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Oral Statement

Fraternite Notre Dame, which was founded by His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie Roger Kozik, thanks you for allowing her to speak.

The problem of unemployment is a global issue that depreciates the value of human beings. Unemployment reflects a society in crisis, which is losing its bearings, along with its moral values and the notion of mutual aid. Some nations have been maintaining a known situation of slavery or economical disorder, thus violating the conventions of labor regulations and international labor laws.

Maintaining unemployment fosters corruption and crime; but here is a well known saying: *“the devil finds work for idle hands”*.

Fraternite Notre Dame wants to testify that uniting people's goodwill through Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) can tackle their misery and poverty, while facilitating their access to employment opportunities.

We have experienced first hand that a collaboration between NGOs and United Nations Agencies provided shelter again, to less-fortunate families.

Large construction projects, for instance in Haiti, have created jobs for a thousand persons and they have received both a salary and food support. From these efforts Fraternite Notre Dame has managed the operations, in partnership with WFP and UNICEF. These large-scale undertakings proved beneficial by offering jobs, allowing a better integration of the population, and the reassertion of the human person's dignity.

Without a job, a man suffers, he is humiliated and rejected, from the family as well as society.

All-out mechanization, by replacing manpower with an automated process, has suppressed much labor. With many jobs and positions being destroyed, they contributed to the erosion of good terms between workers and employers. But the machines do not replace human relationships, as we can assess from so many trades that have disappeared.

When you deprive a man of his job, you destroy him and you take his freedom away. Today, the right to have a job is no longer a social entitlement; it has become an unfair fight.

Why is this? Because all the values that used to make up the grandeur of a nation, and would bind it together, constituting its strength and ability to compete, have been trodden underfoot, day after day:

This is the case with labor, but also effort, merit, freedom and private property. It is also the case with respect for the homeland, respect for our elders, respect of the family and of religious beliefs.

As long as these values are trodden underfoot instead of being upheld anew, our societies will not prosper and the world will not live at peace.

[end of Fraternite Notre Dame's Oral Statement]