

STATEMENT TO THE 13TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Item 5c: Human Rights Bodies and Mechanisms The Social Forum 16 March, 2010

Mr. President,

As the representative to the UN of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, and on behalf of Caritas Internationalis, the association Comunita' Papa Giovanni XXIII, **Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers)**, Franciscans International, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Social Workers, and the World Organization Against Torture, we wish to express our appreciation for Ambassador Logar's excellent report on the 2009 Social Forum's proceedings (A/HRC/13/51) and outcome. The 2009 Social Forum demonstrated once again the value of the Forum, as providing a unique opportunity for all stakeholders to examine on an equal footing priority issues related to the application of human rights principles in the eradication of poverty.

We want to underline two points from the report's recommendations, and put forward two recommendations for the 2010 Social Forum.

1) As emphasized by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other speakers in the High-Level Panel on the Economic and Financial Crises, both national governments as well as the international community have an obligation to protect human rights even in periods of crisis. The economic and financial crises have underscored the importance of developing a human-rights-based approach to poverty eradication. In keeping with the Social Forum's recommendations, we strongly encourage the members of the Human Rights Council to give priority to advancing the work on the **Draft Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty**, as an important contribution to clarifying the responsibilities of all actors in ensuring that economic policies support rather than undermine the universal enjoyment of human rights.

2) In this context, we recommend that one of the topics for this year's Social Forum be the sharing of good practices on cooperation between donor countries, receiving countries and communities in **operationalizing human rights in ways that respect, in terms of both outcomes and processes, the principles of transparency, participation and accountability to all stakeholders**, especially those living in extreme poverty.

3) The 2009 Social Forum underscored the importance of clarifying the framework for human rights indicators to measure the impact of strategies and policies to eradicate poverty. In follow-up to this conclusion, we recommend that this year's Forum explore experiences in the use of **participatory approaches in the development of poverty indicators**. Participatory approaches allow for the development of indicators that provide a more comprehensive and precise image of poverty conditions and their causes and consequences, and thus contribute to the development of more effective policies. People living in extreme poverty define their situation not simply in terms of deprivation of resources, but also in terms of factors such as non-respect for their

dignity, ongoing insecurity, and forced dependency on assistance. Indicators for monitoring the impact of poverty eradication efforts on factors such as these would constitute an important contribution to developing effective and sustainable approaches.

4) And lastly, we fully endorse the recommendation that the Forum take place immediately before or after the September session of the Council, in order to make it possible for more civil society organizations from outside of Geneva to participate. We would strongly plead for the Forum to be scheduled **prior to the Council session** (8-10 September) for maximum participation, and for the Forum's outcomes to contribute directly to the Council's deliberations.

Thank you.

Delivered by Janet Nelson
International Delegation to the UN in Geneva
International Movement ATD Fourth World