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Holy See at UN: Negotiation Must Replace Race to Arms

Archbishop Mamberti Laments a Loss of Faith in Dialogue

NEW YORK, OCT. 3, 2012 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Holy See is calling for improvements at the United Nations that will enable the international body to more effectively resolve conflicts using peaceful means.

Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, secretary for relations with states at the Vatican secretariat of state, addressed the 67th General Assembly of the United Nations on Monday. The theme of the assembly was the "Adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means."

In his French-language address, the prelate lamented a "loss of faith in the value of dialogue, and the temptation to favor 'a priori' one of the sides in regional and national conflicts," saying that this threatens "respect for the juridical mechanisms of the United Nations."

He said the values spelled out in the UN Charter should "lead to the adoption of all possible means to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable, the promotion of respect for the rule of law and the rights of man, and the safeguarding of centuries-old cultural and religious balances."

Archbishop Mamberti referred specifically to situations in the Middle East, particularly in Syria.

"A solution is impossible if it fails to respect the rules of international and humanitarian law, or falls outside the mechanisms established in the United Nations Charter," he stated. "All interested parties should not only facilitate the mission of the special envoy of the United Nations and the Arab League, but also ensure humanitarian assistance to the suffering peoples. The international community must unite its efforts so that all sides replace the race to arms with negotiation, just as it must insist on effective respect for religious liberty, human rights and all fundamental freedoms."

The Holy See official said the international community must be "strongly anchored in values that are truly concordant with human dignity" in order to offer feasible solutions to conflicts, including those that include "transnational groups which diffuse a hegemonic, pseudo-religious ideology that fails to respect the rights of persons and civil peace."

In this context, he pointed to recent terrorist attacks in parts of Africa and Asia, and of the collusion between drug trafficking and terrorism in other parts of the world.

"It is of vial importance," Archbishop Mamberti concluded, "to reach an effective outcome in the debate about the reform and improvement of the working of the United Nations Organisation, in order to revive its capacities to foresee conflicts and to resolve then using peaceful means."

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