

Pope Francis Rejects \$16 Million Donation from Argentinean Government



Rome, June 13 (RHC)-- Pope Francis has rejected a donation of \$16 million from the Argentinean government of President Mauricio Macri to an education project he sponsors.

Local media reported that in a letter addressed to Cabinet Chief Marcos Peña made public over the weekend, José María del Corral and Enrique Palmeyro — directors of Pope Francis's Scholas Occurrentes education network — confirmed the decision “to suspend the non-refundable contribution fee amounting to 16,666,000 pesos” granted to the foundation “taking into account that some may try to distort this gesture,” according to the Buenos Aires Herald.

The daily La Nación reported that the directors were following direct orders from the Pope. “The Argentinean government needs to address so many needs you shouldn't be demanding a single penny from it,” Pope Francis said in a letter to Corral and Palmeyro.

The two directors said in their letter to the government that their foundation would “try to obtain that necessary contribution from multilateral credit agencies and with the help of private donors.”

The news comes as the latest development in a tense relationship between the Argentinean Pope and Macri's government. Late last month the president of human rights organization the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, Hebe de Bonafini, said the pontiff was sad about the situation in Argentina due to Macri's policies which reminded the Pope of the political climate in 1955, when President Juan Peron was ousted by a military coup.

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