

## **“International cooperation for economic development: the contribution of the Social Doctrine of the Church”**

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### **Introduction: missionary cooperation and the Social Doctrine of the Church.**

For the Centesimus Annus Foundation, of which I have the privilege of being President, the missionary vocation is a central and, I would say, identifying element of *the mission* entrusted to us by our holy founder, Pope John Paul II, who created our Foundation and named it after his important encyclical "Centesimus Annus", which celebrated the 100th anniversary of Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. This mission of evangelisation was then reaffirmed by all his successors up to Pope Leo XIV, who addressed us with an important speech during the private audience granted to the members and supporters of the Foundation gathered in Rome for the annual International Conference on 17 May 2025. In this address, the Pope emphasised the very close relationship between the Social Doctrine of the Church (SDC), which is the main subject of our studies, research and debates, and missionary cooperation, particularly cooperation aimed at promoting the economic and social development of the most vulnerable countries and disadvantaged communities. "I urge you to give a voice to the poor," the Pontiff exhorted us (cf. Leo XIV 2025). Emergency and humanitarian aid must always be accompanied, as far as possible, by structural economic and social interventions aimed at addressing the root causes and fundamental obstacles that lead to crises and thus condemn individuals, communities and entire economic and social systems to poverty, inequality and social exclusion, creating suffering, divisions and offences to human dignity. This is the task of the SDC.

The Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation (FCAPP) has been placed under the direct authority of the Holy Father (Pro Pontifice), the Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, who is entrusted with the care and responsibility of exercising charity, one of the essential tasks of the Church, as Benedict XVI (2005) explains in his first encyclical 'Deus Caritas est'. "Charity is not for the Church a kind of social assistance activity that could also be left to others, but belongs to its nature, it is an indispensable expression of its very essence." It is a "service that the Church performs to constantly meet the sufferings and needs, including material ones, of human beings." "Thus, in the face of ever-changing situations and problems, a Catholic social doctrine has developed" which "in the difficult situation in which we find ourselves today ... has become a fundamental guide, offering valid guidelines that go far beyond its boundaries; these guidelines - in the face of progressing development - must be addressed in dialogue with all those who are seriously concerned about humanity and its world" (all quotations from Benedict XVI, 2005, *Deus Caritas Est*).

## **The mission of FCAPP at the beginning of Leo XIV's pontificate**

This essential link becomes even more meaningful and evident at the beginning of a new pontificate that has taken the ambitious name of Leo XIV, and which therefore stands in direct succession to the pontificate of Leo XIII and his famous encyclical "*Rerum Novarum*" (1891). In his address to our Foundation, Pope Leo calls the DSC "an instrument of peace and dialogue for building bridges of universal fraternity", emphasising that in "the dramatic historical situation we are experiencing, in which wars, stigmatised poverty, disruptive technological innovations, job insecurity and rights converge", the SDC is "called to provide interpretative keys that bring science and conscience into dialogue, thus making a fundamental contribution to knowledge, hope and peace". Quoting Paul VI and the Second Vatican Council, the Pope reminds us that "it is the permanent duty of the Church to scrutinise the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel, so that, in a manner appropriate to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions of men and women about the meaning of present and future life and their mutual relations" (Pastoral Constitution **Gaudium et spes**, 4). Pope Leo invites us to "participate actively and creatively in this exercise of discernment by contributing to the development of the SDC together with the people of God, in this historical period of great social upheaval, listening and dialoguing with everyone. Today, there is a widespread need for justice, adds Pope Leo, a demand for fatherhood and motherhood, a deep desire for spirituality, especially on the part of young people and the marginalised, who do not always find effective channels for expressing themselves. There is a growing demand for DSC to which we must respond" (all quotations from Pope Leo XIV's 2025 address to the members of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation -FCAPP-).

That is why, when we talk about 'international cooperation for economic development', we refer to the heart of FCAPP's mission and the role of SDC in the critical times we find ourselves in. As Father Huang rightly said, there is a widespread perception of insecurity today, a sense of disorientation that fuels stress and fear, creating a need to find scapegoats and ephemeral solutions on which the lack of leadership, or rather the unscrupulousness of populists, builds feelings of hatred and resentment and feeds violent 'emotional' polarisation that fragments and wounds communities and undermines social cohesion. The British call these moments in social evolution '*tipping points*', turning points at which history seems to precipitate rapidly and dramatically towards imbalance and conflict. Everything changes and accelerates disintegration and rupture, making it increasingly difficult to see what lies beyond the curve, and when and how the established trends of the past are reversed and interrupted.

### **Missionary cooperation and economic and financial cooperation: the role of markets and free economic initiative.**

In this context, therefore, in response to the challenge of reading and understanding what is happening before our eyes and what it implies, it becomes essential to try to discern the new meaning, value and implications of the concepts of international cooperation, and in particular missionary cooperation. Where are we in the theory and practice of international cooperation? What problems does economic and social development pose? Which of the old balances still remain in place and which are irretrievably doomed? What new trends are emerging in economic development and how are countries preparing to address them? I will start from this picture, trying to highlight the relationship between these trends and the different phases of the DSC. Turning points are not only a source of unrest and instability. There is also a new centrality that the SDC

assumes at the beginning of Leo XIV's pontificate. It is the advent of a new hope, the kerygma of a new phase in history, capable of giving more credible and authoritative answers to the new and growing question of the meaning of life that the whole world, Christians, is asking today. The hope is that the new and unprecedented demand for the SDC will be matched by the grace of new horizons for reflection and dialogue, new answers and inspirations, new opportunities for faith, hope and charity.

Ever since *Rerum Novarum*, economic growth, freedom of private initiative and the market economy have been cornerstones of the DSC's search for a position of balance and moderation regarding both unbridled *laissez-faire* capitalism and socialist style planned economies. However, this balance has not always been clear or easy to achieve, often disrupted by the Catholic world's tendency towards totalitarian corporatism or conservative and anti-liberal reaction. It was mainly after the Second World War, in response to the errors and horrors of Nazi-Fascism, that these orientations became clearer and took root with Pope Pius XII's statements on economic freedom and pluralist democracy. "Freedom of private initiative in the economic sphere is a right of the person and must be guaranteed..." (Pius XII, 17 October 1941). "A healthy economic system must leave room for private initiative and the free play of economic forces, provided that it is regulated by justice and subordinated to the common good" (Pius XII, Christmas radio message, 1944). It is necessary that the new democracy be founded on human dignity, personal freedom and respect for the fundamental rights, including economic rights, of the individual" (ibid.). "The modern economy cannot function without the creative, responsible and free contribution of the Christian entrepreneur..." (Pius XII, address to UCID, 1956).

### **The distinction between growth and economic development: the contribution of *Populorum Progressio* and *Centesimus Annus***

Missionary cooperation cannot therefore ignore economic cooperation aimed at enhancing economic freedoms, stimulating trade and investment, making markets work, and thus creating development, and with-it income and employment. Here, however, we need to introduce a fundamental distinction for economists that has influenced the analytical tools and interpretative theories at our disposal: that between economic growth and development. The two concepts are, of course, closely linked but also profoundly different. This difference is not obvious, and I must say that in the history of reflection, especially when we look at history through the eyes of the Church, it is a relatively recent distinction. It has been established in the social sciences fundamentally since the Second World War in reaction to mainstream economic theory, which in the previous century had been monotonous and had followed a reductive approach conditioned by utilitarianism and positivism. The theory of general economic equilibrium, which emerged in the nineteenth century following the so-called marginalist revolution, that of the so-called neoclassical theory, became established in the same years in which the SDC was born with *Rerum Novarum*. It is interesting to note that the latter also arose in response to neoclassical theory and its limitations, to a conception of economic activity detached from ethics (*wertfrei*, as the fathers of marginalism said). In this regard, we recall the contributions of Carl Menger (Vienna), William Stanley Jevons (United Kingdom) and Leon Walras (France), which appeared simultaneously in the 1870s.

Economic growth, and the models and theories that interpret it, fundamentally focus on short-term trends and cyclical stabilisation policies that serve to manage aggregate demand in the short term. Fiscal policies, monetary policies and public finance are analysed through the lens of economists

who are concerned only with quantitative aspects, the current economic situation, inflation, demand and the trade-off between inflation and employment. When we talk about economic development, however, we are talking about something else. Development is also something 'qualitative', concerning the medium and long term, and is fundamentally multidimensional because development involves not only the economic cycle, i.e. demand, but also supply, production, investment and accumulation; in short, the entire world of the economy and society, its humanity, its values, its multidimensionality.

Development seeks to look at all dimensions of economic and social activity. In his *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Saint Paul VI spoke of 'integral human development', which therefore encompasses everything, the different aspects of the economy and society, starting with the dignity of people, social inclusion and the relationships that are established between people through work and working relationships. This is the approach taken by the SDC. And this approach finds its clearest and most advanced formulation in the Encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (John Paul II, 1991), the most 'liberal' of the SDC Encyclicals. 'The market economy is the most effective means of utilising resources and meeting needs, provided that it is oriented towards the common good (n. 34).' 'Freedom in the economic sector is an indispensable element for the ordering of society... It belongs to the set of freedoms enjoyed by human beings and is therefore necessary for their integral development (n. 25).' "The state must not replace the initiative and responsibility of individuals and intermediate bodies, but must rather ensure that it remains free, operating within an appropriate legal framework (no. 48)". "If by capitalism we mean an economic system that recognises the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property and the resulting responsibilities for the means of production, and free human creativity in the economic sector, then the answer is certainly positive (n.42)".

It is remarkable, as we said, that in the same period in which neoclassical theory was born (in the second half of the nineteenth century), DSC also emerged and the industrial revolution took hold, a revolutionary movement that profoundly changed the way goods were produced. We believe that the fundamental change preceding the industrial revolution can be traced back to around 10,000 years earlier in human history, namely the 'agricultural revolution'. We believe that until a century before the Industrial Revolution, physiocracy still held that agriculture was the only economic activity capable of producing added value, because ultimately it was thought that the only activity capable of 'creating' in nature was agriculture (see Pasinetti's book, 2012). We believe, however, that at the heart of the Christian concept of 'creation' is humanity, created in the image and likeness of God, and therefore the ability, through humanity, work and ingenuity, to generate 'value'.

### **The gap between growth and development has been gradually narrowing since the post-war period, even in economic theory**

When economic theory began to distinguish between growth and development after the war, it also raised the question of the meaning of work and productive activity, its value and significance. It did so by adding new dimensions to the traditional 'neoclassical' models on which economic policy had previously been based: starting from microeconomic models, in which individuals and individual firms came into play, it moved on to macroeconomic models (Keynes) concerning social groups and national communities (the so-called Keynesian models), which determine the balances and imbalances of full employment or structural unemployment and require broader policy interventions, not just cyclical brakes or accelerators, or liquidity and credit management.

Since the post-war period, the gap between economic growth theory and development theory has gradually narrowed, because economic analysis has tended to progressively broaden the concept of growth, embracing ever new dimensions and thus also broadening the concepts of equilibrium, stability and economic development.

The evolution of thought sees economic models interacting with demographic variables, which naturally operate in a medium- to long-term perspective. Neoclassical and neo-Keynesian growth models (Solow, Harrod and Domar, Kaldor) appear. Demographics were first considered and entered models as an exogenous variable, then became endogenous, as it was recognised that economic variables also influence demographic variables. Demographics are fundamental if we want to understand what is happening, for example, in the labour market, in birth rates and population ageing, what is happening with migratory pressures, why people move from one part of the world to another in response to different demographic pressures and their interaction with economic development (think of the contributions of Gary Becker and Robert Barro). Technical progress and technological change are beginning to be considered. 'Endogenous' technical progress changes everything in growth models, affecting short- and long-term equilibria (see Paul Romer and Robert Lucas). Think of what is happening today with the introduction and spread of artificial intelligence.

### **From physical capital to human capital and social capital**

In addressing development issues, economic theory realises that a broader view is needed, starting with the concept of wealth and capital. The latter can no longer be defined as money, coins or gold stored in the coffers of sovereigns. Capital, the most precious resource available to the economy for accumulation and development, is man, because it is through work that value is created, human labour. Hence the need to create wealth by investing in people through education, vocational training and training, which is not limited to initial investment in schools and universities but must extend to *lifelong learning*. Economists have also discovered that there is a further dimension to capital, that of 'social capital', an even more recent concept, which represents trust and social cohesion, a fundamental prerequisite for a developed system of production and exchange, especially of services, based on the professionalism and trust of operators and customers (cf. Robert Putnam). Consider the role that trust plays in the financial sector, where 'credit' and therefore trust are exchanged. We were saying how, in our contemporary world in crisis, trust is being eroded. This represents a serious obstacle to economic and social progress.

Without trust, there is no possibility of creating value and well-being. But beware, trust is not like oil, a raw material found in nature. Trust can and must be created, established and re-established, nurtured and preserved. Unfortunately, economics textbooks do not say much about how to create, strengthen or restore trust. Since Adam Smith, there has been talk of how the *invisible hand* operates in markets and makes them work, and there is also talk of how the *invisible handshake* operates, the one behind every contract, every transaction and every economic or working relationship. If there is no handshake, if there is no trust in others in commercial and investment relationships, there can be no economic efficiency, no market equilibrium. Think of even the most comprehensive and complex of contracts, such as one for a merger or acquisition of a company, a contract that may be more than 100 pages long, but in which something may always have been overlooked, because all contracts are incomplete. That is why trust plays an essential role in every contract, whether simple or complex, complete. Social capital plays an essential role in the

economy, in production and exchange, in the trade of goods and services, and in direct and financial investments.

Social capital must also include the quality of governance, the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions, and good public administration. Democracy also counts in creating wealth and in the competitiveness of an economic system. Think of the importance of corruption, the efficiency of the justice system, the quality of the bureaucracy, and the damage caused by bad governance. Consider the problems arising from a lack of leadership, the quality of the ruling classes, and the ethics of politics. Economic theory has gradually incorporated all these aspects as decisive factors in growth and development models. Consider the modern concept of 'total factor productivity', which goes hand in hand with labour and capital productivity and explains much of the rise and fall of national economies.

### **Sustainable development and the protection of nature.**

The most recent stage in the evolution of economic development theory is one that extends the concept of capital to ESG factors, i.e. environmental, social and governance factors. The sustainability of development then becomes the fundamental criterion in assessing the economic prospects of a profession, a business or an entire economy. In the face of the challenges posed by climate change, sustainability takes on decisive importance. Similarly, the need to protect nature becomes paramount. We talk about 'natural capital', the first and last capital we have, without which we could do nothing, not even survive as human beings.

Lately, given the geopolitical crisis we find ourselves in, it has become important to consider what we might call 'geopolitical or geo-economic capital', i.e. the ability to create conditions of peace and security that are essential for the development of trade, value chains, transport and international finance. Peace and security are fundamental dimensions of the ability to produce wealth at the national, regional or global level.

To conclude and summarise this brief overview, we note that economic research and the evolution of theories have sought to bridge the gap between economic growth and development by progressively extending and deepening the field of investigation and consideration of the factors relevant to a functioning economy and, with it, economic and social progress. In these continuous extensions and enrichments, the concept of economic growth has increasingly approached that of 'integral human development' in *Populorum Progressio*, which is at the heart of the SDC.

### **Cooperation policies: from market opening to the governance of integration processes**

Parallel to the evolutionary line we have discussed, from growth theories to economic development theories, there has been a corresponding evolution in the economic policies that characterise relations between developed and developing countries, and therefore international cooperation. This evolution has characterised the last eighty years and must be considered in order to understand how we arrived at the current crisis.

Confidence in the functioning of markets had led to the belief in the past that it was sufficient to ensure the opening of markets and the elimination of obstacles and barriers to the movement of products, investments, capital and labour in order to optimise the functioning of the national and international economic system, generating prosperity and equity. In short, international economic policy and cooperation simply had to aim to liberalise trade and production relations, eliminating

tariffs and all forms of protectionism and promoting the widest possible freedom of economic initiative. The market was enough. Thanks to perfect competition, which is the form of economic organisation that ensures maximum welfare (fundamental theorem of welfare economics), the market regulates everything. What should politics do in this context? Simply organise those institutions that allow the market to function and resolve all the problems associated with its imperfections. So let us say that in this context, liberalisation represented the main, if not the only, form of international cooperation intervention. This also corresponded to the nineteenth-century concept of what a market is. Nineteenth-century classical liberalism arose from this reductive view, the concept that unlimited markets are capable of creating the optimum, equilibrium, as they say, stability and growth, and thereby solving all problems of equity and development.

However, as trade and commerce grew, it became clear that this was not enough. Eliminating obstacles was not enough to integrate markets and make them more efficient. It was also necessary to govern the processes, setting standards, establishing mechanisms for compensation and social rebalancing, and promoting dialogue between cultures and policies. This is natural when moving from a logic of growth to one of development: things become much more complicated, and development requires taking into account all the other 'qualitative' factors we mentioned earlier. These are all factors included in the governance of economic cooperation processes.

This widespread need has significantly broadened the scope and objectives of international cooperation. Since the post-war period, complex and sophisticated mechanisms of multilateral governance of economic integration processes have been created, which have promoted globalisation and created an environment conducive to the development of the international economy and trade between economies and societies.

What does the governance of international economic integration processes mean and imply? It means, for example, that it is necessary to establish an international monetary and financial system without which the conditions of liquidity and financing cannot be created to generate investment opportunities and channel financial resources towards development needs and wealth creation. There is also a need to intervene with development cooperation subsidies, because there are inequalities and poverty that will not resolve themselves and are exacerbated by the processes of change and integration currently underway. There is a need not only to produce wealth, but also to distribute it between developed and developing countries. There is a need to make agreements on climate, biodiversity and nature protection, so that these precious assets are safeguarded. As at the national level, so too at the global level there are public goods to be provided and guaranteed to citizens, such as health and pandemic prevention, with the logic of universalism whereby no one is safe until everyone is safe.

The results of this governance, created and developed since the post-war period, have been remarkable and widespread, despite its shortcomings and inefficiencies.

Consider, for example, the international monetary and financial system, represented by the Bretton Woods institutions. Consider the trade dispute resolution mechanisms of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Consider the climate and nature protection agreements, and the regular meetings to monitor and promote the implementation of these agreements (the regular COPs). Consider the resources and management mechanisms put in place by development cooperation in favour of disadvantaged countries. Finally, consider cooperation to prevent and respond to

pandemics and health risks, which have made it clear to us that national public goods also correspond to global public goods that require an equal level of attention and joint action.

### **Geopolitical crisis and moral crisis of the multilateral governance system.**

Today, however, this complex and intricate international governance framework has broken down, paving the way for an unprecedented crisis. Unfortunately, we find ourselves at the end of a long period, 80 years, of peace, relative security and significant growth in prosperity, which has lifted millions of human beings out of poverty. This positive phase can be attributed to the shift from a one-dimensional and narrow vision of an economic model geared towards mere economic growth to a multidimensional, broad and long-term vision centred on the concept of economic development or, better still, borrowing the concept from the SDC, geared towards 'integral human development'.

The problem is, and here I come to the crux of the message I would like to convey, that this framework of international cooperation has now worn thin. We live in a world of geopolitical fragmentation accompanied by hegemonic conflicts, a world that has swept away the climate of multilateral cooperation that was once considered essential and had favoured the transition from the logic of growth to that of development.

Certainly, we have lived through a period in which the limited objective of international cooperation was to liberalise economic activities and markets, because the market was considered a fundamental instrument of freedom and justice, the two coordinates that you have placed at the centre of this conference's reflection. Freedom and social justice, both of which are also part of the SDC's vision, are ensured by markets, private economic initiative, and the responsibility of social classes, entrepreneurs and workers. This is a different and alternative vision to that of the proletarian revolution, and different and alternative to that of pure economic liberalism, which attributed the ability to solve all problems to the market alone. Liberalisation was a fundamental moment in the development and liberal international order of the post-war period. Then we realised that liberalisation, although necessary, was not enough, and we sought to strengthen the governance of globalisation processes through international law and active cooperation policies.

Today, however, we are backtracking not only on improving governance, but also on market liberalisation itself. We are reintroducing the principle that states, in their absolute sovereignty, can and even must impose constraints and obstacles on the functioning of markets, preventing free trade. Instead of directing international cooperation towards the provision of global public goods, today we passively bear the burden and consequences of 'global public harms' caused by the absence of international policies and the lack of collaboration, or even trade wars. We are also backtracking on combating climate change and cooperatively managing technological change. Instead, we are witnessing the militarisation of innovation processes, because we have discovered that the way we wage war today involves the militarisation of information, technology, trade, and entire economic and social systems.

At the same time, inequality, poverty and migratory pressures are increasing. The issue of vulnerable countries' debt is becoming more serious. This is a huge problem, and I believe that many people are experiencing it as stressful, especially in this Jubilee year, which was invented in human history precisely to deal with this type of problem. This is a problem that weighs heavily on the weakest and one that we should take on in this jubilee year in order to make concrete progress

towards solutions and reforms. Because if not today, when? Add to this picture the climate-related natural disasters, the lack of protection from nature in many parts of the globe, the spread of insecurity and structural uncertainty about the future...

### **The change of era and the crisis of values.**

In short, I believe we are facing an epochal change which, naturally, is causing and determining a new and additional dimension to the crisis. I believe that we are currently facing a serious ethical crisis in international cooperation. This crisis is an integral part of the spiritual crisis of our time.

We are discovering in the context of the poly-crisis (as Pope Francis called it) that there are many dimensions to the crisis, from the financial to the technological, from the health to the geopolitical, but that above and below all these dimensions there is a worrying ethical dimension that affects our responsibilities as human beings, our humanity, our freedom. In the world of business, society, economics, finance and politics, leadership, the ruling classes and men of good will often no longer seem capable of seeking and finding answers to the crisis, and of setting the right example to give strength and credibility to humanity in the face of crises. This is because the values that underpinned the world of relative stability and prosperity from which we are now emerging are today often disregarded, denied and set aside.

The values of multilateralism over unilateral action. Those of free international trade and economic cooperation based on shared rules and not on force, whereas today the rule that seems to be imposed on trade and cooperation is precisely that of force. The principle that conflicts are not resolved through violence and arrogance, but through dialogue, consultation and patient reconciliation. I believe that from this point of view, we are truly facing an epochal change that we must come to terms with. However, my message is not meant to be negative. On the contrary, I believe that in this epochal change, missionary cooperation and the SDC are playing a positive role, bringing a contribution of hope. Let us see how and with what objectives.

I believe that we must have a coherent vision of the role of missionary cooperation within the framework of global and local economic and financial policies. These policies cannot be implemented without the fundamental contribution of private solidarity. This private solidarity certainly includes the contributions of non-governmental organisations, but we must also include missionary cooperation. However, there must be fundamental consistency between private solidarity and public policies. If there is no consistency, problems arise, illusions are fuelled and hopes are dashed.

In the past, developing countries often complained: you are not giving us aid, we want free trade first and foremost. *Trade, not aid!* Often, in fact, in a post-colonial logic, developed countries granted development aid with one hand and practised trade protectionism towards the potential exports of weak countries with the other (think, for example, of agricultural protectionism and immigration blocks). So, there must be consistency. And we need to put ourselves on the side of the needs as perceived by weak countries.

This demand is evident today in certain phenomena of protest and social rebellion. In the United States, for example, a book written by an African American, Jason Riley (2015), entitled *Please Stop Helping Us*, is very popular. The subtitle reads: 'How liberals make it harder for black people to succeed'. Some welfare programmes, however well-intentioned, end up harming those they are

intended to benefit. For example, laws imposing minimum wages end up pushing low-productivity workers out of the labour market, driving them into the black market and the underground economy. When the way in which aid is provided creates subordination and fuels dependence on subsidies, then potential beneficiaries may still say: no, thank you. The spirit of missionary cooperation, on the other hand, is precisely that which does not give aid in a way that erodes self-esteem and negatively impacts people's dignity, but instead gives self-confidence, strengthens self-esteem and the dignity of the weakest.

I believe that a new phase is beginning in the SDC, in which we are called to seek answers to the new and challenging questions that the epochal change currently underway is generating. I also feel, as the Holy Father testified, that there is a growing demand for DSC and renewed international cooperation, coming not only from the Catholic world but from all people of good will in search of new ethical and spiritual guidance and credible models of behaviour. In this context, a new and promising phase is opening for us, one that requires accountability, dedication, investment in research, missionary activity and solidarity.

### **A summary overview of missionary cooperation in times of crisis**

As we have seen, international cooperation has evolved in line with the different phases of reflection and action in national and international economic policy. In the first phase, when economic growth and development appeared to be clearly separate, cooperation also moved in a distinct and separate manner, intervening with technical assistance to support economic growth and with development cooperation subsidies to finance development.

In the next phase, as the gap between economic growth – increasingly multidimensional – and development gradually narrowed, cooperation took on the task of promoting integration through the multilateral governance of integration processes.

In the current crisis, international cooperation must take on the task of rebuilding and gradually strengthening the ethical foundations of renewed multilateral governance at national and global level.

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## **Summary**

What matters is the transition from simple economic growth to integral human development, which requires a multidimensional approach: not only production and consumption, but also human capital, trust, good governance, environmental protection, peace and security. The modern economy has expanded the analytical tools for addressing inequalities, technological and demographic changes, and migratory pressures. However, today we are experiencing a systemic crisis, with international cooperation in crisis and geopolitical fragmentation on the rise. The answer cannot be a return to pure and simple liberalism, or competition and hegemonic and commercial conflict, but a renewed alliance between politics, economics and solidarity based on renewed dialogue and more credible cooperation. There needs to be consistency between aid and trade, avoiding practices that generate dependency. The Social Doctrine of the Church and missionary cooperation offer positive models of ethics and inclusion for addressing the global challenges of this new era.