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Speech to U.N. General Assembly

Pope Francis

Pope Francis asked members of the United Nations how they think they can respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and build a more peaceful, more just world when many of their countries spend billions on military weapons and when their treatment of the unborn, of refugees and of women shows so little respect for human life. "We must ask ourselves if the principal threats to peace and security — poverty, epidemics, terrorism and so many others — can effectively be countered when the arms race, including nuclear weapons, continues to squander precious resources that could better be used to benefit the integral development of peoples and protect the natural environment," the pope said in his video address, which was broadcast

"The present crisis has further demonstrated the limits of our self-sufficiency as well as our common vulnerability."

Sept. 25 during a virtual meeting of the U.N. General Assembly. The U.N. is celebrating its 75th anniversary. On the fifth anniversary of his visit to the U.N. headquarters in New York, Pope Francis returned to themes he has repeated since the COVID-19 pandemic began: Humanity faces a choice between trying to go back to an often unjust "normal" or taking the opportunity to rethink economic and political policies, putting the good of all people and the environment ahead of concern for maintaining the lifestyles of wealthy individuals and nations. The pope spoke in Spanish; a Vatican translation of his speech follows, copyright © 2020 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

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r. President, peace be with all of you!

I offer cordial greetings to you, Mr.

President, and to all the delegations taking part in this significant 75th session of the U.N. General Assembly. In particular, I greet the secretary-general, Mr. António Guterres, the participating heads of state and government, and all those who are following the general debate.

The 75th anniversary of the United Nations offers me a fitting occasion to express once again the Holy See's desire that this organization increasingly serve as a sign of unity between states and an instrument of service to the entire human family.¹

In these days, our world continues to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic,

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