

**CENTESIMUS ANNUS – PRO PONTIFICE FOUNDATION  
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**“THE GOOD SOCIETY AND THE FUTURE OF JOBS”  
Can solidarity and fellowship be part of business decisions?**

Session 1 – A geo-economic view of the world on growth, inequalities and jobs

Foreword

by Alberto Quadrio Curzio and Giovanni Marseguerra

Since its inception over twenty years ago, the *Centesimus Annus – Pro Pontifice Foundation* has worked to spread and endorse Catholic social teaching on themes of specific relevance connected to the new Millennium. These include globalization, governance and global cooperation, relations between institutions, society, the economy and markets, employment and unemployment, industry and work. A reputable international scientific committee assisted the Foundation to achieve these goals which were based on its work of reflection and political-institutional and economic-social implementation.

The global socio-economic scene today - deriving from changes during the past decades in relations between countries with different levels of development plus the recent serious six-year crisis particularly in developed countries - must confirm Christians in their renewed commitment to the common good. This obligation originates in the vision of Catholic social teaching, which from *Centesimus Annus* onwards has systematically warned that world socio-economic problems have not been resolved by the prospect of globalization. Furthermore, gaps in levels of development and an inadequate understanding of the ethics of Christian, human and civil development have led to new risks.

Hence the reason why the Scientific Committee has constantly endeavoured to firmly uphold principles and interpret events in the light of these principles in order to advance new effective operational suggestions.

While conforming to principles, we have nevertheless always maintained that the common good does not coincide with material wellbeing and materialistic opulence. Instead we have emphasised consideration of persons and communities, freedom and responsibility, fairness and efficiency.

The common good seeks steady but on-going constructive harmony between all sides. On this point, Christians find themselves at one with many other people of good will aware that all of us should be committed to mankind's wellbeing. This is why many people of good will, who do not belong to the Christian community but are attentive to Christianity's ethical and civil values, have taken part in conferences and conventions organized by the Centesimus Annus Foundation.

Catholic social teaching offers these principles to help build a better society while the Foundation has at all times addressed itself to three of these key principles - subsidiarity, solidarity and development.

Subsidiarity is a foremost principle of liberty and responsibility. It allocates “sovereign” institutional power vertically between different levels of Government while horizontally it allocates this function to the “production of goods” between Institutions, Society and the Economy. In more specific terms but with a clear-cut and tangible importance, subsidiarity is part of a plan aimed at re-awakening and giving a fresh start to people’s creativeness. It will achieve this by stimulating the participation of intermediary social bodies, by involving communities in the production of goods and services and thus managing not only to build solidarity but to share in it.

Solidarity is the pursuit of the common good. In keeping with the above recommended concept, this must be achieved in a more dynamic and creative form and not merely or predominantly a form of redistribution which often comes down to hand-outs. Enterprise and industry are the indispensable underpinnings of solidarity. This is also demanded of inter-generational solidarity, which too often is undervalued or underestimated.

Development is far more important than growth. It combines subsidiarity and solidarity for the promotion of people and communities in order to lead to a true civilization and to higher income levels leading to humanism in its entirety.

Today’s crisis demands a profound re-thinking of international economic relations and a revival of dynamic solidarity which, besides the distribution of existing resources, is also concerned with production and a new breakthrough in North-South and East-West relations. This solidarity is expressed through different types of development: economic development sponsored by institutions, society and industry made up of employers and workers; inter-generational development based on sustainable social security systems which lead to the enhancement of the family; and social development which promotes the unity of society and territories. Furthermore, development is necessary for authentic solidarity.

An essential starting point for any development process wishing to combine subsidiarity and sustainability, innovation and solidarity, must be the wealth and variety of available human and social resources. In other words, competence and knowledge but also dependable relationships and affiliations. These have recently become the key elements in guaranteeing equitable, balanced and sustainable growth thus generating a process of real development.

Dynamic solidarity based on the principle of subsidiarity and set within a dimension of social and economic development will result in a model of cooperative liberalism between spheres of independence. This will be very different to state handouts and individualistic/ (laissez faire) liberalism when individual responsibilities and community independence little by little achieve an organized and flexible vision of society. In such a society one can clearly identify those features of a development truly sustainable for territories and communities which lead at one and the same time to the good of each person and the common good.

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