

INTERVENTO DEL GOVERNATORE GENERALE  
DELL'ORDINE DEL SANTO SEPOLCRO DI GERUSALEMME  
AMBASCIATORE LEONARDO VISCONTI DI MODRONE  
AL CONVEGNO  
"MAPPING OF CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN PALESTINE:  
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT"  
(Palazzo della Rovere, 6 Marzo 2022)

I am pleased, in my capacity as Governor General of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, to welcome to Palazzo della Rovere on behalf of the Cardinal Grand Master the speakers and participants to this important event: a presentation aimed at giving a complete statistical and analytical picture of the social and economic impact of the Church in Palestine through 296 Christian organisations.

In reading this study, I myself was surprised to note that these organisations together constitute the third largest employer after the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Palestine, benefiting some 1,900,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

This study shows that despite the fact that Christians in Palestine constitute a minority, their social and economic impact is consistent, and it is significant that the beneficiaries of this impact are mostly not Christians.

This should lead us to consider the fact that by drawing inspiration from the principles of our faith, we can foster an harmonious coexistence between Christians and Muslims on the basis of constructive dialogue and mutual respect.

This study is in a sense a first comprehensive directory of Christian Organisations in Palestine, drawn with scientific systems and through direct questionnaires, and I am particularly pleased that the Ambassador of Palestine has chosen to present it in the headquarters of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, whose mandate is precisely to assist the population of the Holy Land and keep the Christian presence alive there. I find this community of intentions very significant.

We are a Central Entity of the Church under the direct authority of the Pope, composed of about thirty thousand knights and dames scattered throughout the world, whose objective, set by Pope Pius IX in the mid of the 19th century, is precisely to support the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the other Christian institutions in the Holy Land in a continuous and non-episodic manner.

In renewing my welcome, therefore, I do not want to take up any more of the speakers' time, and I will immediately give them the floor.