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LE UDIENZE

Il Santo Padre ha ricevuto questa mattina in Udienza:

S.E. Mons. Friedhelm Hofmann, Vescovo di Würzburg (Repubblica Federale di Germania);

Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale degli Stati Uniti d'America (Regione II), in Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum": E

S.E. Mons. Matthew Harvey Clark, Vescovo di Rochester;

S.E. Mons. William Francis Murphy, Vescovo di Rockville Centre

con gli Ausiliari:

S.E. Mons. Emil Aloysius Wcela, Vescovo tit. di Filaca

S.E. Mons. John Charles Dunne, Vescovo tit. di Abercorn

S.E. Mons. Paul Henry Walsh, Vescovo tit. di Abtugni;

Gruppo degli Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale degli Stati Uniti d'America (Regione II), in Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum";

S.E. Mons. Andrés Carrascosa Coso, Arcivescovo tit. di Elo, Nunzio Apostolico nella Repubblica del Congo e in Gabon, con i Familiari.

[01257-01.01]

VISITA "AD LIMINA APOSTOLORUM" DEI PRESULI DELLA CONFERENZA EPISCOPALE DEGLI STATI UNITI D'AMERICA (REGIONE II)

Pubblichiamo di seguito il discorso che Giovanni Paolo II ha rivolto agli Ecc.mi Presuli della Conferenza Episcopale degli Stati Uniti d'America (Regione II), incontrati questa mattina e ricevuti nei giorni scorsi, in separate udienze, in occasione della Visita "ad Limina Apostolorum":

● DISCORSO DEL SANTO PADRE

Dear Brother Bishops,

1. It gives me great joy today to welcome you, the Pastors of the Church in New York, in the context of the continuing series of visits *ad limina Apostolorum* by the American Bishops. I greet you in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, through whom we give thanks always to our heavenly Father "whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine" (*Eph 3:20*).

In previous meetings with your fellow Bishops from the United States, attention has been focused on the sacred duty to sanctify and teach the People of God. With the group that preceded you I began to reflect on the great responsibility of governing the faithful. Let us continue today to examine this same *munus regendi*, which must always be carried out in the spirit of the exhortation found in the Rite of Ordination of a Bishop: "The title of Bishop is one of service, not of honor, and therefore a Bishop should strive to benefit others rather than to lord it over them. Such is the precept of the Master" (Roman Pontifical, *Rite of Ordination of a Bishop*: Homily; cf. *Pastores Gregis*, 43).

2. In your Particular Churches, you are called to act *nomine Christi*. Indeed, it is as vicars and ambassadors of Christ that you govern the portion of the flock entrusted to you (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 27). As shepherds, you "have the task of gathering together the family of the faithful and . . . fostering charity and brotherly communion" (*Pastores Gregis*, 5). Yet your immediate function as pastors cannot be isolated from your wider responsibility for the universal Church; as members of the College of Bishops, *cum et sub Petro*, you in fact share in solicitude for the entire people of God, received through episcopal ordination and hierarchical communion (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 23). Moreover, while guaranteeing the communion of your Dioceses with the Church throughout the world, you also enable the universal Church to draw upon the life and the charisms of the local Church in a spiritual "exchange of gifts". Authentic "catholic" unity presupposes this mutual enrichment in the one Spirit.

Considered within a properly theological context, "power of governance" emerges as something more than mere "administration" or the exercise of organizational skills: it is a means for building up the Kingdom of God. I would

encourage you, therefore, to continue to lead by example, in order to evangelize your flock for their own sanctification, thereby preparing them to share the Good News with others. Foster communion among them so as to equip them for the Church's mission. As you embrace lovingly the three-fold *munera* entrusted to you, remember that your sacred responsibility to teach, sanctify and govern cannot be surrendered to anyone else: it is your personal vocation.

3. I am grateful for the deep affection which American Catholics have traditionally felt for the Successor of Peter, as well as their sensitivity and generosity to the needs of the Holy See and the universal Church. The Bishops of the United States have always shown a great love for the one in whom the Lord established "the lasting and visible source and foundation of the unity both of faith and of communion" (*Lumen Gentium*, 18). Your abiding loyalty to the Roman Pontiff has led you to seek ways to strengthen the bond linking the Church in America with the Apostolic See. These devoted sentiments are a fruit of the hierarchical communion linking all members of the episcopal College with the Pope. At the same time, they constitute a great spiritual resource for the renewal of the Church in the United States. In encouraging your people to deepen their fidelity to the Magisterium and their union of mind and heart with the Successor of Peter, you offer them the inspirational leadership that is needed to carry them forward into the Third Millennium.

4. One of the fruits of the Second Vatican Council was a fresh understanding of episcopal collegiality. Among the ways in which this ecclesial vision is realized at the level of the local Church is through the activity of Episcopal Conferences. Bishops today can only fulfill their office fruitfully when they work harmoniously and closely with their fellow Bishops (cf. *Christus Dominus*, 37, *Apostolos Suos*, 15). For this reason, constant reflection is needed on the relationship between the Episcopal Conference and the individual Bishop.

My dear Brothers in the episcopate, I pray that you will work diligently with one another, in that spirit of cooperation and unanimity of heart that should always characterize the community of disciples (cf. *Acts* 4:32; *Jn* 13:35; *Phil* 2:2). The Apostle's words apply in a special way to those charged with the salvation of souls: "I beg you, Brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to agree in what you say. Let there be no factions; rather, be united in mind and judgment" (*1 Cor* 1:10).

As Church leaders, you will realize that there can be no unity of praxis without an underlying consensus, and this, of course, can only be attained through frank dialogue and informed discussions, based on sound theological and pastoral principles. Solutions to difficult questions emerge when they are thoroughly and honestly examined, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Spare no effort to ensure that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops serves as an ever more effective means of strengthening your ecclesial communion and assisting you in shepherding your brothers and sisters in Christ.

5. Without prejudice, therefore, to the God-given authority of a Diocesan Bishop over his Particular Church, the Episcopal Conference should assist him in carrying out his mission in harmony with his brother Bishops. The structures and procedures of a Conference should never become unduly rigid; instead, through constant reassessment and reappraisal, they should be adapted to suit the changing needs of the Bishops. In order for a Conference to fulfill its proper function, care should be taken to ensure that the offices or commissions within a Conference strive "to be of help to the Bishops and not to substitute for them, and even less to create an intermediate structure between the Apostolic See and individual Bishops" (*Pastores Gregis*, 63).

6. Brothers, I pray that at every opportunity you will be able to work together, so that the Gospel may be more effectively proclaimed throughout your country. I wish to express my appreciation for all that you have already accomplished together, particularly in your statements on life issues, education and peace. I invite you now to turn your attention to the many other pressing issues that directly affect the Church's mission and her spiritual integrity, for example the decline in Mass attendance and in recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the threats to marriage and the religious needs of immigrants. Let your voice be clearly heard, announcing the message of salvation in season and out of season (cf. *2 Tim* 4:1). Confidently preach the Good News so that all may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (cf. *1 Tim* 2:4).

7. As I conclude my remarks today, I make my own the words of Saint Paul: "Encourage one another. Live in

harmony and peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Cor 13:11). Entrusting you and your priests, deacons, religious and lay faithful to the intercession of Mary, Mother of America (cf. *Ecclesia in America*, 76), I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of grace and strength in her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

[01258-02.02] [Original text: English]

INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL PRIMO COMITATO DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SU GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT (ITEM 67)

Nella giornata di ieri, 7 ottobre, nel corso della 59a Sessione dell'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U., l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha preso la parola dinanzi al I Comitato sul tema "General and Complete Disarmament" (item 67).

Riportiamo di seguito il testo dell'intervento dell'Osservatore Permanente:

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr Chairman,

I would like to join the other Delegations in congratulating you and the rest of the bureau upon your election.

We are now on the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The ideals embodied in the Charter – seeking peace through international organization and cooperation – have been a source of hope through the years. These ideals ought to animate us as much now as in 1945. But lately, a sense of fear seems to cloud our vision: fear of terrorist attacks, fear of new wars, fear of a breakdown in the processes of international law.

A sign of this fear is the surge in global military spending which reached \$956 billion last year, an increase of 11 percent from 2002 and 18 percent from 2001. Military spending, which will exceed \$1 trillion this year, will soon surpass even the Cold War peaks. Many States are increasing their spending because they think that larger arsenals of firepower will provide security. Increased reliance on guns – large and small – is leading the world away from, not towards, security.

A clear result of such over-spending on the instruments of death is that governments are much less able to meet long-term commitments to education, health care and housing. The Millennium goals are left lagging while military priorities claim scarce funds. The United Nations pioneered studies which show the integral relationship between disarmament, development and security. Security for all is enhanced when disarmament and development steps complement one another. We must point up the economic benefits of disarmament measures. Development alternatives to militarism must be the constant work of this Committee.

Moreover, it certainly cannot be said that poverty leads directly to terrorism, but it is true that terrorists exploit conditions of poverty in ways that produce heightened conflict and violence. The brutality of the terrorist attacks over the last year is a clear sign of a culture of fear and death. Responding to the ideological and supposedly religious nature of international terrorism, the Holy See has condemned these blasphemous attacks. My Delegation reiterates that the name of God must not be used to justify terrorism in any form and calls upon all religious leaders to speak and act against terrorism.

Terrorists use an array of weapons to kill, maim and slaughter. Their global reach means that these weapons are being produced and sold internationally, on black markets as well as by State-sponsors. In conjunction with the Counter-Terrorism Committee, States must look for ways to reduce the easy availability of these weapons

through increased export controls and added vigilance over weapon stockpiles.

The world has also become increasingly aware of the grave threat posed by terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. The fragile state of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at this moment is very worrying, as proliferation of these weapons greatly increases the likelihood of terrorist acquisition.

On the immediate horizon is the 2005 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. As the three preparatory meetings for the Conference have shown, the NPT is in crisis. The inability even to agree on an agenda or the continuing relevance of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference indicates the diverse perspectives among States Parties. The crisis, however, is far deeper than procedural disagreements. It has to do with the interplay of responsibilities between the Nuclear Weapons States and the non-Nuclear Weapons States. The non-nuclear members of the NPT have a duty not to engage in the proliferation of nuclear weapons, while the Nuclear Weapons States have a duty to engage in negotiations leading to the elimination of their nuclear weapons. This was the original bargain of the NPT: no proliferation in exchange for nuclear disarmament.

Since the Treaty was signed in 1968, there has been an ongoing struggle between the nuclear haves and have-nots. This struggle has divided our attention between "vertical" and "horizontal" proliferation, and the best intentions of this bargain have not resulted in the desired outcome of a world free of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, attempts are being made to modernize nuclear weapons and to give them a war-fighting capacity. This situation is becoming increasingly unsustainable and unacceptable. Progress will be made only when strategic choices towards nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and a reconsideration of nuclear policies are undertaken by all parties.

It is to be hoped that the gravity of the present crisis will lead States to act to ensure that the NPT emerges from the Review Conference next year in stronger condition than at present. There should be early agreement to start negotiations for a fissile cut-off treaty; placement of surplus fissile materials under IAEA control; verification measures for nuclear disarmament; de-alerting measures; establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament; maintenance of the moratorium on nuclear testing and early Entry-into-Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; and the universality of the NPT.

As frightening as the proliferation of WMD and their possible acquisition by terrorists are, they do not come close to exhausting our disarmament concerns. The spread of conventional weapons, especially in conflict and post-conflict situations in Africa, is extremely concerning. The UN and its Member States must support all disarmament, demobilization and re-integration efforts in Africa and everywhere there is the need of such activities. We should give particular attention to addressing the special needs of children affected by armed conflicts, in particular the reunification with their family, their reintegration into society and their appropriate rehabilitation, as stressed in the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Mr Chairman,

In two months, Nairobi will host the First Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention, also known as the Nairobi Summit for a Mine-Free World. From the beginning, the Holy See supported the process of the Ottawa Convention which has yielded a number of positive results in the fight against anti-personnel mines. Nonetheless, much still needs to be done if humanity is to be set free from these terrible, treacherous devices.

The Summit will be an important occasion to renew our efforts to promote the universalization and the implementation of the Convention in order to realize, in the not too distant future, the dream of a world free of anti-personnel mines. The Holy See calls on the whole international community to accomplish these efforts and pledges its own full and active participation.

Mr. Chairman, over the years, the Holy See has supported UN initiatives for building a "culture of peace". The

discussion of this agenda item has always taken place in the Plenary Assembly, rather than in this Committee, even though its importance to disarmament is evident. While the technical proficiency of arms control negotiators and experts is welcome and necessary, my Delegation would like to emphasize the larger aspects of education and formation, and reiterate its firm commitment to it.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

[01259-02.02] [Original text: English]

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