



*Coordinating Ministry
For Maritime Affairs
Republic Indonesia*



*Embassy of Indonesia
to The Holy See*



*Embassy of Malaysia
to The Holy See*



*Dicastery for
Promoting
Integral Human
Development*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE

“Eradicating Poverty Through Agriculture and Plantation Industry to empower Peace and Humanity”

Pontifical Urban University, Rome, Italy, 15 May 2018

1. The Pontifical Urban University in Rome hosted on 15 May 2018 a landmark conference aiming to assess and promote concrete activities which are instrumental to contribute to poverty eradication and peace by leveraging agriculture and the plantation industry.
2. The conference gathered a wide range of stakeholders from different countries and disciplines, including Members of the Diplomatic corps, Prelates of the Holy See, policy makers, think tanks, academia, and non-governmental organizations. It was opened by His Eminence Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson (Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development), H.E. Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan (Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia), and H.E. Tan Sri Bernard Giluk Dompok (Ambassador of Malaysia to Holy See). In their opening address the speakers underlined the importance of fostering dialogue among all stakeholders concerned; overcoming the divisive debates opposing economic development and the environment; pursuing all efforts to balance human activities and environment protection.
3. This conference has been an important forum for thoughtful and forward-looking exchange of views in an open and transparent dialogue among all stakeholders on the contribution of palm oil to eradicating poverty and to achieving the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
4. The panel sessions and the debate underlined: (1) the fundamental importance to the global community of achieving by 2030 the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aiming to balance economic and social growth with the protection of the environment; (2) social and economic progress is fundamental to achieving the eradication of poverty and promoting peace and well-being and a sense of spiritual wellness which underpins our faith; and (3) environmental protection is essential to ensuring quality of life for our future generations and that economic and social progress, while noble goals, should be balanced out with the sustainability of our environment in general.

5. The Conference further discussed and elaborated on the need to work together to address these goals and recognize that no plantation industry or commodity whether in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe or beyond should be singled out and discriminated against, but that the focus should be on unity of purpose to achieve the goals of SDGs, notably within the vegetable oil sector which represents for several countries an important factor of economic and social development.
6. The conference also recognized that the oil palm cultivation has contributed significantly towards raising the income level of rural small farmers, addressing poverty, employment creation, and new business opportunities. Besides that, it was also underlined that palm oil is also an important component of the global food supply chain from developing economies in particular among the vegetable oils traded globally, and that the future development of palm oil cultivation and palm oil industry shall be based on sustainable practices that takes into account environmental as well as social considerations in order to create a balance between economic growth, better employment and income for the small holders.
7. In summary, the Conference addressed and conveyed key messages to policy makers, the industry, and civil society, in particular:
 - a. Promote greater awareness of the importance of a sustainable management of our natural resources so that economic and social progress is in harmony with the protection of the environment, and is better appreciated, understood, accepted and adopted at grass root level.
 - b. Tackle the SDGs on a non-discriminatory basis in the vegetable oil sector to cover, for example, soil contamination, water and ocean pollution from fertilizers used in the rape, soy and sunflower sector, as well as to address deforestation and peat protection issues related to palm oil.
 - c. Emphasize the need for more concerted efforts and coordinated actions between governments, private sector and local communities.
 - d. Intensify educational campaigns at the level of rural communities to emphasize the importance of the SDGs.
 - e. Champion assistance to the agriculture community to help increase yields to meet future vegetable oil demands in a sustainable manner.
 - f. Restore economic development opportunities that agriculture and forestry can bring, notably in an effort to stop illegal migration and human trafficking.
 - g. Avoid discriminatory trade practices, protect the rule of Law in the vegetable oil sector and ensure that regulatory requirements are fully respected and implemented to include the protection of human rights.