



Statement of the Holy See Second World Summit for Social Development

Doha (Qatar), 6 November 2025

Madam President,

The Holy See wishes to thank His Highness Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, and his government for hosting this important Summit, as well as Belgium and Morocco for facilitating negotiations on the Political Declaration.

This Declaration reaffirms the commitment to “a political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision for social development,” which is rooted in human dignity above all else.¹ This vision, particularly in its spiritual dimension, places the person at the center of concerns for development.

Poverty

Significant progress has been made in eradicating poverty since the Copenhagen Summit, with one and a half billion people no longer living in extreme poverty. However, these gains are fragile, and inequalities are deepening. Far too many people still experience poor health, inadequate shelter, and lack of opportunity, often linked to poverty. Its deprivations are also spiritual in nature, as poverty can erode a person’s sense of his or her own dignity through feelings of shame, futility, and despair.

Social protection and the provision of basic necessities are important immediate measures for preserving life. However, there is also a need to focus on creating conditions that allow people to flourish. In all efforts the poor should be engaged as partners and protagonists, rather than passive recipients. Education, the rule of law and strong institutions are vital to fostering a just society in which individuals and families can thrive.

Full employment and decent work

Work has both productive and personal dimensions, which should complement each other. Workers create and provide the goods and services that people need and want, thereby contributing to the economy, which benefits all when properly ordered.

¹ Cf. Doha Political Declaration of the “World Social Summit” under the title “the Second World Summit for Social Development”, 16.

It is important to recognize the role of work in enabling individuals to establish and maintain a family, as well as its contribution to the economy. It is also important to recognize the role that work plays in personal development, and that a family affected by unemployment encounters difficulties in achieving its aims of being a “community of love and solidarity, which is uniquely suited to teach and transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values, essential for the development and well-being of its own members and of society”.² Just wage is the rightful fruit of work that must enable workers and their families to lead dignified lives. Thus, workers’ associations continue to have a role to play in promoting workers’ legitimate interests. These interests could be affected by the emergence of technologies such as artificial intelligence. The widespread use of AI puts many workers at risk of losing their jobs. Therefore, Pope Leo XIV asked that “artificial intelligence functions as a tool for the good of human beings, not to diminish them, not to replace them.”³

Madam Presidente,

Social integration

Social integration is an essential aspect of the human experience. Everyone needs to feel connected and part of the community. The family plays a central role in promoting social integration. The family is a “school of deeper humanity,”⁴ in which its members learn to recognize their own and others’ dignity, and to love and care for others, particularly those in need.⁵

The State should support social integration by creating conditions that encourage human flourishing and support family life. This includes respecting human rights, encouraging inclusion and participatory governance, promoting peace and the rule of law, and fostering environmental stewardship. To this end, governments should collaborate with civic and religious organizations, as well as voluntary associations, to ensure that these efforts are community-driven and respond to local needs of communities.

Conclusion

Madam President,

True progress in social development is not measured by power or wealth, but by uplifting the least privileged in society while safeguarding the God-given dignity of every person. The Holy See welcomes this Summit as an opportunity to renew the collective commitment to achieving this vision. Thank you.

² Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 237.

³ Pope Leo XIV, Address to the Members of the International Inter-Parliamentary Union (21 June 2025).

⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*, 52.

⁵ Cf. Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 114.