



Forum pour une Mondialisation Responsable
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Address by Ivano Barberini,
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Mr. President, Ladies and Gentleman, dear friend,

First of all I would like to congratulate speakers and participants for organising and carrying out this Forum. I find particularly significant that it took place here, in Lyon, a city that played a fundamental role in the birth and development of social organizations and of co-operative movement.

It is a very important fact that so many representative of social organizations, institutions and enterprises from different parts of the world are gathering together to look for the most effective ways to manage the change caused by the globalization of markets, by the phenomenon of mass migration and by the new technologies of information.

It is our duty to ensure that the growth of new spaces of personal freedom, the development of intercultural relationships and economic processes are taking place in the respect of human rights and social responsibility towards others and the future generations.

Economic systems – wrote philosopher Rabbi Jonathan Sacks – must be judged by their impact on human dignity. They must find a better guide in relatively simple ethic principles: control,

contribution, co-operation, compassion and conservation, adding to these “Cs”, a new pact of human solidarity.

The qualifying factor of globalization and the actions of its actors is, therefore, a different way to exercise responsibilities. It is the fundamental discriminating factor of different forms of enterprises. Institutions and civil Societies are called to pass a judgement of values on this, and to legitimate at social level, the entrepreneurial activity using the same measure for everybody.

Without a full and responsible long-term assumption of the weaving of problems at world’s level and their solutions it is not possible to achieve a real economic development nor to ensure decent jobs and a stable peace to all citizens in world, without exceptions.

Sadly, global competition and the processes of modernization, drawn by global capitalism, don’t imply a responsibility neither towards local communities nor towards the future of our planet.

Zygmunt Bauman wrote, “Modernity is liquid. That means to be characterised by the new power technique, whose main weapons are non-commitment and the art of escaping. These are the principles pursued by an increasingly slippery, mutable and evasive power.

Social networks, especially those deeply rooted in the territory, are seen as an obstacle to be removed.

A development separated by the ethic of responsibility is not bound to improve the standards of live of the majority of citizens.

Escaping the responsibilities of “drivers of globalisation” goes hand in hand with weakness towards them showed by national Governments. Confronted with the power of multinationals, they try to set up new investments in their country, hence competing with others.

Making cities active partners in order to achieve a responsible globalisation means therefore to unite local and global aspects and to create networks able to connect them together and to create the

favourable conditions for changing the social structure, for economic development and social justice.

In economically developed countries, the intensity and the size of migratory processes bring into contact people from different cultures and worlds on a daily basis.

Due to this connection, cultures today are undergoing a continuous transformation. These phenomena increase complexity. The action of global capitalism aiming at the destruction of everything local and traditional causes deep and painful lacerations on the social structure and prevents from achieving a real economic development for the general wellbeing.

In spite of this drive towards cultural homologation, favoured by the globalization of new technologies of information, it is still hard to assert that world is everywhere the same. Cultural innovations have varying impacts and meanings according to the country in which they take place.

The mobility of people gives them to access to a single network of people and opportunities in local communities, while still maintaining a tie with the cultural roots of their Country of origin.

A responsible globalization involves the management of this complexity based on the respect of the differences, within a system of shared rules and values.

On a different level, not entirely separated, to commit oneself to a responsible globalization means to do one's best to reduce poverty and the situations of extreme hardships, which make social distances so unbearable and end up fomenting armed conflicts and terrorism.

In this context, Africa represents a priority, especially for Europe.

The future of the two continents is closely connected; to be in charge of this situation implies a responsibility towards Europeans, as well as Africans.

Creating habitable conditions in rural areas can control the phenomenon of mass migration from the Southern to the Northern part of the world: otherwise, it is bound to remain out of control.

It is especially in conditions of social discomfort, often extreme, that co-operatives play an increasing role, even if they still inadequately present in the territory.

Their action takes place in the absence of all other forms of organizations aiming to protect farmers and to help them accessing to markets and increase their incomes through co-operation.

The creation of inter-ethnics co-operatives is still difficult, but it shows to be very useful: belonging to a single group gives people the chance to know each other and to share their experience with each other, providing a great benefit for economic development, the building of peace and democracy.

The challenge for Africans and their economically developed partners consists in being able to seize the opportunity and the spaces provided by the ongoing changes, even if they are still rather small.

ICA and ILO launched a Global Campaign against Poverty aiming to contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, adopted by the UN in the year 2000.

The International Co-operative Alliance represents an inter-cultural meeting point, which preserves an open dialogue between people belonging to different worlds, even when their respective countries are in conflicts. It is an example of global network of people and co-operatives based on common values, principles and goals.

Being part of a network means, among other things, to fit in a circuit of learning, experiences and abilities which allows the creation of processes of capitalization of knowledge, the activation of innovation processes, and the formation of closer relationships at national and international level.

Being part of a network allows the single actors to bring about pro-active processes drawing on the environment according to their own priorities, rather than merely adjusting to the changes taking place in the wider context.

It is an important challenge for everybody. Overcoming it requires a closer unity of aims and more effective forms of relationships and common initiative.