Pope Francis calls on world leaders to reform economic and social systems

Pope Francis said rich countries should not hoard a coronavirus vaccine (Photo: Guglielmo Mangiapane/Reuters)

United Nations, September 26 (RHC)-- Pope Francis has urged world leaders to use the coronavirus emergency as an opportunity to reform the injustices of the global economy and the "perverse logic" of the nuclear deterrence doctrine.

In a recorded video speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Friday, the Pontiff stressed the world is facing unprecedented challenges stemming from the deadly coronavirus pandemic, which "has exposed our human fragility and has called into question our economic, health and social systems."

"The pandemic has shown us that we cannot live without one another, or worse still, pitted against one another," he said. "This is why, at this critical juncture, it is our duty to rethink the future of our common home and our common project."

He asserted the crisis provides a chance "to come out better or worse," and there are plenty of reasons to work to come out better.

The 75th session of the UN General Assembly is being held mostly virtually this year because of the pandemic, which has killed nearly 985,000 people amid the more than 32 million confirmed cases. Some 150 coronavirus vaccines are in development, about two dozen are in human studies and a handful is in late-stage trials. Pope Francis told the UN the poor and weakest members of society should get preferential treatment when a vaccine for the coronavirus is ready.He specifically highlighted the devastating effects of coronavirus on children, including the unaccompanied migrants and refugees, pointing out that instances of child abuse and violence have seen an increase. He also appealed for greater involvement and influence of the UN in protecting the poor, migrants and the environment.

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