



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO AUSTRIA

ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II TO REPRESENTATIVES AND OFFICIALS OF VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS*

Vienna - Monday, 12 September 1983

*Distinguished Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency,
Director General of the United Nations Office
Executive Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization,
Representatives and officials of the various International Organizations which have their
headquarters here at United Nations City.*

To all of you I extend the expression of my respect and esteem. I do this all the more willingly, knowing that members of your families are also following this meeting of ours, and showing deep interest in it, as they do in all your worthy activities, which they support as only families can.

1. Allow me to express to you my sincere appreciation for the invitation to visit this place where so many *important agencies work to protect and promote life* in crucial areas of human endeavour: the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the promotion of industry especially in the developing world, trade law, social and humanitarian development and the serious questions of narcotics control. All these agencies and offices bear testimony to the pressing need we have in today's world *to work together* in order to deal constructively with sectors of human life that are complex and many-faceted. The treatment of these issues offers possibilities for good or for bad in ways that previous generations did not have to face.

That is why the first obligation we share is the obligation of working together, of sharing our expertise, of building up a common consensus through *common effort and commitment*. Thus the agencies and offices grouped here participate in the same vision and spirit which is proper to the

United Nations Organization as such, and which, as I said in New York in 1979, “unites and associates, it does not divide and oppose” (Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Allocutio ad Nationum Unitarum Legatos*, 4, die 2 oct. 1979: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, 11, 2 (1979) 523). The overriding characteristic that must mark the works you undertake should always be to unite and associate, not to divide and oppose. This characteristic stems from the spirit that called your organizations into existence. It is reinforced by the demands that the content of your fields of expertise makes on you.

2. In my Encyclical “[Laborem Exercens](#)”, I reflected on work in the objective sense and referred to the development of modern industry and technology in the richness of its expressions as “grounds for repropounding in new ways the question of work”, and as “a whole set of instruments which man uses in his work”. I viewed the “correct affirmation of technology as a basic coefficient of economic progress” (Eiusdem [Laborem Exercens](#), 5).

Reflecting on this and applying it to your several concerns, you are being challenged to struggle in new ways *to explore and develop the relationship of man with technology*. For only when we examine the points of interaction between the human person and technology can we find the criteria to guide the present and future efforts you are called to make. To this end, and mindful that there are many elements to be examined in these points of interaction, I would like today to call your attention to two indispensable factors that must be brought constantly into consideration.

3. The very complexities of your subjects demand a level of training and education that, in terms of time and talent, can be all-absorbing. For example, to master even one of the disciplines that contribute to our knowledge of nuclear energy is a lifelong commitment and vocation. Because of this, the temptation can be great to let the content and the methodology of one discipline determine, in a total way, our vision of life, the values we espouse and the decisions we make. Because of this, because of the all-encompassing inner demands of these highly complex disciplines that offer so much to mankind, it is extremely important that we always maintain *the primacy of man as the criterion for our judgments and decisions*.

Man is the subject of all work and of all our intellectual and scientific disciplines. *Man is, under God, the measure and end of all the projects* that we attempt in this world. Whether the object is industrial projects for developing countries, nuclear reactors, or programmes for the improvement of society, the human person is the guiding criterion. No project, however technically perfect or industrially sound, is justifiable if it endangers the dignity and rights of the persons involved. Every initiative of your agencies should be tested by the question: Does this advance the cause of man as man?

Such a reflection will not always be easy to make but it is necessary. No one would deny that the complexities of industry, technology, nuclear science and the many organizations of modern society must be approached with full respect for all the components which command our careful

attention. In light of these realities and conscious of the potential they have, I can and must insist that the commitment and effort you rightly give to the intellectual, tech-nological, scientific and educational aspects must always be matched by a sensitivity for and dedication to the cause of man who we proclaim is formed in the image of God and hence *worthy of total dignity and respect*.

4. The *second criterion* that I would mention briefly, places us in the context of the world we live in. It is the concern we must have for the good of people as a whole, for the well-being of society, for what we traditionally call *the common good*. For you it will mean seeing your work as a contribution not only for a specific project or for a certain government or agency. It will mean seeing your work as a contribution for all the people of the world. Thus you will measure the worth of a project by the impact it will have on cultural and other human values as well as on the economic and social well-being of a people or nation. In this way you place work in the wide and challenging context of the present and future good of the world. You concern yourselves with *all the nations of this earth*. Promotion of the common good in your work demands respect for the cultures of nations and peoples coupled to a sense of the solidarity of all peoples under the guidance of a common Father. The advancement of one nation can never be realized at the expense of another. The advancement of all in an equitable use of the expertise you have is the best guarantee of the common good that ensures that all people have what they need and deserve.

5. These few words of mine are offered to you today for your *encouragement*. As leader of the Catholic Church, whose members are found throughout the whole world, I wish to encourage all of you to be *servants of that world* which needs to be ever more united through the efforts each of us is called to make in our proper spheres. As *servants of the truth about man*, as well as servants of the truth of our disciplines, servants of the common good of all nations and peoples, may you be ever more intimately associated together in tasks that will utilize your talents and your knowledge to advance the well-being, harmony and peace of all peoples for generations yet to come.

6. Permit me to allude to an extraordinary person of a former generation - one who is known and admired as an apostle of peace, one whose figure, so often reproduced in art, so familiar to so many of you, and whose ideas are crystallized in expressions that effectively manifest his spirit to the modern world. Yes, the ideals of Saint Francis of Assisi are a link spanning generations, uniting men and women of good will of all centuries in the quest for peace, whose spiritual goals are furthered by the honest efforts and hard and concerted work performed each day by the experts of so many fields and disciplines. It is in his spirit that I permit myself to speak of your contributions to the world, of what you are able to do for humanity, by working together, as brothers and sisters under the common Fatherhood of God: Lord, make us instruments of your peace! Where there is hatred - let us sow love! Where there is injury - pardon! Where there is doubt - faith! Where there is despair - hope! Where there is darkness - light! Where there is sadness - joy! And where there is death, let us sow life! Where there is war - let us make peace! Lord make us effective servants of humanity, servants of life, servants of peace!

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