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THE CHALLENGES OF GOVERNANCE TO DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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International Conference on:

"ENHANCING THIRD WORLD'S HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX THROUGH ECONOMIC AND TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC RE-ENGINEERING"

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Excellencies,

Dear brothers and sisters,

1. I would like to begin by extending my sincere congratulations to the Ambassador of Nigeria to the Holy See, His Excellency Godwin George Umo OON, for organizing this Conference on the occasion of a triple commemoration, namely the 145th anniversary of the arrival of the Catholic mission in Nigeria, the 42nd anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the Holy See and Nigeria, and the 58th anniversary of the Nigeria's independence. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for having invited me to address this Assembly, and for having agreed to hold this Conference after the Synod on Young People, which was already on my agenda. I take this opportunity to express my sincere best wishes for the integral development of your nation, the implantation of the Catholic faith in your country, as well as for a sincere dialogue and fruitful collaboration with the Holy See.

To all of you gathered here, from all walks of life, from here and abroad, I extend my warm greetings, along with my prayer for you and your loved ones, and my best wishes for fruitful participation in this meeting.

2. "Enhancing Third World's Human Development Index through Economic and Techno-Scientific Re-engineering" is the general theme of our Conference. Looking more closely, we see two major aspects emerge from this vision of development. The first is the goal to be achieved, precisely the "Third World's Enhancing Human Development Index." The second is the proposed optic or how we seek to achieve this goal, and that is "Economic and Techno-Scientific Re-engineering."

As we all know, the Human Development Index is based mainly on GDP per capita, life expectancy at birth, the level of education and, more recently, gender inequalities and disparities, which make it possible to measure development. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Third World countries, especially those of sub-Saharan Africa, are almost always at the bottom of the rankings. We can realize this simply by looking at the reports published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

As long as the level of development is measured in this way, using so-called universal criteria established by a group, development will remain a mirage for many Third World countries, especially those on the African continent.

3. Technology is, indeed, a tool of development that makes it possible to transform matter and put it at the service of man. The Bible tells that, after God created man, He entrusted him with the mission to dominate and subdue the earth¹, to cultivate and guard the garden², to produce, by the sweat of his brow, the bread that he will eat.³ "The introduction of industrialization, which is necessary for economic growth and human progress, is both a sign of development and a spur to it. By dint of intelligent thought and hard work, man gradually uncovers the hidden laws of nature and learns to make better use of natural resources. As he takes control over his way of life, he is stimulated to undertake new investigations and fresh discoveries, to take prudent risks and launch new ventures, to act responsibly and give of himself unselfishly".⁴ It is, consequently, through his intelligence and technology that man can transform and extend his mastery over nature.⁵

As the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council stated, "through his labors and his native endowments man has ceaselessly striven to better his life. Today, however, especially with the help of science and technology, he has extended his mastery over nearly the whole of nature and continues to do so. Thanks to increased opportunities for many kinds of social contact among nations, the human family is gradually recognizing that it comprises a single world community and is making itself so. Hence many benefits once looked for, especially from heavenly powers, man has now enterprisingly procured for himself".⁶

4. Yet, when using his intelligence, ingenuity, and work, man does not always obey the divine command and accomplish his mission as guardian and protector of creation. Moreover, although science and technology further humanity's progress, they are not always

¹ Cf. Genesis 1:28.

² Cf. Genesis 2:15.

³ Cf. Genesis 3:19.

⁴ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 25.

⁵ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 33.

⁶ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes, 33.

synonymous with true growth because they risk becoming absolutes and an end in themselves instead of being at the service of humanity, as instruments for man's full development.

Science and technology do not calm man's anxieties in the face of death⁷ because they cannot penetrate the mystery.⁸ When they are detached from all ethics and become absolute, they risk favoring the idolatry of temporal things—and especially technology runs the risk of becoming inhumane⁹—because they cannot reach the depths of reality.¹⁰ On the other hand, "Sacred Scripture teaches the human family what the experience of the ages confirms: that while human progress is a great advantage of man, it brings with it a strong temptation. For when the order of values is jumbled and bad is mixed with the good, individuals and groups pay heed solely to their own interests, and not to those of others. Thus, it happens that the world ceases to be a place of true brotherhood. In our own day, the magnified power of humanity threatens to destroy the race itself". 11 This happens when science and technology, although necessary for man, are not ordered 12 for his true development. In this respect, Pope Francis—while recognizing the benefits of technology and its inventiveness—cautions against the new technological paradigm with its power¹³ that prevents those who have made technology into universal ideology from opening up to the quest for an integral ecology which transcends the language of the exact sciences and biology and embracing man's essence. 14 From the "departure from the ethical and religious order" to the lack of spiritual impulse, ¹⁶ to agnosticism¹⁷ and to the refusal of God, ¹⁸ there is just one step.

To be honest, science and technology alone do not bring true development. As Pope Francis says, "the alliance between the economy and technology ends up sidelining anything unrelated to its immediate interests". ¹⁹ That is why it is necessary to promote a correct vision of development centered on man – as already pointed out by Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate* ²⁰ - instead of reducing it to a sort of Promethean enterprise to achieve progress merely for the sake of progress, that is to say, as an end in itself.

⁷ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 18.

⁸ Cf. Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 20.

⁹ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Closing Message *To Women*.

¹⁰ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes, 57.

¹¹ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes, 37.

¹² Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 35.

¹³ Cf. Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 102-114.

¹⁴ Cf. Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 11.

¹⁵ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree Apostolicam Actuositatem, 1.

¹⁶ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 4.

¹⁷ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 57.

¹⁸ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 7.

¹⁹ Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 54.

²⁰ Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, see Chapter Six: "The Development of Peoples and Technology."

5. These preliminary considerations on the general theme lead us to reflect, now, on the subject that I have been asked to speak on, that is, "The Challenges of Governance to Development in Africa." This, in fact, implies linking three verbs or dimensions: govern, develop, and Africanize.

Let us start with development. Here we can draw inspiration from the reflections proposed by Pope Paul VI in his Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, where he begins his analysis with the aspiration of today's people to "make, know, and have more, to be more". 21 This observation already, in a way, traces the line to be followed: the person's essence is not qualified by the "doing" of technology, the "knowing" of science, or the "having" of the possession of wealth, but by "being." Technology, science, and material progress are necessary, as we have seen above, but they must be ordered to the person's humanity. Paul VI emphasizes this, when he defines "true development" as "the passage, for everyone and for all, from less humane conditions to more humane conditions". 22 In other words, development or "being more humane" consists in overcoming obstacles to the person's growth. Accordingly, Paul VI linked the cultural and spiritual values that elevate man and enable him to reach his complete fulfillment and realize his vocation by constantly surpassing himself and opening up to transcendence as the essence beyond his being. It is important to note that, to be authentic, development, or transition from less human conditions to more human conditions, must be valid for every man and, therefore, for all men, and for the whole man, that is to say, for man in the totality of his being and all the dimensions—material as well as spiritual, physical, social, and moral—that constitute him. This notably means that human development must be accomplished for all men without any discrimination of age, sex, social or physical condition, race, culture, origin, language or nation.

6. Affirming the importance of development for man, every man and all man also implies thinking in terms of humanity, both as one and plural, in the perspective of solidary growth, because "the integral development of the individual necessarily entails a joint effort for the development of the human race as a whole". What does this mean if not that no people can develop at the expense of other peoples or nations, just as no man can achieve his full development if he leaves others languishing in poverty, misery, inhumanity, and so risks being morally underdeveloped. All develop together, and none without or against the others.

²¹ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 6.

²² Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 20; cf. *ibid.*, 21, where he explains what he means by "less humane conditions" and "more humane conditions".

²³ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 43.

²⁴ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 19.

- 7. Precisely here, programming acquires its full value and importance. Indeed, working together to build a world where everyone can fully live and flourish, is not the result of chance or improvisation. Development, as man's vocation to his full accomplishment, is the work of a lifetime, never completely realized and always in progress. This requires coordinating different stages, knowing where we come from, where we are, and where we are going. It also implies knowing what material, human, and spiritual means one has to work towards the goal. In other words, one needs to plan, direct one's action and, in some cases, correct the course, following, all the while, the compass of "being more" or the greater degree of humanity towards which one is oriented. Programming ensures the effectiveness of efforts, avoids the dispersion of resources, and guarantees concertation. "Planning of projects and programs are much more effective than occasional efforts promoted by individual goodwill. Studies must be made, goals must be defined, methods and means must be chosen, and the work of select men must be coordinated; only then will present needs be met and future demands anticipated. Moreover, such planned programs do more than promote economic and social progress. They give force and meaning to the work undertaken, put due order into human life, and thus enhance man's dignity and his capabilities".²⁵
- 8. Talking about programs also means recognizing the need for initiatives and projects that transform into action the will to collaborate and make the cause of development progress. To meet this challenge, Paul VI thought of asking "world leaders to set aside part of their military expenditures for a world fund to relieve the needs of impoverished peoples;" for, as he said, "only a concerted effort on the part of all nations, embodied in and carried out by this world fund, will stop these senseless rivalries and promote fruitful, friendly dialogue between nations". 26
- 9. Yet—and this brings us to the second dimension—programs are not a cure-all and projects alone are not enough to ensure the development of peoples. Men and women able to govern development, manage projects, and distribute benefits equitably are also needed. This is the place to recall that political authority finds its reason for being in the organization of society, in its different forms, with a view to the common good of all those who are recognized as members of this society.²⁷ Hence, there can be no development without economic operators and politicians who are aware of their role in the service of the common good.²⁸ This

²⁵ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 50.

²⁶ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 51.

²⁷ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 74.

²⁸ Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter Caritas in Veritate, 71.

requires professional competence as well as moral consistency.²⁹ And that is not all, because development also requires the participation of all citizens, each according to his talents, in such a way that the people themselves become the artisans of their destiny,³⁰ taking into account, moreover, the contribution of religions and cultures.³¹

10. Let us, now, consider the third verb or third dimension of my presentation, that is Africanize. This means governing development within the African socio-cultural context. In fact, if authentic development means the development of every man and of the whole man, it means that there can be no abstract or disembodied development.

In Africa, what is striking at first glance is the contrast between the abundance of natural resources and the poverty of millions of Africans living on this continent.³² Material poverty which is accompanied by many injustices, the frantic exploitation of the continent's resources and the exploitation of man by man, the unequal distribution of wealth, not to mention the epidemics that afflict the continent, heavy international debts, armed conflicts and wars that threaten the peace crucial for development and are mortgaging the future of this part of the world and its future generations.

- 11. On the other hand, if "besides the earth, man's principal resource is man himself", 33 it is justified to question the availability of human capital in Africa. A careful look at the current migration crisis—both the migration within Africa and the migration from Africa to other parts of the world—shows that many countries on the continent are in the process of losing their workforce, their energy, the minds of thousands of qualified intellectuals who, because they are poorly paid, poorly supervised, and even persecuted by the dictatorial regimes of their countries, leave and make a go of it elsewhere. The means of communication and the social networks, for their part, continue to dazzle the candidates for immigration with an Eldorado that it would be humanly insane not to try to reach. The consequences are before everyone's eyes: construction of walls, integration difficulties, xenophobia, racism, and populism, even if there are also good practices or good initiatives to welcome and integrate foreigners. Sadder still, some of the migrants are forced to sell their bodies and sell themselves as if human life could be bought at a low price.
- 12. Politically, the situation is not among the best. We are dealing with an imported model of government—democracy—which is struggling to be accepted in many countries, to become a culture, to enter African customs. We are currently at an impasse: African leaders

²⁹ Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter Caritas in Veritate, 71.

³⁰ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 65.

³¹ Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter Caritas in Veritate, 55.

³² Cf., in particular, John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, 42.

³³ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 32.

competing for longevity in power, the non-respect of promises, the multiplication of political parties that make it possible to continue fishing in troubled waters, tailoring of constitutional amendments, the refusal of political alternation, the corruption, and so on. We must, however, recognize that some countries are taking significant steps and really progressing, even if they are only exceptions that confirm the rule.

Basically, the concrete problem is on the level of governance. This is why the Church must give voice to "peoples whose governments mortgage the present and the future for personal interests".³⁴ The Church "acknowledges the courage of governments that have legislated against the culture of death—of which abortion is a dramatic expression—in favor of the culture of life"³⁵ and continues to insist on good governance in African countries for the common good.³⁶ Conscious of the fact that "today, many decision makers, both political and economic, assume that they owe nothing to anyone other than themselves"³⁷ the Church invites them to greater "responsibility for their own and other people's integral development".³⁸

13. It is, therefore, time to think seriously about the formation of the continent's future leaders—especially economic and political decision-makers—for the responsibilities they will assume at the head of their countries. The experience of rebellion or resistance is not enough to forge a leader worthy of the name. They need a solid integral human formation, one that takes into account not only the material but also the spiritual aspects of development, since the man they commit themselves to serve is composed of both matter and spirit, body and soul. As we have seen above, professional competence and moral consistency are both important for forming leaders. What is lacking the least is not much professional training but moral consistency. That is why formation with an interdisciplinary perspective should be promoted, along with openness to wide-ranging collaboration involving not only public institutions, but also religions, cultures, traditional leaders, and the citizens themselves. If the current model of governance has not brought the expected results, why not draw inspiration from the rich treasure of traditional African values, regarding society's organization, and use the best of it for contemporary governance? The contribution that the Church could make through her social doctrine cannot be underestimated insofar as one can draw from it "the principles for reflection, the criteria for judgment and the

³⁴ Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus, 30.

³⁵ Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus, 70.

³⁶ Cf. Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus, 81-83.

³⁷ Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus, 82.

³⁸ Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus, 82.

directives for action which are the starting point for the promotion of an integral and solidary humanism".³⁹

- 14. Why is Africa not developing despite its enormous natural, cultural, human, and intellectual wealth? Some put the blame on foreign powers that are seeking geopolitical and economic influence and interests, using national partners for their intentions. Others point directly to the African leaders, 40 whom they accuse of having deliberately chosen to impoverish their countries while enriching themselves and their allies, with the blessing of foreign accomplices. Still others accuse the Africans of being inert and lacking creativity. The mutual accusations could continue since no one wants to take responsibility for a tragedy that mortgages the lives of millions of human beings and the destiny of future generations.
- 15. Is the current economic model well adapted? What role do politics play in it? Pope Francis has sufficiently emphasized the negative effects of the current economic model and asks: "What happens with politics? ... Today, it is the case that some economic sectors exercise more power than states themselves. But economics without politics cannot be justified since this would make it impossible to favor other ways of handling the various aspects of the present crisis". Clearly, we need a strong policy, capable of governing the economy, rather than a policy serving the economy. As the Holy Father asserts, "politics must not be subject to the economy, nor should the economy be subject to the dictates of an efficiency-driven paradigm of technocracy. Today, in view of the common good, there is an urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life, especially human life. Saving banks at any cost, making the public pay the price, foregoing a firm commitment to reviewing and reforming the entire system, only reaffirms the absolute power of a financial system, a power which has no future and will only give rise to new crises after a slow, costly and only apparent recovery".⁴²
- 16. This is where ethics come into play. In fact, the economy takes over wherever progress or money dominates and somehow takes the place of God; but money must serve, not rule.⁴³ So only "Ethics—a non-ideological ethics—would make it possible to bring about balance and a more humane social order".⁴⁴

³⁹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 7.

⁴⁰ Cf. Greg Mills, Why Africa is poor: And what Africans can do about it, Penguin Global, 2011.

⁴¹ Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 196.

⁴² Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 189.

⁴³ Cf. Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 57.

⁴⁴ Francis, Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium, 57.

The very idea of progress should be redefined⁴⁵ in terms of the economy's human finality and, hence, of development, and taking into account the social and environmental responsibility of enterprises,⁴⁶ with a view to constructing a better world and improving the quality of life.⁴⁷ "Economy, as the very word indicates, should be the art of achieving a fitting management of our common home, which is the world as a whole. Each meaningful economic decision made in one part of the world has repercussions everywhere else; consequently, no government can act without regard for shared responsibility. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find local solutions for enormous global problems which overwhelm local politics with difficulties to resolve".⁴⁸ In this perspective, the responsibility lies with all the inhabitants of the common house, on both the national and global levels.

- 17. Africa has made a choice and adopted a development agenda, the so-called "Agenda 2063. The Africa We Want." However, for its realization, it is important that prerequisites be fulfilled at different levels, including, first and foremost, that of governance. Pope Francis highlighted this by showing that "what is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and interdisciplinary approach to handling the different aspects of the crisis. Often, politics itself is responsible for the disrepute in which it is held, on account of corruption and the failure to enact sound public policies. If in a given region the state does not carry out its responsibilities, some business groups can come forward in the guise of benefactors, wield real power, and consider themselves exempt from certain rules, to the point of tolerating different forms of organized crime, human trafficking, the drug trade and violence, all of which become very difficult to eradicate. If politics shows itself incapable of breaking such a perverse logic, and remains caught up in inconsequential discussions, we will continue to avoid facing the major problems of humanity". 49
- 18. A "broad-based policy" will need to take into consideration the human capital and promote education for development, so that the country may have qualified people in all fields. This requires investment in research, innovation, and the means of communication; while, at the same time, access to financial capital, especially for young people, women and other vulnerable sectors of society, will have to be ensured. Yet, first and foremost, the projects and programs of development, intended to be carried out with the collaboration of the local beneficiary populations, must be realistic and take into consideration the real, concrete needs of these populations. Many projects do not work or produce the expected results because

⁴⁵ Cf. Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 194.

⁴⁶ Cf. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Vocation of the Business Leader, Rome/St. Paul, 2014.

⁴⁷ Cf. Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 194.

⁴⁸ Francis, Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium, 206.

⁴⁹ Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 197.

they are designed elsewhere and, then, implemented in a context that did not participate in their elaboration; they are like the transplant of an organ from one body to another that, in end, rejects it.

- 19. Being realistic and concrete also means thinking about sustainability. It is useless to undertake large projects, if they last only the time of their publicity and inauguration but, then, quickly fails. Sustainability also depends on the availability of qualified local staff who can monitor the program without necessarily using foreign experts for its maintenance. But that is not all, it is also necessary to consider the context and especially the impact of the program on the populations concerned and the natural environment. This is particularly important in the case of projects led by multinationals that often cause immense damage, through the pollution and destruction of the natural environment that local inhabitants cannot clean up to without the help of experts. Yet another issue is linked to this: the question of the very nature of transferred technologies that are not always appropriate at the stage of economic growth of their recipients.
- 20. The issue of regional integration in Africa should also be seriously examined. This is not only a question of creating infrastructure and trade, let alone the free movement of people and goods in the region; but, first and foremost, a spirit of solidarity or solidary development. In fact, if development is for each individual and for all, it is contradictory that some are excluded from enjoying the goods destined to all the citizens. Moreover, the logic of two-tier development has negative consequences for countries considered economically more advanced, which are often the destinations of migrants from the countries in the region who are searching for better living conditions. The impact of this situation can explain how the people who come from outside are received and the fact that migrants are often treated even more inhumanly by other Africans than their compatriots who have left Africa. The silence of African leaders about the fate of their fellow citizens may be interpreted as complicity in non-assistance to people in danger.
- 21. Finally, peace. If it is true, as Paul VI asserted, that development is the new name of peace,⁵⁰ then Africa, with its many armed conflicts and the ensuing hardships, as a continent is going down the wrong road⁵¹ from the point of view of its development, especially when one knows that there are countries and generations of Africans for whom peace remains and will forever remain an unrealized dream. Better regional integration could be a lasting response to this tragedy, in the sense that one could imagine that the rulers of a given region

⁵⁰ Cf. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, 76.

⁵¹ Cf. René Dumont, L'Afrique noire est mal partie, Paris, Seuil, 1962.

could make some kind of commitment by adopting a code of conduct for regional leadership that would include, among other things, the exclusion, by appropriate means, of those who commit serious human rights violations or do not respect the Constitution of their country, the aspirations, and the will of their people expressed notably in elections. ECOWAS has already proven itself in this field. Other regions of the continent, can find inspiration in it.

22. In conclusion, I hope that, after the Synod on Young People, today's young people and the future generations of tomorrow, with their creative spirit, love for their country, and learning from today's history, will be better equipped to meet the challenge of the governance of Africa's development. A possible "Marshall Plan" for Africa should be considered in this perspective of sustainability.

Thank you for your attention.