



Statement by His Excellency Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the UN and Other International Organizations in Geneva
at the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Transnational Corporations and Other
Business Enterprises with Respect to Human Rights
Item 4-Preamble

Geneva, 18 October 2018

Mr. Chair,

The Delegation of the Holy See has already expressed in the preparation of this process that the interplay of business and human rights offers a *unique* opportunity to humanize further the economy. As recognized even in the UNCTAD Nairobi Azimio, the United Nations “*recognize that economic activities should be at the service of persons. Any development and growth strategy should aim at the promotion of every human being and at the primacy of human work*”¹. Economic and financial actors, both at the international and national levels, need to recognize that economic activities function not only through self-regulation of the market and much less through agreements limited to reconciling the interests of the most powerful stakeholders, but they need also to consider that they function at the service of persons who work and contribute to development. Since the transnational legally binding instrument under negotiation aims to create an international system that would be really sustainable, inclusive and equitable at all levels, we consider of utmost importance that such agreed language will be reflected in the Preamble of the *zero draft*.

Political decisions, social responsibility on the part of the business community and criteria governing investments, all of these must be guided by the pursuit of the long-term common good and concrete solidarity among generations. As recalled by Pope Francis “an interdependent world is calling us to devise and implement a long-term common project that invests today in order to build for tomorrow (...). Environmental and energy problems now have a global impact and extent. Consequently, they call for global responses, to be sought with patience and dialogue and to be pursued rationally and perseveringly”².

Mr. Chair,

Our obligations for the environment are strictly related to the need to be concerned for future generations. In shaping the Preamble, we cannot forget that we are called to a “responsible stewardship” of our common home. The Delegation of the Holy See would like to insert into the preambular language the following sentence: “stressing that the urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development”.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

¹ UNCTAD XIV, *Nairobi Azimio Declaration*, TD/519/Add.1, para. 9

² Pope Francis, Address to participants at the meeting for executives of the main companies in the oil and natural gas sector and other energy related businesses, 9 June 2018.