

DECLARATION ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

We, young people from all regions of the world, affirm that each person has the responsibility to participate in the building of a free and just society rooted in the intrinsic and inviolable dignity of the human person. We acknowledge that human dignity is the foundation of every human right and call upon all persons, to give of themselves in order that society may be justly governed. We recognize that each person must answer the question “who am I”, and that the discovery of this question takes place through work carried out in solidarity for the common good.

Through work the person contributes to the common good. The common good consists of the well-being of the persons in a community, solidarity among those persons and the environment in which each person’s deepest human aspirations and capacities can flourish. The common good arises from the person’s free and deliberate choice to pursue something beyond himself both for his own benefit and for the benefit of the community. Participating in the common good belongs to each person by right of his or her dignity.

The responsibility of every person at all levels of society to work in solidarity for the protection of human dignity is the basis of good governance. Solidarity, a key building block of good governance, is the unified commitment of persons to work in trust toward the common good, fostering a sense of community. Leaders bear a particular responsibility to uphold the dignity of the human person in their governance; in exercising this responsibility, they earn the trust of the community. Good governance entails the just use of power to create conditions for unity and trust and to inspire in the governed the desire to contribute to the common good. Good governance includes the rule of law, transparency and accountability, as well as free expression and participation.

Corruption is an assault on the inherent dignity of the human person and a betrayal of one’s responsibility to others. It is the pursuit of one’s interests at the expense of the good of others. Corruption undermines commitment and solidarity by corroding trust and hope. It robs all, particularly the poor and marginalized, of their rightful share in the common good and thus blocks integral development.

We believe that all persons have the duty to peacefully resist corruption in all its forms. Respect for the dignity of the person requires all persons to live in truth and in the exercise of solidarity, particularly with those directly resisting corruption.

We call on all persons, and in particular young people, to embrace their responsibility to foster free and just societies by actively promoting good governance and just leadership.