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**International Colloquium on
TOWARDS A STRONG ECONOMIC SYSTEM
Revealing the Logic of Gratuitousness in the Market
Economy**

Organized by Pontifical Council for Culture (Vatican),
Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (Bangalore) and
Christ University (Bangalore)

25-29 October, 2011, Bangalore India

*Venue: Christ University and Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram
(Bangalore)*

The international colloquium on "Towards a Strong Global Economic System: Revealing the Logic of Gratuitousness in the Market Economy" was attended by 150 delegates, experts, and participants from all over the world. The event was jointly organized by the Pontifical Council for Culture (Vatican), Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (Bangalore), and Christ University (Bangalore).

The inauguration of the colloquium was held on Wednesday, 26 October 2011 at 9.30 am in the Christ University Main Auditorium. The inauguration was attended by the following dignitaries: Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio (the Apostolic Nuncio to India), who also delivered the inaugural address, Cardinal Telesphore Toppo, who read out the message to the conference by His Eminence Cardinal Ravasi, Archbishop Barthélémy Adoukonou, who presided over the function and delivered the presidential address, Dr. Theodore Mascarenhas, director of the departments of Asia, Africa and Oceania at the Pontifical Council for Culture, who gave a bird's eye-view of the colloquium, and Rt. Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras, Archbishop of Bangalore and Rev. Fr. Jose Panthaplamthottiyil, Prior General of the CMI Congregation and the Vice Chancellor of Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram who offered felicitations. Rev. Dr. Thomas Aykara, rector of Dharmaram College and the chancellor of Christ University welcomed the gathering and Rev.

Prof. Dr. Francis Thonippara CMI proposed the vote of thanks. Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, the Apostolic Nuncio to India, called for placing human welfare at the heart of the developmental activities and stated that the world must strive for an economic order driven by human concern.

The international colloquium was attended by two cardinals, forty bishops, and over hundred heads of various renowned institutions from different parts of India and a number of national and international experts on Economics and Developmental Studies. The colloquium had sixteen position papers, including two keynote addresses, by scholars of international and national stature with specialisation in various domains of economy. The intention of this colloquium was to evaluate the present models of economics and to look for alternative new models. As the colloquium coincided with the Diwali celebrations, a Fellowship in Religious Experience (FIRE) was arranged with the participation of members from six different religious traditions, which was organized under the banner of the Centre for the Study of World Religions (CSWR) of DVK.

The inaugural keynote address of the conference was delivered by Prof. Thomas Pogge from Yale University (USA) in the Christ University Main Auditorium. He spoke on "Transcending the Washington View of Development." On the first day, there were position papers presented by Prof. Renato Troncon, University of Trento, Italy ("*Caritas in Veritate* and the Issue of Gratuitousness in the Economy"), Dr. Monica Fantini, Director, The Legacoop, Italy ("The Experience of the Cooperatives: The Contribution of Gratuitousness to All Round Development"), and Prof. Christoph Stueckelberger, Professor of Economic Ethics and Founder and Executive Director of Globethics.net, Geneva ("Towards a Sustainable Development Paradigm: The Values of Caring and Sharing in a New Global Economy").

The second day began with a keynote address by Rev. Prof. Dr. Francis Vineeth on "Rethinking the Market Economy Based on the Primacy of Person." Later, Prof. Antoon Vandeveld, Higher Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Belgium & Roy Varghese Palatty, PhD Scholar, HIP, KU Leuven, Belgium presented a position paper on "The Role of Institutions: Preserving and Promoting Non-Tradables with a Philosophy of Giving." Then Rudolf C. Heredia SJ, Independent Researcher and Writer ("The Role of Culture and Education in Economic Development") and Mr. Conrad Sangma, the leader of opposition of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly ("The Promotion of an Equitable and Sustainable Economy: Green and Just Economy") spoke. Sangma opined that decentralization through Panchayathraj is necessary for sustainable and equitable development in the country. He also stressed that the government of India must focus on diverse solutions and policies as the needs and aspirations of states and villages differ. Archbishop Thomas Menampampil SDB, Archbishop of Guwahati, spoke on "Values and Probity in Public Life" and called to fight corruption and adopt transparency in order to build up a strong and sustainable economy.

On the final day of the colloquium, apart from a position paper presented by Prof. Stephan Rothlin, Professor of the University of International Business and Economics, UIBE, Beijing on "Globalization and Gratuitousness: Challenges from the Chinese Model Based on the Vision of *Caritas in Veritate*," there was an interesting panel discussion on "Strengthening Global Economic System: Models" in which Prof. N. S. Ramaswamy, National Professor of Management, Founder Director of Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, Dr. Prasad D. J. M. Sirivella, General Secretary, National Dalit Movement for Justice, Dr. Cynthia Stephen, Researcher and Writer, H. E. Gholam Reza Mesbahi Moggadam, MP - Member of the Committee for Economic Affairs, Islamic Parliament of Iran Tehran, Iran, and Prof. Paulachan Kochappilly, Professor of Moral Theology and Dean of the Faculty of Theology, DVK, Bangalore presented their positions on Gandhian, Dalit, Ambedkarian, Iranian, and Christian models.

In the concluding session on Friday, 28 October 2011, Justice N. Santhosh Hegde, former Lokayukta of the State of Karnataka, delivered the concluding keynote on "Development and Corruption: Re-Establishing Justice for the Common Good." Globalization, according to him, has resulted in the deterioration of basic human values in the society. In a world where greed rules over need, he underlined the need for a change in social thinking that would pave the way for a strong society that would cater to and safeguard the common good. His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, President of CBCI and the Secretary General of the FABC, presided over the function. He opined that the greatest service to development is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God. Archbishop Telesphor Cardinal Toppo and Dr. J. Alexander, IAS, Dr. Thomas C. Mathew, Vice Chancellor of Christ University, and Dr. Saju Chackalackal, Chief Organizer of the Colloquium, spoke on the occasion.

This International Colloquium could evolve a consensus among the participants that it is high time that we looked for alternative models. It was found that the values of gratuitousness has to be at the root of any human and humanizing economic system; if it were to fight against the dehumanizing tendencies of exploitation that is at the root of the capitalist system, an attitude of caring for and sharing with the other must become the basic dynamics of any social intercourse, including the market economy. The pool of national and international scholars, coming from different professional and religious background were of unanimous opinion that the economy must open itself for possible new paradigms that would cater to the common good.

It is suggested by the participants that the deliberations initiated at this colloquium should be made available to the rest of the Church so that the bishops could initiate further deliberations along the line in their dioceses so that more grass-root level conscientization could be facilitated. The organizers informed that, in view of making the fruit of this consultation

available to the larger public, the proceedings of the colloquium will be edited and published at the earliest.

This initiative of the Pontifical Council for Culture (Vatican), Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (Bangalore), and Christ University (Bangalore) has brought to focus the scattered thinking on the globalized economy and has aired certain serious concerns, which both the Church and state leaderships should address.

Dr Saju Chackalackal, CMI, DVK, Bangalore

&

Dr Theodore Mascarenhas, SFX, Pontifical Council for Culture, Vatican