



DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**“PERSPECTIVES FOR A WORLD FREE FROM NUCLEAR WEAPONS
AND FOR INTEGRAL DISARMAMENT”**

Vatican, November 10, 2017

WELCOME GREETINGS

Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson

**Your Eminences,
My Lord Archbishops and Bishops,
Your Excellencies, Members of the diplomatic Corp,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Dear Professors, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to greet all of you very warmly in the name of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development of the Vatican/Holy See; and on its behalf, I bid all of you heartily welcome to this Conference on *Integral Nuclear Disarmament*.

Every day we are bombarded with bad news:

- **about the atrocities that we humans can do, harming each other and nature,**
- **about the increasing drumbeat of a possible nuclear conflagration and the fact that humanity stands on the precipice of a nuclear holocaust.**

In these two days, however, we are here to share a piece of good news. This is about the global will to encourage nuclear weapons States to persevere in, if not hasten, their ongoing strategic reduction of nuclear arms, and to dare to hope, eventually, for a *world free of nuclear weapons*.

Indeed, we live in a moment of human history when fear about potential global catastrophe has intensified to a point rarely experienced, since the days of the Cuban

Missile Crisis. Nuclear weapons have become again a global problem, affecting nations and impacting our future and future generations. Our conversations are as critical; and the decisions made by the global human family about peace and war in the coming months and years, particularly those with political responsibility, will have profound consequences for the very future of humanity and our planet.

The desire for peace, security and stability is one of the deepest longings of the human heart, and it is understandable that people, moved by fear, desperately demand more safety and security. However, the way to respond to such a demand is not through the proliferation of arms of mass destruction in general, nor through nuclear weapons in particular. This not only increases the problem of security, but also reduces nations' financial capabilities to invest in matters that are conducive to long-term peace, such as health, the creation of jobs, or the caring for the environment.

That is why, as you may recall, the nations of the world, emerging from the 2nd World War, resolved in the *Charter of the United Nations*, “to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources” (Article 26).

((The former President of the United States, Dwight Eisenhower, a five- star general of World War II provided in his “Chance for Peace” speech in 1953, delivered shortly after the death of the Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, an alarming analysis of military spending. He stated: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities or two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population or two fully equipped hospitals. It is some fifty miles of concrete pavement. We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people... This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron. [...] Is there no other way the world may live?" [9]

Nuclear armament, in fact, is never an appropriate policy to achieve a long-term basis for peace;¹ and true security is not found in the size of our military or the number of weapons, but when every human need for food, housing, healthcare, employment and dignity is met; when the earth is protected and sustained; when we all turn to the methodology and wisdom of non-violence as a way of life, pursued and lived in the cordiality of relationship and care for all, as *Laudato si*, Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter on "*the care of our common home*" teaches us. It is when we trust in the God of peace and the goodness that is in one another; and renouncing fear, hatred and age old conflicts, we promote the dignity and wellbeing/flourishing of all.

And so, in the era of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Pope John reminded the human family of its vocation to coexistence in the pursuit of its common good; and in the different levels of relationship (community, national and international), and the justice they call for, Pope John XXIII sought a solution to the missile crisis.

In 1967, in the post-Cuban Missile Crisis era and in the era of decolonization and the emergence of new independent nations in Africa and Asia, Pope Paul VI said that *development is the new name of peace* (*Populorum progressio*). In our day, Pope Francis has revisited Pope Paul's intuition to assert that "peace which is not the result of integral development will be doomed", because "it will always spawn new conflicts and various forms of violence" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 219).

Accordingly, in order to respond to people's demand for security, leaders and states must invest their energy and resources in promoting integral human development, which means, the development of the entire person and the development of all people.² This kind of development can only be furthered by processes of inclusive dialogue across nations, communities, and by experts in different fields.³

To foster this dialogue on integral development and peace, the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, has organized this conference on integral disarmament, gathering together experts from all over the world: representatives of civil society, Churches, States and International Organizations, and scholars (academics). I want to thank you all: participants and speakers for your kind

¹ Cf. USCCB *The Challenge of Peace*, 1983; *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*, 1993.

² Cf. *Populorum Progressio*, 14.

³ Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 238.

response to our invitation. We hope for a candid conversation about how to achieve a world , free of nuclear weapons.

This conversation is urgently needed, given the current tensions

- **among nuclear weapon states,**
- **between nuclear weapon states and states seeking to become nuclear weapon states.**

And I am glad to observe that this conversation that has been on-going in several circles around the world, received a great impetus from Pope Francis at the beginning of this year, when he called for *non-violence as a style of politics for peace* in his *World Day of Peace Message*. Similarly, the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly has convened an International Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons; and, on July 7 (2017), the international community, with 122 countries voting in favour and thus showing the desire of most people of the world for peace, approved a Treaty that overwhelmingly rejects the use of these weapons and affirms that they are totally unacceptable. Subsequently, last October 6, the *International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)* was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2017 for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve the above mentioned treaty-based prohibition of such weapons. These achievements represent first of all a clear acknowledgment of the sufferings of the Hibakusha, as well as of the other victims of nuclear weapons testing.

As has been stressed by Pope Francis, “international peace and stability cannot be based on a false sense of security, on the threat of mutual destruction or total annihilation, or on simply maintaining a balance of power. Peace must be built on justice, on integral human development, on respect for fundamental human rights, on the protection of creation, on the participation of all in public life, on trust between peoples, on the support of peaceful institutions, on access to education and health, on dialogue and solidarity”⁴.

By way of concluding, let me thank you all again for generously responding to our invitation; and let me acknowledge the very many institutions and groups who

⁴ Cf. his message to the above-mentioned United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

encouraged the Dicastery for Integral Human Development to hold this *International Conversation on "a world free of nuclear weapons"* with their generous support:

- Catholic Bishops' Conference of Germany
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan
- Centro Interdisciplinare Scienze per la Pace (CISP), Università di Pisa
- Georgetown University
- Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies of the Keough School of Global Affairs
- Mazda Motor Europe GmbH
- Notre Dame University
- Nuclear Threat Initiative
- Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs
- Senzatomica
- Soka Gakkai International
- Unione degli Scienziati per il Disarmo ONLUS (USPID)

Special thanks and greeting also to the students and young professionals who are here today: your testimony is crucial to convey to future generations the message of justice and peace.

Now, I wish to invite Archbishop Silvano Maria Tomasi to moderate the sessions of the morning, and to thank you all for your kind and gracious attention. We wish you a very successful meeting and useful time together, and pray that this event may contribute to a new world peace.

"BLESSED, INDEED, ARE ALL PEACE MAKERS!"