

## The Holy See

### Positions for the General Assembly First

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#### I. The Increasing Threat of Transnational Organized Crime to International Security

The Holy See is committed to protecting the dignity of human life throughout the world and calls on all Member States to foster greater international cooperation to combat transnational organized crime (TOC). The Church has been committed to assisting the victims of TOC and their plight should be the priority of our joint efforts with our fellow Member States. We have worked to rehabilitate the victims of these grave injustices by providing charitable and spiritual support. The Holy See is dedicated to strengthening the resolve among nations expressed by the General Assembly Resolution 25/55, which created the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). We further reaffirm our commitment to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The Holy See recognizes that globalization and the spread of the world wide web has allowed for the proliferation of international criminal networks, and calls for greater cooperation among member states to address this grave threat to human dignity that transcends borders. The Holy See is committed to providing moral support to the international efforts to combat organized crime and affirms that the instruments of criminal and judicial cooperation are best served by strengthening the spirit of fraternity among peoples.<sup>1</sup> Justice and peace cannot be achieved without the opening of human hearts across borders. The victims of these transnational criminal enterprises are among the most vulnerable among us and their plight should be prioritized by Member States. The structures of sin and moral abandonment that fuel the heinous trafficking of persons and the cowardly specter of terrorism must be met head on.<sup>2</sup> The trafficking of persons is a grave insult to the dignity of individuals and an insult to the nature of humanity. We hope that Member States will work tirelessly to free victims from the shackles of modern slavery and pursue their tormentors vigorously. Only after such blatant transgressions of the human spirit have been brought to heel can penance and forgiveness restore the wholeness of the spirit and bring healing to victims and transgressors alike. The human impact of these crimes must be the focus of our common vocation.

The Holy See recognizes that combating the moral abandonment inherent to transnational organized crime must begin with inward reflection. Pope Francis has taken measures to separate the Catholic Church from those individuals and organized tormentors who have in the past sought shelter from prosecution by masquerading behind a false face of piety.<sup>3</sup> We have taken measures to excommunicate those false persons who wear a mask of religion while perpetrating heinous and organized crimes against their neighbors and communities. We have also removed from among our own ranks those priests who were complicit in these transgressions and we seek forgiveness for our own shortcomings.

The Holy See calls on all Member States to work as one to address the trafficking of persons and the smuggling of migrants and weapons outlined in the Palermo Protocols. The blossoming in information and communication technology has borne great fruit for humanity, but this innovation has also been exploited. Many member states have not been able to match criminal enterprises in technology. Archaic tracking technologies and political corruption have slowed the fight against TOC. We call on this body to resolve for the provision of technological upgrades in tracking TOC. The Holy See proposes fostering programs of exchange among judicial, law enforcement, and civil society communities to share best practices for combating TOC across borders and at the local level. We call on this body to resolve to work with nongovernmental organization to provide technical assistance to Member States that are currently striving to reduce corruption and strengthen the rule of law. The Holy See calls on Member States to not only combat TOC, but work to prevent it and address the needs of victims. We

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<sup>1</sup>"The Holy See Ratifies and Accedes to UN Conventions Against International Crime." The Holy See Mission. Accessed September 30, 2016. [https://holyseemission.org/contents//press\\_releases/55e34d362bbad3.94613069.php](https://holyseemission.org/contents//press_releases/55e34d362bbad3.94613069.php).

<sup>2</sup>"Pope Francis Addresses Judges' Summit on Human Trafficking and Organized Crime." - Vatican Radio. Accessed September 30, 2016. [http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/06/03/pope\\_francois\\_addresses\\_judges\\_summit/1234691](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/06/03/pope_francois_addresses_judges_summit/1234691).

<sup>3</sup> "Pope Excommunicates Italian Mafia." CNN. Accessed September 30, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2014/06/21/world/pope-mafia-excommunication/>.

look forward to working with member states to achieve goal 8.7 of the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development by eradicating human trafficking and forced labor in every corner of our world.

## II. Measures to Prevent the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

In 1945 when the first atomic bomb was dropped, the Holy See saw that new weapon as “a sinister shadow on the future of humanity”, and later called for a ban on all nuclear weapons in 1963.<sup>4,5</sup> Since the advent of the atom bomb, the Holy See has been observing a common notion that the threat of mutually assured destruction is a means to guarantee peace. As a consequence of the said notion, some nations have seen it as a worthwhile and rational effort to produce weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), in order to ward off any incursions to their sovereignty. The Holy See stands vehemently against such efforts, viewing the existence of weapons with such destructive potential as a temptation that has the potential to bring forth a storm with horrific violence upon countless innocent souls. The existence of atomic, biological or chemical weapons, regardless of who holds the power to use them, is a threat against all mankind. Thus, the very existence of WMDs today is unacceptable, let alone any further production of them. The Holy See strongly condemns any efforts to produce WMDs, calls on all Member States to see any existing WMD stockpiles as a threat against their own citizens rather than an intimidation for their rivals, and supports all disarmament efforts to cut down on such stockpiles.

The Holy See believes any efforts to promote disarmament and to stop further production of WMDs should be done on a ground of mutual agreement and trust between parties. Member States with programs to develop and produce such weapons should be incentivized to cooperate rather than coerced through sanctions that only aggravate them to stockpile more WMDs. On the same note, attempts should be made to reduce the threat felt by such member states that incentivizes such programs as an attempt at self-defense, not only in an effort to prevent the catastrophic results of an arms race, but also in an effort to promote peaceful cooperation, to reduce military tension, and to make progress towards a world peace. The Holy See views nuclear disarmament as a common goal to strive towards for all Member States, and endorses all disarmament efforts with this goal in mind rather than approaching the issue as a grounds for political conflict and power projection.

The Holy See’s stance against highly destructive weaponry is not limited to WMDs as they are defined today by (A/RES/36/97), “...weapons of mass destruction include atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons and any weapons developed in the future which have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or the other weapons mentioned above[.]” Weapons of mass destruction pose a serious threat to human life and dignity, but other categories of weapons should also be the focus of our efforts to secure peace and security. This harm also extends to the environment they are used in, sometimes for generations to come. Such implements should also be banned, possibly through an extension of the definition of WMDs to include combat methods with a potential to cause irreparable damages to future generations beyond its intended use. A new definition for WMDs is a necessity before Member States can find any level of common ground on how to move towards a peaceful future.

Curbing the proliferation of WMDs is an absolute necessity to leave our children a peaceful, welcoming future. As Member States, we should all strive towards this goal regardless of any political discords, threats or rivalries. We cannot afford to leave future generations a world scarred by the aftermath of a political conflict made irrelevant. We cannot allow a weapons buildup that has the potential to ruin our most important heritage to those that will come after us. The Member States with existing WMD stockpiles or programs to build such stockpiles need to reconsider the strategies they employ to thwart military threats. They need to be vigilant about not letting an ambition to dominate get before the need to protect the livelihoods of the innocent. And any Member States that wish to put a stop to WMD stockpiling or development should make their efforts towards this goal within a frame of cooperation and understanding.

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<sup>4</sup> *Pacem in Terris, Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal Peace In Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty*, April 11, 1963, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_j-xxiii\\_enc\\_11041963\\_pacem.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html)

<sup>5</sup> “Vatican Views Atomic Bomb 'Unfavorably'” *Chicago Tribune*, August 8, 1945, 189th ed. [archives.chicagotribune.com/1945/08/08/page/2/vatican-views-atomic-bomb-unfavorably](http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1945/08/08/page/2/vatican-views-atomic-bomb-unfavorably).