

Holy See at the UN Unveils Semantics Strategy

By Sergio Mora

"Husband" and "wife" is out, and "partner" is in. Also out: "man" and "woman." "Gender" is the word of choice today. Want to say "Contraception?" Try "reproductive health."

With these and similar word games combined with an extreme interpretation of "anti-discrimination," international institutions are imposing ideologies across the globe -- policies that oppose Catholic thought and influence daily life. And in general, people realize there's been a change too late.



This was the warning made by **Archbishop Silvano Tomasi**, permanent representative of the Holy See to the U.N. offices in Geneva, when he spoke Thursday in Rome at the headquarters of the Communion and Liberation movement.

His address was titled "***The Force of the Word. Truth and Ideology in International Organizations.***"

Marta Carabia, professor of constitutional law at the University of Milano-Bicocca, also spoke. The event was moderated by the director of the International Center, Roberto Forlan.

"Geneva is a place where culture is generated daily," said Archbishop Tomasi, recalling that 30,000 employees of international entities reside there, holding more than 9,000 conferences every year.

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To clarify the problem, the prelate recalled Benedict XVI's thought on the dictatorship of relativism: *"A good part of contemporary philosophy states that man is incapable of knowing the truth. And, as a consequence, the man who is incapable of [truth] does not have ethical values ."*

Thus, the archbishop continued, *"he ends up by accepting majority opinion as the sole reference point -- although history demonstrates how destructive majorities can be, " as in the case " of the dictatorships imposed by Nazism and Marxism ."*

Moving over

According to Archbishop Tomasi, words from Judeo-Christian tradition are disappearing: words such as truth, morality, conscience, reason, father, mother, child, commandment, sin, hierarchy, nature, marriage, etc..

A new vocabulary that "represents an individualist ideology taken to the extreme and which inspires the guidelines of the employees of world governance" is coming to the fore, he said.

"The United Nations aspires to create a new international order and to do so it creates a new anthropology, " (i.e. *a new interpretation of man's origin and culture*- ed.) as when it speaks of gender -- "not the one given by nature but the one chosen by the individual," Archbishop Tomasi explained. This undermines the very structure of society in what pertains to the family, he added.

A Thomist vision that exacts "conformity of the intellect with reality" is replaced "by a concept of reality as subjective and as a social construction in which truth and reality do not have a stable content," the prelate cautioned.

This "alliance between ideology and pragmatism" challenges Christian wisdom, he affirmed, even if in the long run "they will not be able to underestimate or simply ignore the anthropological realism of the Christian tradition."

Apples and pears

Asked how these strategies come about, Archbishop Tomasi said it is a complex process,

beyond the proponents themselves. He traced it to the dictatorship of relativism.

"To say that a pear is not an apple is not discrimination," the archbishop reminded. "And these soft laws are transformed into juridical norms. Then there is a new convention and it becomes law and it is applied even in a small village."

For her part, Marta Cartabia affirmed the importance of the language of law. She noted the ambiguity since the 1995 Beijing Conference, with its emphasis on "gender discrimination," which has nothing to do with a biological fact but simply with the interpretation of a role that a person wishes to have.

She noted that in Spain and Germany today, one can "ask for a change of sex despite physical characteristics, guaranteed by the law with a trivial procedure such as going to a registration office."

"How can woman be defended," Cartabia asked, "if the role is only optional?"

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