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CHAPTER NINE

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

I. BIBLICAL ASPECTS

a. Unity of the human family

428. *The biblical accounts of creation bring out the unity of the human family and teach that the God of Israel is the Lord of history and of the cosmos.* His action embraces the whole world and the entire human family, for whom his work of creation is destined. God's decision to make man in his image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:26-27) gives the human being a unique dignity that extends to all generations (cf. Gen 5) and throughout the entire earth (cf. Gen 10). *The Book of Genesis indicates moreover that the human being was not created in isolation but within a context, an integral part of which are those living spaces that ensure his freedom (the garden), various possibilities for food (the trees of the garden), work (the command to cultivate) and above all community (the gift of someone who is like himself) (cf. Gen 2:8-24).* Throughout the Old Testament, the conditions that ensure the fullness of human life are the object of a divine blessing. God wants to guarantee that man has what is necessary for his growth, his freedom of self-expression, success in his work, and a wealth of human relationships.

429. *Following the destruction wrought by the flood, God's covenant with Noah (cf. Gen 9:1-17), and in him with all of humanity, shows that God wants to maintain for the human community the blessing of fertility, the task of subduing creation and the absolute dignity and inviolability of human life that had characterized the first creation.* This is God's desire despite the fact that, with sin, the decadence of violence and injustice, which was punished by the flood, had entered creation. The Book of Genesis presents with admiration the diversity of peoples, the result of God's creative activity (cf. Gen 10:1-32). At the same time, it denounces man's refusal to accept his condition as creature with the episode of the Tower of Babel (cf. Gen 11,1-9). In the divine plan, all peoples had "one language and the same words" (cf. Gen 11:1), but humanity became divided, turning its back on the Creator (cf. Gen 11:4).

430. *The covenant that God established with Abraham, chosen to be "the father of a multitude of nations" (Gen 17:4), opens the way for the human family to make a return to its Creator.* The history of salvation leads the people of Israel to believe that God's action was restricted to their land. Little by little, however, the conviction grows that God is at work also among other nations (cf. Is 19:18-25). The

Prophets would announce, for the eschatological times, a pilgrimage of the nations to the Lord's temple and an era of peace among the peoples (cf. *Is* 2:2-5, 66:18-23). Israel, scattered in exile, would become definitively aware of its role as a witness to the one God (cf. *Is* 44:6-8), the Lord of the world and of the history of the nations (cf. *Is* 44:24-28).

b. Jesus Christ, prototype and foundation of the new humanity

431. *The Lord Jesus is the prototype and foundation of the new humanity.* In him, the true "likeness of God" (2 *Cor* 4:4), man — who is created in the image of God — finds his fulfilment. In the definitive witness of love that God has made manifest in the cross of Christ, all the barriers of enmity have already been torn down (cf. *Eph* 2:12-18), and for those who live a new life in Christ, racial and cultural differences are no longer causes of division (cf. *Rom* 10:12; *Gal* 3:26-28; *Col* 3:11).

Thanks to the Spirit, the Church is aware of the divine plan of unity that involves the entire human race (cf. *Acts* 17:26), a plan destined to reunite in the mystery of salvation wrought under the saving Lordship of Christ (cf. *Eph* 1:8-10) all of created reality, which is fragmented and scattered. From the day of Pentecost, when the Resurrection is announced to diverse peoples, each of whom understand it in their own language (cf. *Acts* 2:6), the Church fulfils her mission of restoring and bearing witness to the unity lost at Babel. Due to this ecclesial ministry, the human family is called to rediscover its unity and recognize the richness of its differences, in order to attain "full unity in Christ."⁸⁷³

c. The universal vocation of Christianity

432. *The Christian message offers a universal vision of the life of men and peoples on earth*⁸⁷⁴ that makes us realize the unity of the human family.⁸⁷⁵ This unity is not to be built on the force of arms, terror or abuse of power; rather, it is the result of that "supreme model of unity, which is a reflection of the intimate life of God, one God in three Persons, . . . what we Christians mean by the word 'communion';"⁸⁷⁶ it is an achievement of the moral and cultural force of freedom.⁸⁷⁷ The Christian message has been decisive for making humanity understand that peoples tend to unite not only because of various forms of organization, politics, economic plans or in the name of an abstract ideological internationalism, but because they freely seek to cooperate, aware "that they are living members of the whole human family."⁸⁷⁸ The world community must be presented, over and over again and with

⁸⁷³ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 1: AAS 57 (1965), 5.

⁸⁷⁴ Cf. Pius XII, Address to Catholic Jurists on the Communities of States and Peoples (6 December 1953), 2: AAS 45 (1953), 795.

⁸⁷⁵ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 42: AAS 58 (1966), 1060-1061.

⁸⁷⁶ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 40: AAS 80 (1988), 569.

⁸⁷⁷ Cf. John Paul II, Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations (5 October 1995), 12: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 October 1995, p. 9.

⁸⁷⁸ John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 296.

ever increasing clarity, as the concrete figure of the unity willed by the Creator. "The unity of the human family has always existed, because its members are human beings all equal by virtue of their natural dignity. Hence there will always exist the objective need to promote, in sufficient measure, the *universal* common good, which is the common good of the entire human family."⁸⁷⁹

II. THE FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

a. The international community and values

433. *The centrality of the human person and the natural inclination of persons and peoples to establish relationships among themselves are the fundamental elements for building a true international community, the ordering of which must aim at guaranteeing the effective universal common good.*⁸⁸⁰ Despite the widespread aspiration to build an authentic international community, the unity of the human family is not yet becoming a reality. This is due to obstacles originating in materialistic and nationalistic ideologies that contradict the values of the person integrally considered in all his various dimensions, material and spiritual, individual and community. In particular, any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable.⁸⁸¹

The coexistence among nations is based on the same values that should guide relations among human beings: truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom.⁸⁸² The Church's teaching, with regard to the constitutive principles of the international community, requires that relations among peoples and political communities be justly regulated according to the principles of reason, equity, law and negotiation, excluding recourse to violence and war, as well as to forms of discrimination, intimidation and deceit.⁸⁸³

434. *International law becomes the guarantor of the international order,*⁸⁸⁴ that is of coexistence among political communities that seek individually to promote the common good of their citizens and strive collectively to guarantee that of all peoples,⁸⁸⁵ aware that the common good of a nation cannot be separated from the good of the entire human family.⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁷⁹ John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 292.

⁸⁸⁰ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1911.

⁸⁸¹ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, 5: AAS 58 (1966), 743-744; John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 268, 281; Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Ar Populorum Progressio*, 63: AAS 59 (1967), 288; Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens*, 16: AAS 63 (1971), 413; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Church and Racism. Contribution of the Holy See to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*, Vatican Press, Vatican City 2001.

⁸⁸² Cf. John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 279-280.

⁸⁸³ Cf. Paul VI, Address to the United Nations (4 October 1965), 2: AAS 57 (1965), 879-880.

⁸⁸⁴ Cf. Pius XII, Encyclical Letter *Summi Pontificatus*, 29: AAS 31 (1939) 438-439.

⁸⁸⁵ Cf. John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 292; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 52: AAS 83 (1991), 857-858.

⁸⁸⁶ Cf. John XXIII, Encyclical Letter in *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 284.

The international community is a juridical community founded on the sovereignty of each member State, without bonds of subordination that deny or limit its independence.⁸⁸⁷ Understanding the international community in this way does not in any way mean relativizing or destroying the different and distinctive characteristics of each people, but encourages their expression.⁸⁸⁸ Valuing these different identities helps to overcome various forms of division that tend to separate peoples and fill them with a self-centredness that has destabilizing effects.

435. The Magisterium recognizes the importance of national sovereignty, understood above all as an expression of the freedom that must govern relations between States.⁸⁸⁹ Sovereignty represents the subjectivity⁸⁹⁰ of a nation, in the political, economic, social and even cultural sense. The cultural dimension takes on particular importance as a source of strength in resisting acts of aggression or forms of domination that have repercussions on a country's freedom. Culture constitutes the guarantee for the preservation of the identity of a people and expresses and promotes its spiritual sovereignty.⁸⁹¹

National sovereignty is not, however, absolute. Nations can freely renounce the exercise of some of their rights in view of a common goal, in the awareness that they form a "family of nations"⁸⁹² where mutual trust, support and respect must prevail. In this perspective, special attention should be given to the fact that there is still no international agreement that adequately addresses "the rights of nations,"⁸⁹³ the preparation of which could profitably deal with questions concerning justice and freedom in today's world.

b. Relations based on harmony between the juridical and moral orders

436. To bring about and consolidate an international order that effectively guarantees peaceful mutual relations among peoples, the same moral law that governs the life of men must also regulate relations among States: "a moral law the observance of which should be inculcated and promoted by the public opinion of all the nations and of

⁸⁸⁷ Cf. Pius XII, *Christmas Radio Message on a Just International Peace* (24 December 1939) 5: AAS 32 (1940) 9-11; Pius XII, *Address to Catholic Jurists on the Community of States and of Peoples* (6 December 1953) 2: AAS 45 (1953), 395-396; John XXIII, *Encyclical Letter Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 289.

⁸⁸⁸ Cf. John Paul II, *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (5 October 1995), 9-10: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 October 1995, p. 9.

⁸⁸⁹ Cf. John XXIII, *Encyclical Letter Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 289-290; John Paul II, *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (5 October 1995), 15: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 October 1995, p. 10.

⁸⁹⁰ Cf. John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 15: AAS 80 (1988), 528-530.

⁸⁹¹ Cf. John Paul II, *Address to UNESCO* (2 June 1980), 14: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 23 June 1980, p. 11.

⁸⁹² John Paul II, *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (5 October 1995), 14: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 October 1995, p. 10; cf. also John Paul II, *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (13 January 2001), 8: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 17 January 2001, p. 2.

⁸⁹³ John Paul II, *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (5 October 1995), 6: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 October 1995, p. 8.

all the States with such a unanimity of voice and force that no one would dare to call it into question or to attenuate its binding force."⁸⁹⁴ The universal moral law, written on the human heart, must be considered effective and indelible as the living expression of the shared conscience of humanity, a "grammar"⁸⁹⁵ on which to build the future of the world.

437. Universal respect of the principles underlying "a legal structure in conformity with the moral order"⁸⁹⁶ is a necessary condition for the stability of international life. The quest for such stability has led to the gradual elaboration of a "right of nations"⁸⁹⁷ (*"ius gentium"*), which can be considered as "the ancestor of international law."⁸⁹⁸ Juridical and theological reflection, firmly based on natural law, has formulated "universal principles which are prior to and superior to the internal law of States,"⁸⁹⁹ such as the unity of the human race, the equal dignity of every people, the rejection of war as a means for resolving disputes, the obligation to cooperate for attaining the common good and the need to be faithful to agreements undertaken (*pacta sunt servanda*). This last principle should be especially emphasized in order to avoid "temptation to appeal to the law of force rather than to the force of law."⁹⁰⁰

438. To resolve the tensions that arise among different political communities and can compromise the stability of nations and international security, it is indispensable to make use of common rules in a commitment to negotiation and to reject definitively the idea that justice can be sought through recourse to war.⁹⁰¹ "If war can end without winners or losers in a suicide of humanity, then we must repudiate the logic which leads to it: the idea that the effort to destroy the enemy, confrontation and war itself are factors of progress and historical advancement."⁹⁰²

Not only does the Charter of the United Nations ban recourse to force, but it rejects even the threat to use force.⁹⁰³ This provision arose from the tragic experience of the Second World War. During that conflict the Magisterium did not fail to identify certain indispensable factors for building a renewed international order: the freedom and territorial integrity of each nation, defence of the rights of minorities, an equitable sharing of the earth's resources, the rejection of war and

⁸⁹⁴ Pius XII *Christmas Radio Message* (24 December 1941): AAS 34 (1942) 16.

⁸⁹⁵ John Paul II, *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (5 October 1995), 3: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 11 October 1995, p. 8.

⁸⁹⁶ John XXIII, *Encyclical Letter Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 277.

⁸⁹⁷ Cf. Pius XII, *Encyclical Letter Summi Pontificatus*: AAS 31 (1939) 438-439; Pius XII, *Christmas Radio Message* (24 December 1941): AAS 34 (1942) 16-17; John XXIII *Encyclical Letter Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 290, 292.

⁸⁹⁸ John Paul II, *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (12 January 1991), 8: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 14 January 1991, p. 3.

⁸⁹⁹ John Paul II, *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace*, 5: AAS 96 (2004), 116.

⁹⁰⁰ John Paul II, *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace*, 5: AAS 96 (2004), 117; cf. also John Paul II, *Message to the Rector of the Pontifical Lateran University* (21 March 2002), 6: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 March 2002, p. 6.

⁹⁰¹ Cf. John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Centesimus Annus*, 23: AAS 83 (1991), 820-821.

⁹⁰² John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Centesimus Annus*, 18: AAS 83 (1991), 816.

⁹⁰³ Cf. *Charter of the United Nations* (26 June 1945), art. 2.4; John Paul II, *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace*, 6: AAS 96 (2004), 117.

an effective plan of disarmament, fidelity to agreements undertaken and an end to religious persecution.⁹⁰⁴

439. *In order to consolidate the primacy of law, the principle of mutual confidence is of the utmost importance.*⁹⁰⁵ *In this perspective, normative instruments for the peaceful resolution of controversies must be reformulated so as to strengthen their scope and binding force.* Processes of negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration that are provided for in international law must be supported with the creation of “a totally effective juridical authority in a peaceful world.”⁹⁰⁶ Progress in this direction will allow the international community to be seen no longer as a simple aggregation of States in various moments of their existence, but as a structure in which conflicts can be peacefully resolved. “As in the internal life of individual States . . . a system of private vendetta and reprisal has given way to the rule of law, so too a similar step forward is now urgently needed in the international community.”⁹⁰⁷ In short, “international law must ensure that the law of the more powerful does not prevail.”⁹⁰⁸

III. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

a. The value of international organizations

440. *The Church is a companion on the journey towards an authentic international “community,” which has taken a specific direction with the founding of the United Nations Organization in 1945.* The United Nations “has made a notable contribution to the promotion of respect for human dignity, the freedom of peoples and the requirements of development, thus preparing the cultural and institutional soil for the building of peace.”⁹⁰⁹ In general, the Church’s social doctrine views positively the role of intergovernmental organizations, especially those operating in specific sectors.⁹¹⁰ However, it has reservations when they address problems incorrectly.⁹¹¹ The Magisterium recommends that the activity of international

⁹⁰⁴ Cf. Pius XII, Christmas Radio Message (24 December 1941): AAS 34 (1942), 18.

⁹⁰⁵ Cf. Pius XII, Christmas Radio Message (24 December 1945): AAS 38 (1946), 22; John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 287-288.

⁹⁰⁶ John Paul II, Address to the International Court of Justice, The Hague (13 May 1985), 4: AAS 78 (1986), 520.

⁹⁰⁷ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 52: AAS 83 (1991), 858.

⁹⁰⁸ John Paul II, Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace, 9: AAS 96 (2004), 120.

⁹⁰⁹ John Paul II, Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace, 7: AAS 96 (2004), 118.

⁹¹⁰ Cf. John XIII, Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra*: AAS 53 (1961), 426, 439; John Paul II, Address to the 20th General Conference of FAO (12 November 1979), 6: *L’Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 26 November 1979, p. 6; John Paul II, Address to UNESCO (2 June 1980), 5, 8: *L’Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 23 June 1980, pp. 9-10; John Paul II, Address to the Council of Ministers of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (30 November 1993), 3, 5: *L’Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 8 December 1993, pp. 1-2.

⁹¹¹ Cf. John Paul II, Message to Nafis Sadik, Secretary General of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (18 March 1994): AAS 87 (1995), 191-192; John Paul II, Message to Gertrude Mongella, Secretary General of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Woman (26 May 1995): *L’Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 31 May 1995, p. 2.

agencies respond to human needs in social life and in areas of particular importance for the peaceful and ordered coexistence of nations and peoples.⁹¹²

441. *Concern for an ordered and peaceful coexistence within the human family prompts the Magisterium to insist on the need to establish “some universal public authority acknowledged as such by all and endowed with effective power to safeguard, on the behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights.”*⁹¹³ In the course of history, despite the changing viewpoints of the different eras, there has been a constant awareness of the need for a similar authority to respond to worldwide problems arising from the quest for the common good: it is essential that such an authority arise from mutual agreement and that it not be imposed, nor must it be understood as a kind of “global super-State.”⁹¹⁴

Political authority exercised at the level of the international community must be regulated by law, ordered to the common good and respectful of the principle of subsidiarity. “The public authority of the world community is not intended to limit the sphere of action of the public authority of the individual political community, much less to take its place. On the contrary, its purpose is to create, on a world basis, an environment in which the public authorities of each political community, their citizens and intermediate associations can carry out their tasks, fulfil their duties and exercise their rights with greater security.”⁹¹⁵

442. *Because of the globalization of problems, it has become more urgent than ever to stimulate international political action that pursues the goals of peace and development through the adoption of coordinated measures.*⁹¹⁶ The Magisterium recognizes that the interdependence among men and nations takes on a moral dimension and is the determining factor for relations in the modern world in the economic, cultural, political and religious sense. In this context it is hoped that there will be a revision of international organizations, a process that “presupposes the overcoming of political rivalries and the renouncing of all desire to manipulate these organizations, which exist solely for the common good,”⁹¹⁷ for the purpose of achieving “a greater degree of international ordering.”⁹¹⁸

In particular, intergovernmental structures must effectively perform their functions of control and guidance in the economic field because the attainment of the common good has become a goal that is beyond the reach of individual States, even if they are dominant in terms of power, wealth, and political strength.⁹¹⁹ International

⁹¹² Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 84: AAS 58 (1966), 1107-1108.

⁹¹³ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 82: AAS 58 (1966), 1105; cf. John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 293; Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 78: AAS 59 (1967), 295.

⁹¹⁴ John Paul II, Message for the 2003 World Day of Peace, 6: AAS 95 (2003), 344.

⁹¹⁵ John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris*: AAS 55 (1963), 294-295.

⁹¹⁶ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 51-55 and 77-79: AAS 59 (1967), 282-284, 295-296.

⁹¹⁷ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 43: AAS 80 (1988), 575.

⁹¹⁸ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 43: AAS 80 (1988), 575; cf. John Paul II, Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace, 7: AAS 96 (2004), 118.

⁹¹⁹ Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 58: AAS 83 (1991), 863-864.

agencies must moreover guarantee the attainment of that equality which is the basis of the right of all to participate in the process of full development, duly respecting legitimate differences.⁹²⁰

443. *The Magisterium positively evaluates the associations that have formed in civil society in order to shape public opinion in its awareness of the various aspects of international life, with particular attention paid to the respect of human rights, as seen in "the number of recently established private associations, some worldwide in membership, almost all of them devoted to monitoring with great care and commendable objectivity what is happening internationally in this sensitive field."*⁹²¹

Governments should feel encouraged by such commitments, which seek to put into practice the ideals underlying the international community, "particularly through the practical gestures of solidarity and peace made by the many individuals also involved in *Non-Governmental Organizations and in Movements for human rights*."⁹²²

b. The juridical personality of the Holy See

444. *The Holy See, or Apostolic See,*⁹²³ *enjoys full international subjectivity as a sovereign authority that performs acts which are juridically its own. It exercises an external sovereignty recognized within the context of the international community which reflects that exercised within the Church and is marked by organizational unity and independence. The Church makes use of the juridical means necessary or useful for carrying out her mission.*

The international activity of the Holy See is manifested objectively under different aspects: the right to active and passive delegation; the exercise of ius contrahendi in stipulating treaties; participation in intergovernmental organizations, such as those under the auspices of the United Nations; and mediation initiatives in situations of conflict. This activity aims at offering non-partisan service to the international community, since it seeks no advantage for itself but only the good of the entire human family. In this context, the Holy See particularly avails itself of its own diplomatic personnel.

445. *The diplomatic service of the Holy See, the product of an ancient and proven practice, is an instrument that works not only for the freedom of the Church ("libertas Ecclesiae") but also for the defence and promotion of human dignity, as well as for a social order based on the values of justice, truth, freedom and love. "By an innate right inherent within our spiritual mission itself and advanced by development of historical events over the centuries, we also send our legates to the Supreme Authorities of States in which the Catholic Church has taken root or in which she is present in some way. It is of course true that the purposes of the Church and the State are of different orders, and that both are perfect societies, endowed therefore with their*

⁹²⁰ Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 33, 39: AAS 80 (1988), 557-559, 566-568.

⁹²¹ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 26: AAS 80 (1988), 544-547.

⁹²² John Paul II, Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace, 7: AAS 96 (2004), 118.

⁹²³ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, canon 361.

own means, and are autonomous in their respective spheres of activity. But it is also true that both the one and the other undertake to serve the good of the same common subject, man, called by God to eternal salvation and put on earth so that he might, with the help of grace attain unto salvation through his work, which brings him well-being in the peaceful setting of society."⁹²⁴ The good of people and human communities is served by a structured dialogue between the Church and civil authorities, which also finds expression in the stipulation of mutual agreements. This dialogue tends to establish or strengthen relations of mutual understanding and cooperation, and also serves to prevent or resolve eventual disputes. Its goal is to contribute to the progress of every people and all humanity in justice and peace.

IV. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

a. Cooperation to guarantee the right to development

446. *The solution to the problem of development requires cooperation among individual political communities. "Political communities condition one another and we can affirm that each one will succeed in its development by contributing to the development of others. For this to happen, understanding and collaboration are essential."*⁹²⁵ It may seem that underdevelopment is impossible to eliminate, as though it were a death sentence, especially considering the fact that it is not only the result of erroneous human choices but also the consequence of "economic, financial and social mechanisms"⁹²⁶ and "structures of sin"⁹²⁷ that prevent the full development of men and peoples.

*These difficulties must nonetheless be met with strong and resolute determination, because development is not only an aspiration but a right*⁹²⁸ *that, like every right, implies a duty. "Collaboration in the development of the whole person and of every human being is in fact a duty of all towards all, and must be shared by the four parts of the world: East and West, North and South."*⁹²⁹ As the Magisterium sees it, the *right to development* is based on the following principles: unity of origin and a shared destiny of the human family; equality between every person and between every community based on human dignity; the universal destination of the goods of the earth; the notion of development in its entirety; and the centrality of the human person and solidarity.

⁹²⁴ Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Sollicitudo Omnium Ecclesiarum*: AAS 61 (1969), 476.

⁹²⁵ John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra*: AAS 53 (1961), 499; cf. Pius XII, Christmas Radio Message (24 December 1945): AAS 38 (1946), 22.

⁹²⁶ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 16: AAS 80 (1988), 531.

⁹²⁷ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 36-37, 39: AAS 80 (1988), 561-564, 567.

⁹²⁸ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 22: AAS 59 (1967), 268; Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens*, 43: AAS 63 (1971), 431-432; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 32-33: AAS 80 (1988), 556-559; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 35: AAS 83 (1991), 836-838; cf. also Paul VI, Address to the International Labor Organisation (10 June 1969), 22: AAS 61 (1969), 500-501; John Paul II, Address to the Participants in the European Convention on the Church's Social Teaching (20 June 1997), 5: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 23 July 1997, p. 3; John Paul II, Address to Italian Business and Trade-Union Leaders (2 May 2000), 3: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 10 May 2000, p. 5.

⁹²⁹ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 32: AAS 80 (1988), 556.

447. *The Church's social doctrine encourages forms of cooperation that are capable of facilitating access to the international market on the part of countries suffering from poverty and underdevelopment.* "Even in recent years it was thought that the poorest countries would develop by isolating themselves from the world market and by depending only on their own resources. Recent experience has shown that countries which did this have suffered stagnation and recession, while the countries which experienced development were those which succeeded in taking part in the general interrelated economic activities at the international level. It seems therefore that the chief problem is that of gaining fair access to the international market, based not on the unilateral principle of the exploitation of the natural resources of these countries but on the proper use of human resources."⁹³⁰ Among the causes that greatly contribute to underdevelopment and poverty, in addition to the impossibility of acceding to the international market,⁹³¹ mention must be made of illiteracy, lack of food security, the absence of structures and services, inadequate measures for guaranteeing basic health care, the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation, corruption, instability of institutions and of political life itself. There is a connection between poverty and, in many countries, the lack of liberty, possibilities for economic initiative and a national administration capable of setting up an adequate system of education and information.

448. *The spirit of international cooperation requires that, beyond the strict market mentality, there should be an awareness of the duty to solidarity, justice and universal charity.*⁹³² In fact, there exists "something which is due to man because he is man, by reason of his lofty dignity."⁹³³ Cooperation is the path to which the entire international community should be committed, "according to an adequate notion of the common good in relation to the whole human family."⁹³⁴ Many positive results flow from this; for example, an increase of confidence in the potential of poor people and therefore of poor countries and an equitable distribution of goods.

b. The fight against poverty

449. *At the beginning of the New Millennium, the poverty of billions of men and women is "the one issue that most challenges our human and Christian consciences."*⁹³⁵ Poverty poses a dramatic problem of justice; in its various forms and with its various effects, it is characterized by an unequal growth that does not recognize the "equal right of all people to take their seat 'at the table of the common banquet'."⁹³⁶ Such poverty makes it impossible to bring about that *full humanism* which the

⁹³⁰ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 33: AAS 83 (1991), 835.

⁹³¹ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 56-61: AAS 59 (1967), 285-287.

⁹³² Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 44: AAS 59 (1967), 279.

⁹³³ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 34: AAS 83 (1991), 836.

⁹³⁴ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 58: AAS 83 (1991), 863.

⁹³⁵ John Paul II, Message for the 2000 World Day of Peace, 14: AAS 92 (2000), 366; cf. John Paul II, Message for the 1993 World Day of Peace, 1: AAS 85 (1993), 429-430.

⁹³⁶ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 33: AAS 80 (1988), 558; cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 47: AAS 59 (1967), 280.

Church hopes for and pursues so that persons and peoples may "be more"⁹³⁷ and live in conditions that are more human.⁹³⁸

*The fight against poverty finds a strong motivation in the option or preferential love of the Church for the poor.*⁹³⁹ In the whole of her social teaching the Church never tires of emphasizing certain fundamental principles of this teaching, first and foremost, the *universal destination of goods*.⁹⁴⁰ Constantly reaffirming the principle of *solidarity*, the Church's social doctrine demands action to promote "the good of all and of each individual, because we are *all* really responsible for *all*."⁹⁴¹ The principle of solidarity, even in the fight against poverty, must always be appropriately accompanied by that of *subsidiarity*, thanks to which it is possible to foster the spirit of initiative, the fundamental basis of all social and economic development in poor countries.⁹⁴² The poor should be seen "not as a problem, but as people who can become the principal builders of a new and more human future for everyone."⁹⁴³

c. Foreign debt

450. *The right to development must be taken into account when considering questions related to the debt crisis of many poor countries.*⁹⁴⁴ Complex causes of various types lie at the origin of the debt crisis. At the international level there are the fluctuation of exchange rates, financial speculation and economic neo-colonialism; within individual debtor countries there is corruption, poor administration of public monies or the improper utilization of loans received. The greatest sufferings, which can be traced back both to structural questions as well as personal behavior, strike the people of poor and indebted countries who are not responsible for this situation. The international community cannot ignore this fact; while reaffirming the principle that debts must be repaid, ways must be found that do not compromise the "fundamental right of peoples to subsistence and progress."⁹⁴⁵

⁹³⁷ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 6: AAS 59 (1967), 260; cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 28: AAS 80 (1988), 548-550.

⁹³⁸ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 20-21: AAS 59 (1967), 267-268.

⁹³⁹ Cf. John Paul II, Address to the Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Puebla, Mexico (28 January 1979), 1/8: AAS 71 (1979), 194-195.

⁹⁴⁰ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 22: AAS 59 (1967), 268.

⁹⁴¹ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38: AAS 80 (1988), 566.

⁹⁴² Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 55: AAS 59 (1967), 284; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 44: AAS 80 (1988), 575-577.

⁹⁴³ John Paul II, Message for the World Day of Peace 2000, 14: AAS 92 (2000), 366.

⁹⁴⁴ Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 51: AAS 87 (1995), 36; John Paul II, Message for the 1998 World Day of Peace, 4: AAS 90 (1998), 151-152; John Paul II, Address to the Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (30 November 1998): *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, XXI, 2 (1998), 1162-1163; John Paul II, Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace, 9: AAS 91 (1999), 383-384.

⁹⁴⁵ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 35: AAS 83 (1991), 838; cf. also the document *At the Service of the Human Community: an Ethical Approach to the International Debt Question*, published by the Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax" (27 December 1986), Vatican City 1986.