HOLY SEE CALLS FOR CULTURE OF PEACE

Stresses Role of Religions in Reconciliation Efforts

NEW YORK, OCT. 20, 2010 (Zenit.org).- The Holy See is urging the United Nations and all countries to work toward building a culture of peace.

Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, permanent observer of the Holy See at the United Nations, made this appeal in an address Monday.

The prelate urged states to foster "productive, sincere relationships, seeking out forgiveness and reconciliation, as well as being transparent in their dealings with others and being faithful to their word," a press release from the Holy See Mission to the United Nations reported.

He underlined the importance of religions in the effort to build a culture of peace, noting that this task "lies within their missions to serve the spiritual and transcendental dimension of human nature."

The archbishop affirmed that religions "contribute to the respect for human life and the observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms."

"Religions promote reconciliation by impelling persons to move forward in a spirit of mutual cooperation," he added.

Archbishop Chullikatt appealed for peace, "which is not merely the absence of conflict but the harmonious coexistence of individual citizens within a society governed by justice."

He highlighted in particular the importance of interreligious relations, noting the work of the

Holy See in the Joint Committee for Dialogue of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue as well as the Permanent Committee of the Al-Azhar for Dialogue among the Monotheistic Religions.

The archbishop urged his listeners to "engage cultures with full regard for the role of religion."

He warned against attempts to "advance principles at odds with the natural moral order, in particular, a reproductive health and sexual rights agenda which runs counter to respect for the right to life of the unborn child."

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