*Unofficial Transcript*

**The Human Rights Dimension: Addressing the Rise of Global Genocidal Anti-Semitism and Vatican II’s Nostra Aetate**

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Conference at the United Nations

LAURIE CARDOZA-MOORE, Deacon and ECOSOC Special Envoy to the UN for the World Council of Independent Christian Churches: Before we go on, I want to recognize representatives from the other distinguished missions, including Italy, Germany, the Holy See, Canada, Finland, France and Spain. Thank you so much for being here today. And Panama, I'm sorry.

I'd like to bring you a statement from Archbishop Dr. John Lupoli with the World Council of Independent Christian Churches. Greetings on behalf of the members and leaders of the World Council of Independent Christian Churches. As you may know, the WCICC is found in 83 nations around the world. We represent 380,000 churches and ministries, our congregation number in the millions. The reason I bring these numbers to your attention is to let you know the problem of global genocidal anti-Semitism is not just a problem here in the USA, it is worldwide. My apologies to all of you for my absence due to an injury I received not long ago.

Hatred in any form is wrong and needs to be reversed and corrected. Hatred based on race, color or creed must be stopped at all levels. Israel and the Jewish people receive this hatred, all three in anti-Semitism. The church in general is not exempt from this criticism, as anti-Semitism lives well within the doctrines and dogmas of the church. Need I remind you that the people of Israel are God's people and we all benefit from the Abrahamic covenant?

The WCICC calls on all churches to stop the anti-Semitic action at once, be it in doctrine or in practice. I would like to thank the Roman Catholic Church in their efforts to celebrate the work of Pope Paul VI and Vatican II in a declaration that anti-Semitism is wrong as state in the document titled Nostra Aetate. Stopping hatred in all its forms is something we can all work on together. Let us use this occasion to make a change today. Greetings, Archbishop John Lupoli.

Testing. Is that better in the back? Thank you. I would like to begin my comments by quoting His Holiness, the late Pope John XXIII, when he greeted 130 members of the United Jewish Appeal Delegation with a Biblical record from Genesis saying, "I am Joseph, your brother." Later just before his death he composed a prayer to make atonement for the Church's history of anti-Semitism. His powerful words stated, "We realize now that many, many centuries of blindness have dimmed our eyes so that we no longer see the beauty of Thy Chosen People and no longer recognize in their faces the features of our first-born brother. We realize that our brows are branded with the mark of Cain. Centuries-long has Abel laid in blood and tears because he had forgotten Thy love. Forgive us the curse which we unjustly laid on the name of the Jews. Forgive us that with our curse we crucified Thee a second time."

During his papacy, Pope John initiated the Catholic Church's historic break from an almost thousand-year-old tradition and dogma of at times subtle but overt, but often overt anti-Semitism. In 1961, under Pope John the Catholic Church drafted a document titled Nostra Aetate, which is Latin for "in our time." It historically declared a new relation of the Church with non-Christian religions. In part, it speaks of the bond between Christians and Jews and states that blame for Jesus' death cannot be laid upon the Jews.

The Declaration also decries all displays and acts of anti-Semitism. With its passage in 1965, Nostra Aetate signaled a new starting point in the Church's relations with Judaism. Few Christians and Jews know the remarkable declaration of Nostra Aetate. In one history-making document, the Catholic Church not only acknowledged that the Jews were not responsible for the death of Jesus and eliminated the espousing of the deicide narrative, it also recognized that the Jewish covenant with God for the land of Israel had not been broken. And it further stated that Christianity sprang from Jewish roots.

Upon the drafting of Nostra Aetate in 1965, Pope Paul VI stated, "The Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed the Holy Scriptures." I wonder how many people in this room know about this very momentous declaration. I pray that this forum will go far to educate Member States about this groundbreaking theological shift.

Earlier this year, a PJTN delegation traveled to the Vatican to meet with His Eminence, Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, to discuss a global celebration of the upcoming 50th anniversary of Nostra Aetate. The principles and points of this historic and unprecedented declaration should not only be celebrated but also declared throughout the Christian world.

We further respectfully requested that the Holy See, in his position of authority over the Catholic Church, be the light to all nations and people of conscience by publicly reminding Christians around the world of the Church's rejection of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. This publication continues to be distributed around the globe to incite anti-Semitic attacks against Jews worldwide.

The incomprehensible resurgence of global genocidal anti-Semitism demands that Christians and all people of conscience reject the Protocols and the many libels that have been spawned by it. As in Nazi Germany of the 1930s, evidence continues to mount that the resurgence of global genocidal anti-Semitism today is a direct result of the Protocols. In many ways, the Protocols gave Hitler a manifesto for eliminating the Jews. As with Stalin and other dictators, the death of Judaism was key to his supposed utopia.

His driving ambition was to free the world from the shackles of conscience and morality, to turn the world away from monotheism. The message of the Jews was diametrically opposed to his vision of what the world should be. Furthermore, Hitler knew that the Jewish threat to his ideals embodied every -- was embodied in every single Jew.

"The Jewish spirit," Hitler explained, "is the product of the Jewish person. Destroying their holy places alone would not be enough." Hitler stated, "Conscience is a Jewish invention. It is a blemish, like circumcision. Even had there never existed a synagogue or a Jewish school or the Old Testament, the Jewish spirit would still exist and would exert its influence. It has been there from the beginning and there is no Jew, not a single one, who does not personify it. Providence has ordained that I should be the greatest liberator of humanity. I am freeing man from the restraints of the dirty and degrading self-mortifications of a false vision known as conscience and morality."

The evil of Hitler lay not in his understanding of who the Jewish people were; his evil grew from his reaction to that understanding. Ironically, Hitler had a clearer understanding of who the Jewish people are and what they have accomplished.

As anti-Semitism grows worldwide, the need to thoroughly repudiate and stop the spread of the Protocols and to champion the message of Nostra Aetate is critical. There is no longer any point in pretending that the horror and intensity of the violence and hatred will soon cease. Nostra Aetate is a vital step in the right direction to stem the age-old hatred. Our Christian faith dictates that we care about our Jewish brethren and logic and preservation should motivate us to speak out.

There are many words for attitudes and actions that are detrimental to human beings. Bias and prejudice deals with attitudes. Bigotry, discrimination and racism are actions. But when racism becomes genocidal and if directed against Jewish people, that is anti-Semitism. Bottom line, anti-Semitism's ultimate goal is genocide. As the Bible commands, rejecting of the intent of the Protocols is required and societies who perpetuate these atrocious libels forfeit their national souls. The sacred declaration of the Church through Nostra Aetate affirms that the faithful have a responsibility, indeed an obligation to stand with our Jewish brethren against the resurgence of global genocide and anti-Semitism.

In 1978 Pope John Paul II proclaimed, "The Church cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God in his inexpressible mercy concluded the ancient covenant -- concluded the ancient covenant. Nor can she forget that she draws sustenance from the root of that well-cultivated olive tree unto which have been grafted the wild shoots, the Gentiles. Indeed, the Church believes that by His cross, Christ, our Peace, reconciled Jews and Gentiles, making both one in Himself."

Following his historic visit to the death camps in Poland he stated, "To this day Auschwitz does not cease to admonish, reminding us that anti-Semitism is a great sin against humanity, that all racial hatred inevitably leads to the trampling of human dignity. We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of Yours to suffer and asking Your forgiveness, we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the covenant. You are our dearly beloved brothers and in a certain way it could be said that you are our elder brothers."

For many people the acceleration of global anti-Semitism is incomprehensible. Others who believe that such atrocities could never happen again have received a wakeup call. They’ve come to realize that it's nothing less than global genocidal anti-Semitism perpetrated by those who despise the very existence of Jewish people and openly seek to annihilate the 14 million surviving Jews.

If we consider the rise of Nazism in Germany, a technologically advanced Christian nation, it is not improbable that it could happen again. Before it is too late, we must recognize the characteristics of this age-old hatred and take steps to protect our fellow man.

Recently the UN has also taken a stand against this growing global threat. On April 21st and 22nd, the UN General Assembly conducted a High-Level Thematic Debate on Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation. The subject was fostering peaceful, inclusive societies and countering violent extremism.

During the debate Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commissioned Member States of the United Nations with the task of broadening its reach to religious leaders and clergy around the globe to confront violence against religious minorities. He stated, "The UN was born out of the ashes of World War II. After the Holocaust we pledged 'Never again.'" During the conference he challenged faith leaders to address these complex issues by providing leadership and wisdom to confront violent extremism.

He also quoted Deuteronomy, stating, "Be brave and courageous." One of the religious minority groups repeatedly mentioned during the two days was the Jewish community and the rise of anti-Semitism. It isn't often that the UN, the Church and the Holy Scriptures sit in agreement. As such, Holy Scripture testifies that God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their fathers. He does not repent of the gifts he makes or the calls he issues. Such is the witness of the apostle.

As Christians we are reminded by the Apostle Paul in Galatians that if you are in Christ, you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the Promise. Paul further stated in his Epistle to the Ephesians, "You who were once outside of the commonwealth of Israel have been brought near because of Christ's shed blood."

So what does Paul mean? And as Christians and people of conscience, how can we act on Paul's words today? We each have our own area of influence and power. Yes, each and every one of us has the power to do something. The question is will we use it to stop the hatred? Will we do all in our power to stand up and make a difference? I pray that today you will not only learn how to make a difference but be inspired to do all you can to stop the heinous sin of global genocidal anti-Semitism. Thank you.

LAURIE CARDOZA-MOORE: Before I go on to our closing statement, I just want to open up the floor to any of the ambassadors or delegates from the other missions, if you want to weigh in or just share a word, a comment with our guests today. Thank you.

The goal of this forum has been to promote an environment that prevents the negative seeds of anti-Semitism from flourishing using a common vehicle, faith and education. Recalibrating both minds and hearts must start at the earliest possible moment, in homes, schools, workplaces and governments. We must all seek and implement sustainable ideas and solutions to confront this worldwide movement.

As governmental and religious leaders, we must focus on learning the lessons from successes and failures of identifying the many facets of this scourge and how we, as Christians and people of conscience, can develop best practices at the UN and in our respective countries to address this ancient threat to our Jewish brethren and all people of faith.

Nostra Aetate is a vital step in the right direction to stem the age-old hatred. Our Christian faith dictates that we care about our Jewish brethren and logic and preservations motivate us to speak out.

So I want to recommend some action steps that you can take. First, adopt the U.S. State Department's definition of anti-Semitism within the United Nations and in your own parliaments. You have a copy in your documents before you and it states: anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

Second, based upon this definition, draft a proclamation and/or legislation on behalf of your country to introduce legislation that would protect your Jewish communities from any form of anti-Semitic attacks.

Also draft a proclamation or legislation to formally condemn the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. The Protocols are much more than a symbol of anti-Semitism of the last 100 years that mushroomed into the Holocaust. It is a vessel that holds the most vicious and poisonous lies against an entire people. And even today, many anti-Semites repeat and act on them.

Over the last 54 years, we've seen a dramatic theological shift in the Catholic Church, as four Popes have come out to condemn the Church's anti-Semitism, including Pope John XXIII, Pope John VI, Pope Paul II and, mostly recently, Pope Francis, as he stated, "I've said it other times and I would like to repeat it now, it's a contradiction that a Christian is anti-Semitic. His roots are Jewish. A Christian cannot be anti-Semitic. Let anti-Semitism be banished from the heart and life of every man and every woman."

He further stated, "You asked me what to say to our Jewish brothers about the promise God made to them. Has this been forgotten? And this, believe me, is a question that radically involves us as Christians because with the help of God we have discovered that the Jewish people are still the holy root from which Jesus originated. Through the terrible experience of the Shoah, through the terrible trials of these past centuries, the Jews have kept their faith in God and for this we will never be grateful enough to them as the Church and as humanity at large."

I want to close with the story of Queen Esther, as she was confronted with the life and death situation. Queen Esther married an anti-Semitic king in Persia who signed a decree to kill all the Jews in his province at the request of Haman. The king didn’t know his beloved wife was a Jew. But Haman was offered 10,000 talents of silver to destroy the Jews.

Are we witnessing similarities today in the recent deal with Iran? The edict Esther faced was that no one, not even his wife, under decree of death could approach the king unless summoned. When she sent word back to her uncle of her predicament, he responded with these words. "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this."

As I stated earlier, we each have our own area of influence and power. Each and every one of us has the power to do something. The question is will we use it to stop the hatred? Will we do all in our power to stand up and make a difference? Each of you have been brought into this world for such a time as this. The question is will you remain silent? God bless you and thank you for attending our forum.