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Intervention of the representative of the INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION (IFOR) Maria Antonietta Malleo

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence Générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil Exécutif, Madame la Directrice Générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Depuis le 1914 l'IFOR travaille pour la résolution des conflits et la réconciliation à travers la nonviolence active, selon les enseignements de Martin Luther King et des autres Prix Nobel de la Paix et activistes qui ont marqué son histoire.

The crisis and conflicts that we are seeing today on a global scale, due to demands for social and environmental justice, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms (of expression, movement, diversity and self-determination of peoples), tell us of the need for a new resolute effort to invest in **Nonviolence as practice of peace** at any level of society.

We need a courageous leap of thought and action, an **“ecology of change”** through an integrated and holistic approach for social transformation, as in the Gandhian “constructive project”, elaborated in 1909 and founded on nonviolence education, gender equality, economic equality, with the localization of industries and handcraft, care of the environment, interreligious coexistence. Points that we recognize as the key of sustainable development and that tells us of Nonviolence as the future.

For us it means also to implement through the cooperation between governmental actors and civil society what have been achieved, conceptually and practically, since the '90s with the UN and UNESCO plan of action for a culture of peace and non-violence.

1) Particularly, **educational aspects** needs a new determination to move to the joint goal, until now applied only by single countries: the **introduction of contents of peace, nonviolence and human rights education** in the **national curricula of all Member States of the UN** through a resolution, as concrete result for target 4.7 of the Agenda 2030, in the framework of the efforts for the Global Citizenship Education.

2) Second point concerns the **cultural aspects of violence**.

The brilliant idea to decor the spaces of the General Conference with the repetition of the founding principle of UNESCO (“to build peace in the mind of men”) as a visual mantra reminds us the powerful influence on the mind of what we see.

Along with a progressive disarmament, with the reduction of investments in weapons, today it is infact necessary also to **demilitarise and desarm the global contemporary culture**, especially the visual one that worldwide, with local variations, targets children and young generations. And, through the aesthetic valorisation and normalisation of violence and a visual education to war, killing and the concept of “enemy” of products of entertainment, it destroys identity, the development of social fabric, and the awareness of interconnection between human beings, naturally present in the mind of the child.

It is therefore urgent to work on the **interconnections of informal education, communication and mass culture** and to start a dialogue with producers of global entertainment in order to develop the antibodies to this drift, and fostering the conditions for human evolution according to the **right to Nonviolence**, principle of civilization that Gandhi called “as old as the hills”, because natural moral law, common to all human beings.

Thank you.