



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 December 2015

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-fourth session

3-12 February 2016

Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world

Statement submitted by Fraternite Notre Dame, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Fraternite Notre Dame and her founder, His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie Roger Kozik, work around the world for the poor and destitute, and thank you to be able to express their view point on improving social development in our contemporary world.

The social and economic development of a society can only be realized, in a country where peace prevails. Now, in a country where religious freedom, freedom of worship and free thinking is not respected, this country cannot live at peace.

Let us specify that freedom of speech does not mean the liberty to insult religions.

This can be verified in the terrible persecutions endured by Christians throughout the world. No freedom of worship, no peace, and a halted economic and social development.

Today, in the regions where Islam prevails, being a Christian leads to persecution. The very fact of being a Christian means you will be persecuted.

Christ does not oblige anyone to become a Christian, nor anyone to remain a Christian. They who want to leave the church are free to do so, and they who wish to embrace her should also be free to do so.

We respect those who are not Christian. In our humanitarian missions, we welcome anyone with no distinction of class, race, gender or creed, with the same availability to all.

The bloody events which the Christians and minorities endure around the world are proof of this. Christians in the East keep warning those in the West.

We currently experience a war of civilization between those who accept to live with others and those who refuse to do so. The world is facing fundamentalists who attempt to take over and exclude all those who are not following in their footsteps.

In the Middle East and in Africa, men endure atrocious Barbary, they live without running water or electricity; when water lines are repaired, some men come up and destroy them anew. While attempts against Christians in the East represent a genocide, attempts against them in the West are sly, but skilfully programed: no more religious insignia, no statues allowed in public spaces. The entire cultural and religious mosaic, which used to live in good harmony, is now being threatened.

Another obstacle to social development is generation gap. Far gone is the time when the elderly were honoured and respected by the community, and when their advice were listened to and their experience, considered.

In our western societies, where the fear of death is present, where the cult of youth is imposed as an ideal or even an ideology, and when hatred of one's neighbour has often led to the desecration of life, the elderly are forcibly led to either ape the youth pathetically, or keep apart from the population, because death is primary taboo in our dechristianized western societies. While the number of seniors is increasing, we witness the emergence of young people condemned to precariousness and unemployment.

Growing old however is neither a curse nor a social burden.

Allowing the elderly to help younger generations and provide them with advice does improve the social fabric. The schools should be set up in the near vicinity of retirement homes and maintain interactive programs, where the various generations could learn again, how to live together.

The family is an abridgment society. When you injure the family or kill it, you actually destroy social life.

In man's conceptual idea on education, you will find the purest expression of his deepest thought.

Education is key when it comes to social development. Bishop Jean Marie has opened schools at the service of poor and destitute children, to help them out of social want. For centuries, the Founders of Christian Religious Orders have allowed millions of children to find a way out of their social want and have access to a better life.

It cannot be ignored that the Christian civilization has allowed the social development of societies.

Rejecting the Christian civilization has actually caused them to regress.

Families should have a right to choose when it comes to the education that they want to give to their children. The children do not belong to the State.

It can be a concern to see that the secular education model has led to a quality loss, but also grown into an aggressive secularism against religions.

This sectarianism is undermining social peace.

Social reinforcement must also take into consideration a renewed interest for manual work.

How many jobs have been suppressed because of the machines, and consequently, how much human misery has resulted, along with social disorder; there would be less unemployment, should such jobs that allowed to strengthen social bonds had not been suppressed.

A society which no longer works is bound to material and moral ruin.

The decision to transform a society with an agricultural background into a society centered on tourism is a roadmap to the collapse of civilization.

A demographic survey conducted by Mister LEBRAS in "Les Echos" in 2015 has shown that the areas which enjoy best social and economic conditions are regions where Christianity constitutes a resistance against the State. There can be found greater solidarity and a more active involvement in associations. The solidarity fabric has weathered the test of time.

The regions that have largely relied on the State became dechristianized and their family structures are weak.

Our contemporary world will witness a strengthening of its social development only once individualism and the loss of all moral sense will be replaced by charity, which is the foundation for a stable social and economical order.