

Holy See Proposes Human Rights to End Recession

Says People Must Be Protected First

GENEVA, Switzerland, MARCH 8, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Defending human rights will contribute to ending the financial crisis, according to a Holy See representative at the United Nations.

Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the Holy See's permanent observer at the Geneva U.N. offices, affirmed this in his address last Wednesday to the 13th session of the Human Rights Council.

"The delegation of the Holy See wishes to reaffirm its conviction that the perspective of human rights offers a positive contribution for a solution to the present financial crisis," the archbishop said. "Although it is true that some signs of recovery are being seen, the crisis continues to worsen the situation of millions of people in their access to essential needs of life" and "compromises the retirement plans" of many.

Regulations are needed that will ensure lasting and global development, the prelate proposed. And he said there is a "unique opportunity" to tackle the "roots of the crisis" by implementing human rights in the "economic, civil and political" realms.

Equality and justice

The Holy See representative reflected on the United Nations Report on the negative consequences of the financial crisis: the scandal of hunger, growing inequality, millions of unemployed, millions of new poor, failure of institutions, lack of social protection for vulnerable people, etc.

Citing Benedict XVI's social encyclical "Caritas in Veritate," he pointed out the imbalances that occur when "separating economic management, to which the production of wealth alone corresponds, from political action, which should have the role of obtaining justice through redistribution."

"Equality and justice are the essential criteria to manage the world economy," stressed Archbishop Tomasi.

And it is possible to promote human rights, the prelate affirmed, if states "translate principles into laws and make on the spot changes a reality."

Governments are the primary protagonists in implementing human rights, the Holy See representative stated, but collaboration with civil society and the international community should not be lacking.

"The common objective," he said, "is the protection of human dignity that connects the whole of the human family," a unity "rooted in these four fundamental principles: the central character of the human person, solidarity, subsidiarity and the common good."

Ignoring people

The prelate cautioned against solutions to the crisis that consider the "reform of the financial system" or of "economic models" without taking into account the needs of people.

On the contrary, "access to resources" must be guaranteed "to improve their conditions of life" and to allow them to "put their talents at the service of the local community and of the universal common good," he said.

To make this happen, Archbishop Tomasi explained, "the rules that govern the financial system" must be modified, leaving aside the "old forms of greed that have led to the present crisis" and encouraging the promotion of an "effective integral development and the implementation of human rights" because "the person, in his integrity, is the first capital to protect and appreciate."