



SOCIAL FORUM, 2 - 3 November 2023

“THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (STI) TO THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING IN THE CONTEXT OF POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY”

Keynote panel: General discussion

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

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Mr Chair,

APG23 welcomes the theme of the 2023 Social Forum and thanks the eminent key notes speakers for their valuable inputs.

Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) specifically focuses on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications. The implementation of this right is crucial for the fulfilment of a range of rights such as, just to mention a few, the right to health, the right to education, the right to water, the right to food, including the right to a healthy environment and the right to development.

Progresses in science and technology play a critical role in promoting sustainable development, social well-being, and cultural advancement. Science and technology are powerful tools in the hands of humanity: they should never be used as drivers of exclusion and exploitation, but need to be put at the service of peace and for the future of our planet.

Regrettably, access to scientific knowledge and its applications in terms of educational resources, research findings, technological innovations, and healthcare advancements, among others, is unequitable in our world.

For example, too many lives have been lost especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries in the years between the early 90's and 2005/2010 before Antiretrovirals drugs, a remarkable scientific discovery, were made accessible for People infected and affected by HIV/ AIDS. Moreover, the vaccines apartheid and nationalism, which happened during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been a great scandal.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities within and across countries fading the likelihood of implementation of the SDGs and the greatest adverse effects have fallen once more on the most vulnerable countries and people.

We firmly believe that the uneven sharing of scientific progress and the post-pandemic recovery require a swift action towards fostering international cooperation without conditionalities, applying the lens of the right to development in formulating policies and programs as well as developing the “antibodies” of international solidarity. Thank you!