

## Introduction by Stefano Costantini

On 25 September 2015, the governments of 193 UN member countries signed the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, an action program based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets and over 240 indicators, promoting a change in the development model for the sake of humanity, our planet and common prosperity. Approved by the United Nations with the commitment to reach the 17 Objectives of sustainable development by 2030, the agenda marked a historical breakthrough because it expressed a clear judgement on the unsustainability of the current model of development in environmental, economic and social terms and it also redefined the concept of sustainability affirming an integrated vision of the different dimensions of development. Specifically, SDGs 16 of Agenda 2030 «Promoting peaceful and more inclusive societies for sustainable development; providing access to justice for all and creating effective, responsible and inclusive bodies at all levels», starting from the national dimension of each country, aims to build efficient and inclusive institutions for the promotion of decent work for all, working in accordance with international labor standards, inspired by social dialogue for the construction of fair and peaceful societies and with the aim of facilitating participatory decision-making processes. From the 2018 monitoring report on SDGs 16 of the Agenda 2030, data provided by UN member countries showed that many regions of the world continue to suffer inconceivable horrors due to armed conflicts or other forms of violence taking place within societies and at a domestic level. Progress in ensure that laws are observed and access to justice is uneven. However, although at a very slow pace, progress is being made in regulation to promote public access to information and in strengthening institutions defending human rights at a national level. In addition, the 2018 report shows that corruption undermines democracy and the observance of law, leading to human rights violations and allowing organ-

ized crime and terrorism to flourish. These phenomena have a more significant impact on the most vulnerable groups such as women and children. To achieve peaceful and inclusive societies that promote sustainable development, therefore, it seems necessary to give a boost to the principles of legality at the international level. This means promoting societies based on transparency and good governance and ensuring respect for human rights. SDG 16 aims to promote the law observance at a national and international level and to ensure equal access to justice for all by reducing corruption and creating accountable and transparent institutions. The accomplishment is also to put an end to all forms of violence and organized crime, to encourage the participation of developing countries in global decisions and to facilitate laws and policies for sustainable development at an international level. Against this background, the CONIUS symposium among the Italian UNESCO Chairs held in Florence on November 16, 2018, discussed some issues of primary importance at a national and international level on SDG 16 and a few thoughts were proposed on some open issues, focusing on critical issues and good practices on thematic studies and initiatives for the achievement of specific goals to be achieved by 2030. Among the interventions of the symposium dedicated to the in-depth session of SDG 16, with reference to the goal of «Developing efficient, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels», De Perini's analysis reviewed the foreign policy speeches of Italian political leaders in Parliament and in multilateral organizations, the data provided by databases and annual reports on human rights issues. On the basis of the data obtained, a reflection was made that highlighted critical elements regarding the coherence of Italy's international commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and its performance regarding their implementation at a national level. In line with this goal, which refers to SDG 16, Cagiano takes into consideration the current European scenario where global development has generated situations in which more and more borders define migrant people, reflected on the necessary emergency to provide a multiple response to the migration issue with a stance at a European and national level, but also providing a greater autonomy of action of local governments since they are the first dimension exposed to the presence of migrants regarding issues of daily life (housing, school, work, health services, mobility). Cagiano's reflection focused on the need to envisage a new approach to the management of the complex migration phenomenon, based on a multiple level of citizenship that today is only formally recognized and asymmetrically in individual European countries. Mascia's essay also examines and deepens the international role of local authorities as the primary territorial pole of subsidiarity for the protection of human rights and the law observance, legitimizing the action of local governments to act beyond national borders as their action translates an institutional 'responsibility to protect' the fundamental rights of each. In his contribution to the

symposium, the author examined the Italian case of the recognition of the so-called «norm of human rights of peace» in the municipal statutes, arguing that the local authority is part of the multi-level institutional architecture of the world order, becoming an active part in ensuring the effectiveness of international human rights law. The document provided by Colonna has been proposed in line with the goal of the SDG 16 «Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making processes at all levels». In this case, the activity that the UNESCO Chair of the University of Basilicata *Mediterranean Cultural Landscapes and Communities of Knowledge* has carried out on the territory has been described with the specific aims of contributing to the creation of a Permanent Observatory for the management of the UNESCO site: *The Sassi and the Park of the Rupestrian Churches of Matera*. Twenty years after the inscription of the UNESCO site of the Sassi of Matera to the list of the World Heritage and on the occasion of the nomination of Matera as European Capital of Culture for 2019, in fact, with the contribution provided by the Chair have been activated symposiums/workshops with citizens with the intent to create a debate on the main issues related to the management of the UNESCO site. The document describes how a joint action between local authorities has been planned and activated in order to create an institutional synergy to allow a participatory process in the community and cooperation between institutions defining a strategy for the first Management Plan of the UNESCO site of Matera. In addition to the description of the good practice, attention is focused on this proposal because it was born from the need to create a knowledge exchange by putting the person at the service of the community and thus allowing its full expression; in this way, in fact, the recognition for the knowledge of the citizen living in a territory that is a world heritage of humanity can become an instrument for a reborn social solidarity. Vega Gutierrez, with his contribution to the symposium, also stresses that starting from the specific objective of SDG 16 «to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, to provide access to justice for all and to build effective, responsible and inclusive institutions at all levels», Agenda 2030 includes important developments that place people at the center of attention, adopting a rights-based approach and seeking global sustainable development within the planetary borders. Following the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity proclaimed on 2 November 2001, which for the first time recognised cultural diversity as «a common heritage of humanity and should be recognised and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations» (Article 1), it is now of fundamental importance to strengthen and assess the conditions of good governance that guarantee diversity, such as the use of differentiated approaches in legislation, policy and the administration of justice, as well as the effective participation of minorities in decision-making processes. These measures, adopted specifically for SDG 16, are consistent with a uni-

versal spirit (the search for a renewed partnership in which all countries participate equally) and with the inclusive scope referred to in Agenda 2030, as they are part of the bold and ambitious principle of «leaving no one behind», which aims to ensure that all citizens benefit from the advantages of sustainable development. Curcio's intervention in the perspective of SDG 16, is part of the broader framework of the goal «Promoting the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice». Curcio, referring to the philosophical orientation suggested by Jacques Maritain, recalls that today we are experiencing a decline in civilization as in the times of the Two World Wars, in a period sadly characterized by the triumph of individualism and to the detriment of the care and needs of others. Humanity is therefore today more than ever called upon to react, so that no one is deprived of the right to life and no one is deprived of the right to be happy; in this time recalling Maritain's philosophical orientation means reaffirming the culture of peace, cooperating with everybody's own identity, managing to live with others according to the rights and values that belong to every culture: peace, solidarity, love, justice. That is, rediscovering peace as a gift born from the connection with otherness, recognizing others as persons and showing respect, responsibility and concern for their dignity, their being and their needs by focusing in a dialogue which promotes a social community where each individual can be recognized in her/his specific needs.