Final statement from the Conference held in Rome (October 10, 2017) on

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY AS A HUMAN RIGHT

1. It is the responsibility of Governments and civil society to choose the appropriate instruments to achieve this objective. This is the case for primary health care, public education, the rule of law, police and defense. According to Aristotle, logos is what characterizes a human being and his or her dignity. Today, without connectivity we do not have a complete logos. This is why we must consider connectivity as part of human dignity and human rights.

The Internet is now moving from commercial service to public utility, but over three billion people still have no connection. Connecting those three billion represents challenging legal issues that include privacy and licensing among others, and represent possible roadblocks to universal access which must be tackled.

2. In order to concretely realize a connected world where digital abundance is shared by all, UN agencies through the appropriate lSDGs (and particularly the UN High Commission on Human Rights and UN Women) and other multi-lateral institutions should adopt connectivity as a priority, and should be strongly supported to do so by member states. In addition, every possible political means should be pursued in order to guarantee access in all nations, with the understanding that implementation will not be easy. Given the possible but challenging implementation work, we should consider measures such as a new institutional design hosted in a UN agency, **or a new agency, The World Connectivity Organization, (WCO) whose main goal should be deploy and operate global connectivity.**

3. It is necessary to reaffirm the role of the Internet as the primary means to enable inclusion, efficiency and promote innovation in different economic sectors as such as healthcare, agriculture, the environment, jobs, gender equity, and mutual understanding. Nevertheless, as Pope Francis recently declared,[1] we have to keep our eyes open and not hide

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[1] Cfr.Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Participants in the Congress on "Child Dignity in the Digital World", *6 October 2017* http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/october/documents/papa-francesco_20171006_congresso-childdignity-digitalworld.html

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an unpleasant truth that we would rather not see'. In fact, the net also has a secret dimension (the "dark net"), where evil finds ever new, effective and pervasive ways to act and to expand.'

4. Education, is the clearest example that the internet is a human right. Even in the 21st century, hundreds of millions of children have no access to school or leave school unable to read. With internet connectivity, they could improve learning capacity. This is of vital importance for the poorest children of the planet.

5. The internet was built by science and has huge benefits for and deep influence on globally connected science communities. Now it is urgent that strong and responsible science engages in the dual agenda to help improve internet connectivity and content. The science community should contribute to facilitate connectivity for all, and at the same time support efforts to end the problems of internet content that is violating human dignity.

6. The cost of connecting every human being around the world is well below 0.1% of what we currently spend on military expenditures worldwide. This is a small price to pay for improving entire societies, eliminating ignorance, alleviating poverty, sharing basic knowledge and working toward a just and a lasting peace.

7. These are the simple reasons why we think that Internet Connectivity must be considered a human right.
Initiating a new agency, The World Connectivity Organization, (WCO), whose main goal should be to deploy and operate global connectivity, would represent the most direct solution to move forward.