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Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights
to safe drinking water and sanitation

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

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Mr. President,

APG23 welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.

We appreciated the focus on the interlinkages and root causes of the systemic crises whose effects prevent 2 billion people from enjoying their human rights to water and sanitation, especially affecting people and communities that are already impoverished and marginalized. Indeed, there is no fatality in the complex factors leading to the denial of such essential human rights. Rather, it is determined by political and economic choices that need to be addressed and deeply revised.

Therefore, we fully agree with the Special Rapporteur when he writes in the report that "the roots of this water crisis lie in the unsustainability of the current development model which is based on the paradigm of domination of nature, and in the greed and irresponsibility of the rich".

The resulting overexploitation, pollution and mismanagement of aquatic ecosystems, with the related harmful impact on human rights, can be faced only by putting people and planet first. We need both justice for the poor and justice for the environment, as Pope Francis highlighted in his Encyclical Letter "Laudato si'".

We have to move towards an equitable and democratic governance of water and natural resources key to human life, and towards solutions based on sustainability, equality and human rights.

Mr. Special Rapporteur: given the need for strengthening the legal and governance framework to support the human rights-based solutions proposed in your report, do you agree that the draft Convention on the right to development, if approved, could give a positive contribution to advance in that direction?

Thank you!