

**Statement by Monsignor Michael W. Banach,  
Permanent Observer of the Holy See**

**Thirteenth General Conference of the  
United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

**Vienna, 10 December 2009**

Mister President,

The Delegation of the Holy See would like to add its voice to the chorus of congratulations to you, Mr. President, as well as to the other Members of the Bureau who were elected at the beginning of this week. Our congratulations extends also to Dr. Kandeh Yumkella on his re-appointment of Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). We are confident that he will continue the Organization's positive trend and further development.

In his Message for the 2009 World Day of Peace, Pope Benedict XVI stated that *".....fighting poverty requires attentive consideration of the complex phenomenon of globalization. This is important from a methodological standpoint, because it suggests drawing upon the fruits of economic and sociological research into the many different aspects of poverty. Yet the reference to globalization should also alert us to the spiritual and moral implications of the question....It remains true, however, that every form of externally imposed poverty has at its root a lack of respect for the transcendent dignity of the human person. When man is not considered within the total context of his vocation, and when the demands of a true "human ecology" are not respected, the cruel forces of poverty are unleashed, as is evident in certain specific areas."*

These words echo well with the focus of this Thirteenth General Conference which offers the occasion to reflect on progress made in the three priority areas of the UNIDO, namely, poverty reduction through productive activities; trade capacity building; and environment and energy. My Delegation is interested in the outcome of this Thirteenth General Conference because the Holy See has always recognized the centrality of the human person in concerns for equitable, accessible and sustainable development.

Respect for the dignity and freedom of each person affected by development programmes must be the guiding force in our work. In fact, the Catholic Church has always stressed that what is necessary is a balance between social and economic-industrial development. The discussion surrounding industrial development reveals the fact that no person or group lives in isolation. What affects one affects others. My Delegation believes that the benefits in discussing the issues and proposing solutions for removing the obstacles that challenge sustainable development will be felt in every corner of the world.

In this understanding of human solidarity we can not lose sight of the need for responsible stewardship which demands attention to the common good that goes beyond narrow individualistic interests on all levels.

Responsible stewardship and genuine human solidarity are directed to the three priority areas and must also remain the starting point in the discussion of access to industrial development. The effects of climate change, the issue of freshwater resources and food security, mobilization of energy resources and sustainable tourism must be

linked to discussions on health, education, nutrition, shelter and security.

In speaking of security, it is important to recall that energy is central to achieving sustainable development goals. With close to two billion people still lacking access to electricity worldwide and even more using traditional biomass, improving access to reliable, affordable and environmentally friendly energy services is a major challenge to poverty eradication. There is also an urgent need to transform global energy systems, as current approaches are causing serious harm to human health, the earth's climate and ecological systems on which all life depends, and because access to clean, reliable energy services is a vital prerequisite for alleviating poverty. While the absolute amount of worldwide renewable energy use has been rising significantly, the overall share of renewables in the world's total primary energy supply has increased only marginally over the past three decades. Some renewable energy technologies are already mature and economically competitive, but the development of renewables continues to be a human, ecological, economic and strategic necessity and should have a priority in public research projects.

In view of the progress made during this discussion, the Holy See wishes to state, once again that simply giving aid, however laudable and necessary, is not sufficient to touch all of the aspects of human solidarity that must be offered to those in need. Nations must work together toward a renewed and greater effectiveness of international structures in such spheres as economics, trade, industrial development, finance and the transfer of technology.

Mister President!

I would like to assure this august Assembly that the Catholic Church will continue to develop and promote specific programmes in those critical areas that seek to improve human life in some of the poorest and least developed areas and in so doing, help to improve life for all.

My Delegation applauds the progress made in this General Conference and will look forward to the future initiatives which will be the next step in attaining the goals of equitable, accessible and sustainable development for all.

Thank you, Mister President!