

# "ISSUES OF IMMEDIATE RELIEF, LASTING DEVELOPMENT AND THE NEED FOR SOLIDARITY."

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**1.- Introduction: current crisis 2.- The MDG overview and limits 3.- New vision for a Post-2015 Development Agenda 4.- Immediate Relief 5.- A new framework based on the Social Doctrine of the Church**

I am grateful to the CAPP-USA and Fordham University's Graduate Program in International Political Economy and Development for inviting me to contribute to the Conference on *Poverty and Development: A Catholic Perspective*. It is particularly a great honour and pleasure for me to return to the school where I received my Sociology Doctorate.

## **1- Introduction: persistence of inequality**

In a moment in which the United Nations' post-2015 development agenda is taking shape, this Conference timely points out a theme that is at the core of discussions in the international arena: immediate relief for the poor, comprehensive and sustainable development and the need for solidarity.

In 2000, governments signed the Millennium Declaration and committed their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty. The declaration also set out a series of time-bound targets. Since then, our world has undergone 'seismic' changes. Pope Francis speaks of epochal change set in motion by advances occurring in the sciences and in technology.<sup>1</sup> Many countries have experienced remarkable growth rates; scientific and technological advances have begun to transform lives; increased global financial integration and new trade agreements as

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<sup>1</sup>Pope Francis, *Evangelium Gaudium*, 52.

well social movements such as the Arab Spring have prompted unforeseen political change. But inequality has worsened<sup>2</sup> within many developed countries and between the developed and developing countries. In both situations, developed and developing, there is an increasing gap between persons at the extremes of income distribution. We continue have stretched our natural bioregions and systems to their limits and to the point of doing irreparable damage to the earth. Our economies have been disrupted and destabilized as a result of one of the worst financial crises in nearly a century.

Francois Bourguignon, Director of the Paris School of Economics, has shown that inequality in the world is back to where it was a century ago. He says: “These worrying trends [on inequality] raise questions about the inclusiveness of growth and call for a re-examination of economic structures and growth models that contribute to skewing growth in favour of certain segments of societies or geographical areas and perpetuating inequalities”<sup>3</sup>.

The world economy is just beginning to escape the growth doldrums in which it has been marooned for the past five years. Growth in the world economy has been experiencing a modest improvement in 2014, although it is predicted to remain significantly below its pre-crisis highs. There is a growing danger that this state of affairs is becoming accepted as the “new normal”, especially as it relates to job creation and wage growth. Policymakers everywhere, but particularly in systemically important economies and at international financial institutions, need to work collaboratively to assess current approaches and proposals, pay closer attention to signs of inclement economic weather ahead and work

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<sup>2</sup> Bourguignon, 2013. The Globalisation of Inequality. Lecture at the European University Institute, Max

<sup>3</sup> Weber Programme

[www.cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/26496/MWP\\_LS\\_2013\\_02.pdf?sequence=1](http://www.cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/26496/MWP_LS_2013_02.pdf?sequence=1)

Cf. Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: The Joy of the Gospel. (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 2013) No. 59, 60.

Thomas Piketty; *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014)

across multiple jurisdictions and through regional and collaborative bodies like the G20 and the Financial Stability Board.

As already highlighted by different scholars, a kind of blindness to the risks and dangers that were introduced into the financial system through the products, services and shadow banking practices that prevailed during the pre-crisis years of 'roaring' financial globalisation, by those institutions and practitioners who were at the heart of the global financial system was pervasive. This blindness to the mounting risks ignored long standing ethical and moral principles, trivialized the wisdom enshrined in the precautionary principle and allowed hubris and greed to proliferate. Regulatory mechanisms, due to rampant ideological deregulation and the inability of the public sector to adapt to an increasingly complex globalised financial system, proved inadequate, ineffective and compromised; they failed to either anticipate or recognize the forthcoming over-leveraged risk-taking, pervasive in the financial system and throughout the economy.

Abundant, available, and relatively cheap credit made it possible to weaken financial discipline and postpone otherwise necessary adjustments to future "better times". Financial markets came to disregard capital adequacy rules and welcome excessive leverage in the name of risk-taking and the hope for future returns. This was magnified by the conscious decision of many to self-interestedly manipulate the irrational packaging of debt that was too readily ratified by an over eager rating system. All this may explain both the short-term successes in the pursuit of wealth and the depth of the crisis that resulted.

But the problems go beyond any technical solutions which may be proposed to address these dysfunctions. As Pope Francis has observed, the financial crisis "makes us forget that its ultimate origin is to be found in a profound human crisis. In the denial of the primacy of human beings! We have created new idols. The worship of the golden calf of old

has found a new and heartless image in the cult of money and the dictatorship of an economy which is faceless and lacking any truly humane goal.”<sup>4</sup>

Over the last 15 years, the condition of many people living in poverty or near poverty has deteriorated as a result of processes that have displaced their livelihoods, severely impairing their ability to make a decent living. These processes include environmental degradation, violent conflict, forced resettlement, rapid fluctuations in the prices of commodities and agricultural products, stranded resources and natural disasters impacted by climate change, cyclical political and economic crises. The loss of benefits like insurance and pensions formally associated with employment in the developed world has further magnified the uncertainty and precariousness now faced by the middle class. In our globally interconnected world, people living in poverty are keenly aware from their exposure to mass and social media that their wellbeing is often determined by decisions of leaders and policy makers they have little opportunity to influence.

Such an individualistic economic ideology, “an economy of exclusion and inequality” (EG, 53), is anchored on a “belief” in the natural selfishness of human beings and the automatic ability of a free market, unhindered by regulations, to generate increased efficiency and aggregate growth. This ideology describes the future not in terms of uncertainty but in terms of risk based on probability. The consequences of any action may be rationally assessed, and all come down to utility maximisation. We have learned through the crisis that in real life the future is unknown; it is often shaped by actions based on incomplete or deliberately false information and even irresponsible speculation, which often produce unintended and unexpected consequences. Within this context, moral integrity and enlightened regulation and the precautionary principle must be the compass for decisions that will

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<sup>4</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* No. 55

impact the lives of millions especially those living in poverty. When the consequences of specific decisions and actions are uncertain, reason demands that moral and prudential criteria be included in the regulatory process.<sup>5</sup>

In addition the financial crisis exposed the inherent weakness in a regulatory framework where individual sovereign nations or small groups of powerful nations, like the G20, expect to govern and regulate the globally integrated financial system without the participation of representatives from the Global South and from more vulnerable economies. A thorough examination and reform of the system that takes into account the structural and ideological barriers that fail to consider the needs of developing countries and communities must include all stakeholders and adopt an inclusive agenda. This agenda must specifically include an analysis of the role and purpose of globally systemic important financial institutions and if it is to achieve long term successful outcomes must take place at higher levels of authority.<sup>6</sup> The progress achieved by focusing the specific 2000 MDG has not yet overcome the causes that enlarge the gap of inequality and produce too many “leftovers” (EG, 53).

## **2- A quick overview of the MDGs**

In this current economic situation, despite progress on some issues, such as on eradicating extreme poverty, ensuring access to water, and tackling HIV/AIDS, the international community will fail to reach several of the Millennium Development Goals. In the face of the threats from climate change and the Ebola virus, greater competition for natural resources and uncertain economic times, the scale of the challenge now calls for a different approach — one that tackles the structural causes of poverty and environmental degradation rather than merely the

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<sup>5</sup> Pope benedict XVI No. 37

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter, *Caritas in Veritate: Charity in Truth* (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 2009) no. 67

symptoms; one that reflects a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape; and one that can respond to an uncertain future.

There is wide consensus that the MDGs have provided a unity of purpose. They put poverty firmly on the international agenda. There has been a global attempt to deliver coordinated development across issues of water, sanitation, health, education, gender and the environment. The MDG framework, based on a set of concrete goals and predominantly quantifiable targets, has been relatively simple and straightforward to understand, making it relatively easy to monitor progress. As such, the MDGs have become an advocacy tool with which to shape national development policies. The process has generated a huge amount of data to share across numerous constituencies while identifying important trends and emerging issues. And they are widely credited with dramatically increasing development aid funding at the beginning of the 21st century through their role in raising public and political support for global poverty reduction.

But the MDGs have had a hard time meeting the needs of the poorest people. Many organisations stress that the MDGs are an ‘end and not a means’ and that the process provided little guidance on how the goals could be achieved. The targets and indicators were formulated by international financial institutions and the governments of developed countries with not enough sensitivity, consultation or negotiation between and within countries.

Finally, some institutions and strategies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) relied too readily on a ‘one size fits all’ approach, which required low-income countries to set “rigid national policy agendas” that followed international benchmarks in order to qualify for international aid, rather than taking into account local conditions, and thereby “often ignoring the complexities of the development process”.

### **3. - The post-2015 process: a new vision inspired by the common good**

The 2015 General Assembly deadline and the ongoing negotiation of the Sustainable Development Goals must be seen by people of good will as the best opportunity to bring the learnings from the MDG's experience to set clear and sustainable goals for the next 15 years and adopt a firm commitment to action on these goals.. It is an opportunity to rediscover how creative and effective multilateral and multi stakeholder activities can be when guided by a common vision and motivated by a moral and pressing imperative.

The commitment to a more integrated, comprehensive, transformative and sustainable approach to development will play a key role in the adoption of new goals and targets for policymakers across all the levels of political organization. The 17 goals and multiple targets that have been agreed to at the United Nations Open Working Group on Sustainable Development have already demonstrated a level of aspiration and ambition well beyond the Millennium Development Goals.

The principle of the common good, to which every aspect of social life must be related if it is to attain its fullest meaning, stems from the dignity, unity and equality of all people. According to its primary and broadly accepted sense, "the common good is 'the sum total of all conditions which allows people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily. The resulting rights and obligations are consequently the concern of the entire human race. Every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other group, and even those of the human family as a whole' "<sup>7</sup>

We have to interpret the common good not as the good of the abstract collectivity or the state, nor as merely the mixture of goods of

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<sup>7</sup> *Gaudium et spes* 26.1.

individual members, but rather the good of every person both as an individual and as a social being in relation to others. “The common good does not exist only on the level of state or nation, however, but at the level of every human group or community.”<sup>8</sup>

Human beings are not necessarily self-centred individuals geared toward maximising their own utility or satisfaction, unmoved by others who they consider only as trading partners. Human beings are persons, each of whom becomes fully her/himself through relationships with other human beings, autonomous but not independent from others. Human persons by nature care for others, for they can only flourish by giving and receiving love. The ideology of extreme individualism runs contrary to the Catholic understanding of a person as well as to classical philosophy and experience. We can offer to current public culture a more optimistic and creative view of the person and history.

Relationships are by their nature the space wherein incommensurability, gratuity, and spontaneity take root. In the short term, relations appear genuinely non-efficient in the market for they divert resources from other uses. In the longer term, however, the gratuity, risk-taking, spontaneity, and incommensurability which are embedded in any relation will nourish a more sustainable society. While possible to anticipate or account for with quantitative precision these economic, spiritual, social benefits are absolutely crucial to the creation of the just order required to foster the common good. The ground for the common good has to be prepared step by step, day by day, by continuous and conscious efforts in two directions—one structural, the other one virtuous. First, the betterment of institutions is instrumental to the common good. Second, the virtuous behaviour of persons ultimately contributes to changing institutions. This is what is required to address the underlying questions related to the financial crisis and the policies

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<sup>8</sup> Williams, Thomas D., “Global Governance and the Universal Common Good”, in *Alpha Omega*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2010, p. 272–273.

aiming to tackle it. With the common good, “the degree of its realisation in any given historical moment depends on the readiness of members of the group to act according to their profound vocation of brotherly humanity.”<sup>9</sup>

While a post-2015 framework will not by itself deliver the scale and scope of changes needed, it can and must contribute to the transformational shifts necessary in our approaches to development. It will ultimately be evaluated by its ability to promote a transformative development agenda that promotes integral human development<sup>10</sup> and to motivate the shifts that are needed across the perspectives, programs and activities of all sectors and stakeholders. This must also include a blended approach to the financing of development particularly as the official aid budgets of many donor countries are being markedly curtailed. As underlined by the WTO Director General, during the last WTO General Council in July, “a development agenda which is people-focused and forward-looking must have a strong emphasis on the economic aspects of human development.”<sup>11</sup> In other words, if the new goals are not rooted in an anthropology that sees realistically the person open to others and to transcendence, they will not serve the common good and will not close the distance between have and have not. This is also the basic insight of the Christian faith. “The kerygma , writes Pope Francis, “has a clear social content: at the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others.” (EG, 177).

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<sup>9</sup> Dembinski, Finanzen und Fristen: Krise der Kongruenz zwischen Realität und Virtualität der Zeit, in Religion-Wirtschaft-Politik: Vol. 8. Kapitalismus – eine Religion in der Krise I. Grundprobleme von Risiko, Vertrauen, Schuld, eds. G. Pfeleiderer & P. Seele, pp. 282–322, Zürich, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 1967; John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1987;

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news14\\_e/gc\\_rpt\\_24jul14\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news14_e/gc_rpt_24jul14_e.htm)

#### **4.- Immediate relief**

History has a tendency to repeat itself. There are always positive lessons to be learned from examining how earlier generations of policymakers dealt with big challenges. The need for reconciling the requirements of policy sovereignty at the national level with the imperatives of an interdependent world economy may seem today to be relatively new. In fact, it is a long-standing challenge that has been discussed extensively, and from many different angles, for almost two centuries, though none as compelling or significant as those arising from the crises of the mid twentieth century inter-war era.

The key objective of the architects of the Bretton Woods institutions was designing a post-war international economic structure that would prevent a recurrence of the opportunistic actions and damaging contagion that had led to the breakdown of international trade and financial payments in the 1930s. Accordingly, such structures were expected to support the new policy goals of rising incomes, full employment and social security in the developed economies. Included were measures that sought to expand policy space for State-led industrialization and to increase the level and reliability of the multilateral financial support necessary to meet the needs of developing countries.

Those results, due to their orientation to developed countries, however, set the stage for the North-South conflicts of the post-war period. In that context, the construction of a more development friendly international economic order was a much slower and more uneven process after the war than the Bretton Woods architects had anticipated. It took the growing voices of newly independent developing countries in the late 1950s and early 1960s to shift multilateralism toward a more inclusive footing. This led to the creation of UNCTAD in 1964, and to a

subsequent broadening of the development agenda around a new international economic order.

In this year of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNCTAD, there are calls for changes in the way the global economy is ordered and managed. Few would doubt that, during the five intervening decades, new technologies have broken down traditional borders between nations and opened up new areas of economic opportunity, and that a less polarized political landscape has provided new possibilities for constructive international engagement. In addition, economic power has become more dispersed, mostly due to industrialization and rapid growth in East Asia, with corresponding changes in the workings of the international trading system. Yet today there are signs that this may be breaking down—evidenced by rapid increase in the polarization of the political landscape and the emergence of many disruptive non state actors.

We have learned that the linkage between these technological, political and economic shifts and a more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable world is not automatic. Indeed, growing global economic and power imbalances, increasing social and environmental challenges and persistent cyclical financial instability that result in full blown crisis are demanding continuous sustained analysis, reflection and debate by policy makers and leaders at all levels. Hunger alone, for instance, still remains a daily reality for hundreds of millions of people, particularly in rural communities, with children being the most vulnerable. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that 842 million people, or roughly one in eight, suffered from chronic hunger in 2011-13, not getting enough food to lead active and healthy lives<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> This figure is lower than the 868 million reported with reference to 2010–12. The total number of undernourished has fallen by 17 percent since 1990–92. Developing regions as a whole have registered significant progress towards the MDG 1 hunger target. If the average annual decline of the past 21 years continues to 2015, the prevalence of undernourishment will reach a level close to the target. Meeting it would require considerable and immediate additional efforts.  
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3434e/i3434e.pdf>

At the same time, rapid urbanization in many parts of the developing world has coincided with premature deindustrialization and a degraded public sector, giving rise to poor working conditions and deepening insecurity. Where these trends have collided with the ambitions of a youthful population, economic frustrations have spilled over into political unrest.

There is mounting evidence from a diverse range of sources, including the World Economic Forum<sup>13</sup>, The Economist<sup>14</sup>, the World Bank<sup>15</sup>, that economic polarisation is undermining different attempts to respond to persisting development priorities. In the words of the global alliance of Catholic Development Agencies (CISDE), the post-2015 framework requires the international community to build a “a new global, legally binding, time-bound over-arching, cross-thematic framework that addresses the interlinked challenges of poverty eradication, environmental sustainability, economic equity, climate change, resilience and equitable distribution of limited national resources in ways that uphold human rights obligations”<sup>16</sup>. Such a comprehensive approach, however, needs to find its motor in order to move ahead, the human person as protagonist of change as she embraces inclusiveness of others.

## **Conclusion: A new framework based on the Social Doctrine of the Church**

In the adoption of a new framework for development through the UN SDG process, Catholic Social Teaching often defined as too much “pie in

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<sup>13</sup> World Economic Forum. 2012. Global Risks 2012 – Seventh Edition. [www.weforum.org/reports/global-risks-2012-seventh-edition](http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-risks-2012-seventh-edition)

<sup>14</sup> The Economist. 14 March 2013. Wealth Inequality: Your money, your life. The Economist blog. [www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2013/03/wealth-inequality](http://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2013/03/wealth-inequality)

<sup>15</sup> The World Bank. 28 June 2012. Inequality of Opportunity Hampers Development. World Bank blog. <http://go.worldbank.org/X1WUB80GN0>

<sup>16</sup> CIDSE Submission to the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals [www.cidse.org/content/publications/rethinking-development/beyond-2015/cidse\\_submission\\_ec\\_post-2015-consultation.html](http://www.cidse.org/content/publications/rethinking-development/beyond-2015/cidse_submission_ec_post-2015-consultation.html)

the sky” on economic issues, can serve as a both an inspiration and an important guide. Recent challenges like the financial and food crises, the Ebola outbreak, climate change, persistent hunger and poverty, social and political unrest as well rising inequality have led to a profound questioning of conventional theories on the benefits of economic growth as well as prevailing development strategies. In documents and various addresses, CST has reminded all of us that a “business-as-usual” approaches have proven inadequate to address the major contemporary development challenges that the world faces.<sup>17</sup> In a recent publication the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) has also emphasized that there is a need to “mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages.”<sup>18</sup>

As the prioritizing of sustainable development goals is entering the final stage of negotiation, the wisdom and the experience of Catholic Social Teaching can be an important moral voice, a source of insightful analysis and innovative recommendations on the concept of integral human and sustainable development and a strong proponent for the kind of reforms that are needed in the global financial system to promote and support sustainable development. This experience that is informed by the practice of the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, a vision that is grounded in community, participation, transparency and the transcendent nature of the human person will be a valuable resource in the forthcoming negotiations.

The tradition that is also rooted in a reasoned philosophical foundation can also be a resource in the discussions of values and priorities that go beyond specific religious traditions and are focused on

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<sup>17</sup> Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel*. (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 2013) No. 57, 58. Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*; Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*.

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[http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=4FB6A60F1DBA5995C1257D1C003DAA2A&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/\(httpAuxPages\)/4FB6A60F1DBA5995C1257D1C003DAA2A/\\$file/Position%20Paper\\_TFSSE.pdf](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=4FB6A60F1DBA5995C1257D1C003DAA2A&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/4FB6A60F1DBA5995C1257D1C003DAA2A/$file/Position%20Paper_TFSSE.pdf)

the journey that is common to all of humanity. In this regard it can also serve as a resource for the evaluation of innovative frameworks and new models on analysis that are being proposed for the achievement of a sustainable future.

### **Solidarity/Subsidiarity**

Over the last three decades the church's teaching and understanding of the rich and enduring concepts of Solidarity and Subsidiarity have continued to deepen and grow. This has been particularly noticeable when we look at how the concept of solidarity has framed the church's response to the collapse of the east-west divide, to the HIV-AIDS crisis, the exponentially increasing numbers of refugees and migrants, religious and ethnic persecutions, the global financial crisis of 2008, climate change and the Ebola virus.

The maturing appreciation of both of these principles has been obvious in the ways they have been used to analyse very complex changes and direct appropriate calls for action on numerous levels and in many different forums. This has been immediately noticeable in the first place in the many immediate calls for personal, organizational and institutional solidarity to numerous natural disasters across the globe while also appealing for greater sensitivity to local structures, communities, customs and environments. It has been noticeable in the more deliberate and targeted innovative and forceful calls for generous responses to the HIV-AIDS and Ebola viruses across numerous societal sectors including religious institutions and international political bodies. Finally these principles have more recently and more decisively been reflected in the calls for solidarity with religious and ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees and persecuted minorities by Pope Francis.

On the evolving and complex issue of development the tradition has, from the beginning, promoted the priority of an integral human development that embraces all aspects of human dignity and is not

measured in economic terms alone. In supporting this priority there is implicit an acknowledgement and support of the large amount of financing from the public and philanthropic sectors that will be needed to achieve specific development goals. More recently this has also demonstrated in the recognition that a blended financing that comes from the official sector and the private sector as well as from the innovations of social entrepreneurs, including the emerging approach of impact investing.

The Catholic Social Tradition as we have discussed earlier has not been silent on the more macro and global issues like the near collapse of the global financial system and its impact on development. The exigencies of the virtue of solidarity in response to countless victims and destructive consequences that have been left in the wake of the crisis have been articulated by a number of official voices. From admonitions about the “globalization of indifference” that is a by-product of a system rooted in self-interest and fed by greed and dishonesty, CST has reiterated the need to keep the poor, the marginalized and the suffering at the center of any reform agenda that is being proposed and debated by the G20 and the Financial Stability Board. This includes a close attentiveness to the deepening inequality across countries and regions that the current system has produced and a call for substantive adjustments and reforms to address the inherent corrosive tendencies of the system.

Solidarity’s parallel principle of subsidiarity can be particularly helpful in examining the appropriateness of specific proposals and innovations and in processes chosen for their implementation. Subsidiarity is a reminder of the autonomy, richness and diversity of local communities where most families and people live each day that must be respected. It shelters these communities from an invasive centralizing and homogenizing trend that shows a proclivity to a “cookie cutter” approach that easily disregards the dignity, diversity and authority of these communities. While most frequently applied in the realm of

politics, subsidiarity must also be respected and promoted when addressing the question of the appropriate size and authority of economic institutions and organisations.

### **Participation, Accountability, Transparency**

Achieving transformational change for people living in poverty will depend on the success of a new framework that increases the ability of all people especially those who are impoverished to active participate in the conversation and to demand accountability and transparency from the institutions and governing mechanisms that are responsible for shaping the SDG process. Transparency and accountability mechanisms in a post-2015 framework must reinforce and reinvigorate existing mechanisms at local, national, regional and global levels and propose new ones when necessary. In particular, existing human rights accountability mechanisms should be taken into account; their improvement when they are weak and their creation where they are lacking should be mandated and their objective enforcement enhanced. The Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council or the Trade Periodic Review of the World Trade Organization provide examples of an existing 360° accountability mechanism which could enhance transparency and indicate the way for the implementation of the post-2015 commitments at the global level.

In addition, some research groups are exploring new models of analysis that seek to reconcile macro-visions of change with practical solutions and thereby reduce the dissonance that often exists between the macro and the local. We should welcome these innovations. The Independent Research Forum (IRF), a group of twelve research organisations from different disciplines and countries, describe a post-2015 development agenda, based on the principles of sustainable development recognizing “the mutual dependency of economic, social and environmental outcomes; [...] grounded in local experience and needs; [...] and

adaptable to diverse contexts and capacities”<sup>19</sup>. The IRF is now testing its analytical framework against different themes, such as water, agriculture, food security and urban issues, to “define the policy frameworks and interventions that are needed to achieve those outcomes from different angles and at different scales of interventions.”

The work of Johan Rockstrom and Jeffrey Sachs on an analytical framework that is founded on a series of ‘transformations’ in sectors also looks promising. To stay within planetary boundaries while continuing to develop economically, they argue, six transformations are required that would affect energy, food security, urban sustainability, population, biodiversity management and public and private governance. Each transformation will require different tactics but all will depend on “the deployment of new sustainable technologies and new global rules of the game”, and “detailed strategies, major on- going R&D efforts and continued problem solving”.

The combination of the political process to negotiate SDG continues while various proposals for the new framework will continue to emerge. Each of these proposals may stress different aspects and priorities while recognizing the need of a political will to globally implement them. The vision and direction provided by the Catholic Social Teaching will contribute to making the newly agreed goals, strategies and frameworks a creative and positive Post-2015 Development Agenda and ensure a sustainable future of greater equality and dignity for all- a reaffirmation of the “universal common good”. Pope Francis graphically and compellingly portrayed the process of articulating and promoting such goals in the following manner: “Every economic and political theory or action must set about by providing each inhabitant of the planet with the minimum wherewithal to live in dignity and freedom, with the possibility of supporting a family, educating children, praising God and

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<sup>19</sup> Caribbean Journal of International Relations & Diplomacy Vol. 1, No. 3, September 2013: pp.61-74

developing one's own human potential. This is the main thing; in the absence of such a vision, all economic activity is meaningless."<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion, also economic life demands that individual player and the international community be guided by the inherent dignity of every person that calls for their respect, love, inclusiveness, making them partners in the common human venture. "We need to grow in solidarity" reminds us Pope Francis, which "would allow all peoples to become the artisans of their destiny" since "every person is called to self-fulfilment."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Letter of Holy Father Francis to H.E. Mr David Cameron, British Prime Minister on the Occasion of the G8 Meeting (17-18 June 2013), [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/francesco/letters/2013/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130615\\_lettera-cameron-g8\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/letters/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130615_lettera-cameron-g8_en.html)

<sup>21</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelium Gaudium*, 190, where he quotes Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (26 March 1967), 65.