



## 46th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 22 February – 23 March 2021

### Meeting on role of poverty alleviation (res. 43/21)

Joint oral statement delivered by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

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APG23 and 11 co-signing NGOs welcome the discussion about the role of poverty alleviation in promoting and protecting human rights.

COVID-19 has transformed our societies, disrupted our economies and affected our communities. We must face not only a health issue, but also a complex political, social, economic, cultural, and global phenomenon that has compromised the pathway towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We would like to put a specific focus on the international cooperation aspects related to access to health-care services, medicines and vaccines for all. We advocate for equal access to treatment for COVID-19 including universal distribution of vaccines. We believe that the pandemic has taught us once again the importance of health as a common good and the value of a public health system. The situation many countries are living during this pandemic has reminded us that health and universal health coverage are key components for the Sustainable Development Goals and poverty alleviation.

It is time to respond to global problems with a renewed commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation, for they are both needed to address such global issues, including combating climate change. It is time for just and far-sighted solutions to problems such as the inequity of the foreign debt of impoverished countries, which deprives them of the necessary resources for, inter alia, the health and social protection of their citizens. It is time to radically review military expenditures, for the benefit of humanity that especially at this moment is asking for peace and not war, medicines and vaccines and not weapons.

We appeal to Member States and international institutions to try everything possible to allow all humanity to benefit from the progress made by the research in the fight against the Coronavirus. Intellectual property rights, such as patents, industrial designs, copyrights etc. should not constitute barriers to the ready availability, production and distribution of medical products against COVID-19, including vaccines. This would mean that words like international cooperation, promotion and protection of human rights, will not remain just rhetoric but become actions to allow every human being to receive the protection and care deserved.

We would like to ask the panellists to elaborate on the relationship between health and alleviation of poverty and the role of the right to development in building back plans for the future of our humanity. Thank you!