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# **WELCOMING REMARKS – 2021.03.25**

## **OPEN LECTURE – UL-N (Porto)**

**António José Moreira**

*Vice Chanceler das Universidades Lusíada*

*Professor Catedrático*

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- **Illustrious Dr. Marco Teixeira**  
**Senior Programme Officer, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and General Coordinator of Global Program for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration**
- **Worthy Professor of The Open University, Mr. Hugh McFaul, Senior Lecturer**
- **Dear Marisa Araújo, Assistant Professor of Lusíada University North**
- **Dear students**

1. It is an immense pleasure and an honour to have you all with us today. Welcome to this Lecture.

To speak about Sustainable Development, in our days, in these times, is, naturally, important for all of us.

So, we await, with great expectation, the lesson about "*What role should university play in supporting the global effort to realise the UN's Sustainable Development Goals?*" brought to us by Mr. McFaul, to whom I address a special compliment and a sincere acknowledgement, extended to the Open University and the Open Justice Centre.

2. Although before we start the lecture, I would like to address a special salute to Dr. Marco Teixeira, of UNODC, and we are willingly for his keynote address. It is always an honour to have you and all the E4J team in, also yours, University.

To be a partner of UNODC is an honour, of a significant importance to Lusíada and we do hope to always be able to meet all the expectations.

3. As Vice-Chancellor of Lusíada's Universities and Vice-President of Minerva Foundation I thank you very much for your availability and your knowledge sharing.

In the Lusíada Universities Charter of Principles we pay particular attention to a humanistic teaching, with the promotion of a participative democracy.

4. To eradicate poverty, famine, promote quality education, decent work and economic growth, alongside with Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, are some of the seventeenth sustainable development goals of the 2030 (twenty, thirty) Agenda from 2015 (two thousand and fifteen) which, we believe, will remain as a landmark in the History of Humanity due to its intrinsic value and, above all, to promote peace, justice as strong institutions, the basis to guarantee humans rights to all humans.

The 2030 (twenty, thirty) Agenda and the seventeenth Goals are a common vision to Humanity, a most needed check list of what it must be done in the name of the people of our Common Home, such as Pope Francis says in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si* (2015) (two thousand and fifteen).

5. UNODC's mission aligns itself in this common ground, to contribute to global peace and security, human rights and development, making the world safer from drugs, crime, corruption...

And E4J – is a valuable resource and a powerful tool to achieve it.

6. It must be emphasized that the repeated and successive prohibition of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour raises the question of the reason why there is do many normative concerns, is it a *legal pollution*? Or does reality continues to antagonise the above-mentioned prohibitions?! *It is pretended* that, in normative terms, very little or nothing at all exists?! Eternal specialists in forgetfulness and non-compliance with the rules that do not safeguard our interests, in the same step that we claim the fulfilment of those that protect our rights... What a strange Humanity this is...

7. In the Christian Social Thought, John Paul II (the second) says that, regarding the right to work that – “[...] a society where this right is systematically denied [...] cannot achieve either its ethical legitimation

or social peace.”

John Paul II (the second), in the *Assisi Decalogue for Peace*, from 2002 (two thousand and two), mentions “[...] the right of all human beings to lead a dignified existence [...]”

Pope Francis, in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si, on Care for Our Common Home, -The need to defend work*, begins by saying that it is necessary to include the value of work in the approach of integral ecology. Attenborough (Sir David Attenborough, honorary graduate and OU supporter – September 2020 (two thousand and twenty), regarding the sustainability of the Common Home says that the natural world is gradually disappearing and that the evidence of it is everywhere. Which will lead to our own destruction, although there is still time to take a stand.

BILL GATES, *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster*, postulates that we have the needed tools to chance the course, and we are capable to imagine other ways also; he concludes although, that is not time to loose anymore to avoid a climate disaster.

In the Abu Dhabi Declaration from February 2019 (two thousand and nineteen), signed by Pope Francis and the Grand-Imam Al-Azhar, it is referred to the unreasonable profit, calling for an end of wars and conflicts. And they conclude that the lack of a fair distribution of natural resources, which only a minority of the wealthy benefits in detrimental of the majority of the people on earth, *starves to death millions of children, already reduced to human skeletons due to poverty and hunger*, and where an unacceptable, terrible and compromising silence reigns.

On the latest March 6th (sixth), from the gathering of Pope Francis and the senior Iraqi Shia cleric, the Grand Ayatollah ALI AL-SISTANI, an exhortation to the main world leaders took place, to respect the rights of people to freedom and to *dignity*, and the full respect for their human rights.

In the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti...* Pope Francis, in this most notable encyclical letter also says that “[...] when a part of a society wants to own everything the world has to offer, as the poorest did not exist, the moment will come and the consequences will be palpable. To ignore the existence and the rights of others will provoke, sooner or later, some form of violence, sometimes unexpected.” It makes us remember what

the President of the United States, JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY, once said, in a remarkable speech, right before he was murdered in Dallas: “*May the rich take care of the poor, so that the poor don’t have to take care of the rich.*”

And the Pope adds: “Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, uniting and not dividing, extinguishing hatred instead of preserving it, opening paths to dialogue instead of building new walls.”

8. The United Kingdom, through the *Modern Slavery Act*, approved by the Parliament on April 2 (two) 2015 (two thousand and fifteen), valid in England and Wales, has a first set of norms in Europe, and one of the first in the world, that aims to combat slavery and human traffic in the light of the modern ages. Following the path, Australia, based in the United Kingdom Act, approved in November 2018 (two thousand and eighteen) the *Modern Slavery Act*, that entered into force on January 1st (first), 2019 (two thousand nineteen).

Over the theme *Slavery, Servitude and Forced Labour*, the *Modern Slavery Act 2015* (two thousand and fifteen), considering the concepts of article 4 (four) of the European Convention on Human Rights, establishes severe penalties under Section V (five) that can, *in extremis*, be life imprisonment.

9. Eliminate *slavery* and *forced labour* continues to be a goal to fulfil, conquer and defend in many places of our *global village*, being a critical challenge in this century. With well disguised linguistic screens, this horrific forms of labour, covered in the above-mentioned realities and that, for the most unwary, seemed to belong only to the sad history legacy of humanity, continue to have a fertile terrain to grow, much at the expenses, also, of the economic discourse and an aggressive corporate culture where the *law to gain at any cost* prevails to achieve maximum profit, a *law where nothing is really worthy*. Deify, worship the profit; commodifies and reifies the person.

And so, as is, it seems proven that the laws, being a good instrument to alter, *in casu*, perverse forms of work, *human imagination and artis* end up torpedoing the text and the spirit of the prohibitive norms, stopping, multiple times, by the simple appearance of a *fumus boni iuris*,

being necessary a permanent and sharp attention in the construction of a *Dignified Law*, and a prudent and cautious militancy of the most diverse judicatures.

The *res novae, in case, v.g.*, of new forms of labour, the *redefinition* of the labour market, the militant *intrusion* of the artificial intelligence, of a new concept of economic globalization, from all of this develops the need for an unlimited, comprehensive legal thinking, committed to new causes, generating laws that, far from *legal pollution*, contribute to a world of peace, because it is more inclusive, more fraternal and more supportive, because it is anthropologically more friendly to the worker, to the human being.

#### 10. And the time?

TOLENTINO MENDONÇA, after stating that the management of time is a question of learning, mostly, the time to rest, and he adds that is necessary to say "*enough for today*", without any feeling of guilt. Later on, he adds: "our greatest cruelty is time [...] our watches never sleep [...]".

How good it would be that workers, eternal victims of time, could say *enough for today*.

11. And MAALOUF, *Le Naufrage des Civilisations*, in a theme related refers GEORGE ORWELL and about his dystopian novel, published in 1949 (nineteen forty nine), *1984* (nineteen eighty four), where *Big Brother* takes on a leading and frightening role. In fact, work situations of the fourth type are easier when there is a constant invasion of privacy and, to such an extent, that is already believed to be normal. In fact, what is increasingly true is that every word we write on a computer, what we say on a phone call, every picture we take and keep in digital format, can be seen or heard by who knows, and who have the means and know-how to analyze, store and use them as they see fit.

Added to all of this is the location, the filming and, thus, it is known exactly who met with whom, at what time, what they said and many other things. This, which is *not a small matter*, as the poet CAMÕES would say, takes away dignity, and can lead the worker back to modern slavery, with unworthy and even indecent work...

12. Always children, always women, always overwork, always slavery.

13. Children's work is the most despicable form of work. Considering SDG 16.2 (sixteen point two). End the abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children. All is well known, in the early years of industrialization, after the fall of men and, later, women, it was children who fed the first Industrial Revolution. You must remember, from Villermé, the considerations he formulates about the state of premature aging of young workers when they came to the inspection to render military service. They were old in their 19, 20 (nineteen, twenty) years old.

14. How many millions of people live in slavery, servitude and forced labour, children exploitation, and excessive work? How many live in the, so called, modern slavery? Is there companies, economic groups, well known internationally, that assume this horrific and horrendous practices?

Is it Portugal a paradise in this subject?

Many know part of the answers. The lukewarmness, however, seems to speak out loud...

**We conclude**, that digital revolutions, taking their courses, more frequent and insidious, assist us the belief that the *forth type labour*, included in article four of the European Convention of Human Rights have, more, privileged conditions to occur, with the aim of the easy and unlimited profit, which is, unfortunately, *who commands the most*.

To MAALOUF, the horizons of the future do not seem very edifying, with the unleashing of a *potentially enslaving* dynamic, difficult to stop. As Orwell said, with a strong dose of cynic, through a character of 1984 (nineteen eighty four) "[...] *The choice, for humanity, is between freedom and happiness, and for the most happiness is better* [...]".

Artificial intelligence and its advances, robotization, nanotechnology, with the "virtuality" of *commodification* of human labour and to degrade it, transferring to sophisticated machines, competences and knowledges of the human laborer, this is, the massive replacement of