.

I reiterate, therefore, my gratitude for your presence and my satisfaction at this meeting, which we are honoured to host in the Vatican. We hope that the conclusions we can reach will provide a valuable contribution to the ongoing discussions in the aforementioned international forums, but above all to help us remember that migrants are, first of all, people, who do not aspire to anything other than to live with dignity.

I wish you well in your work.

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[1] Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in veritate*, 29 June 2009, 62.

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