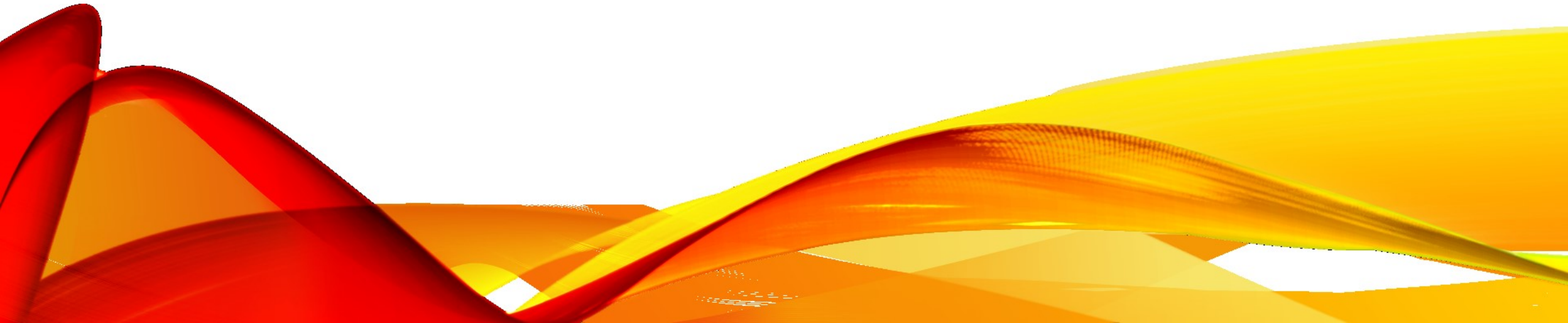




A Meeting of the Missions:

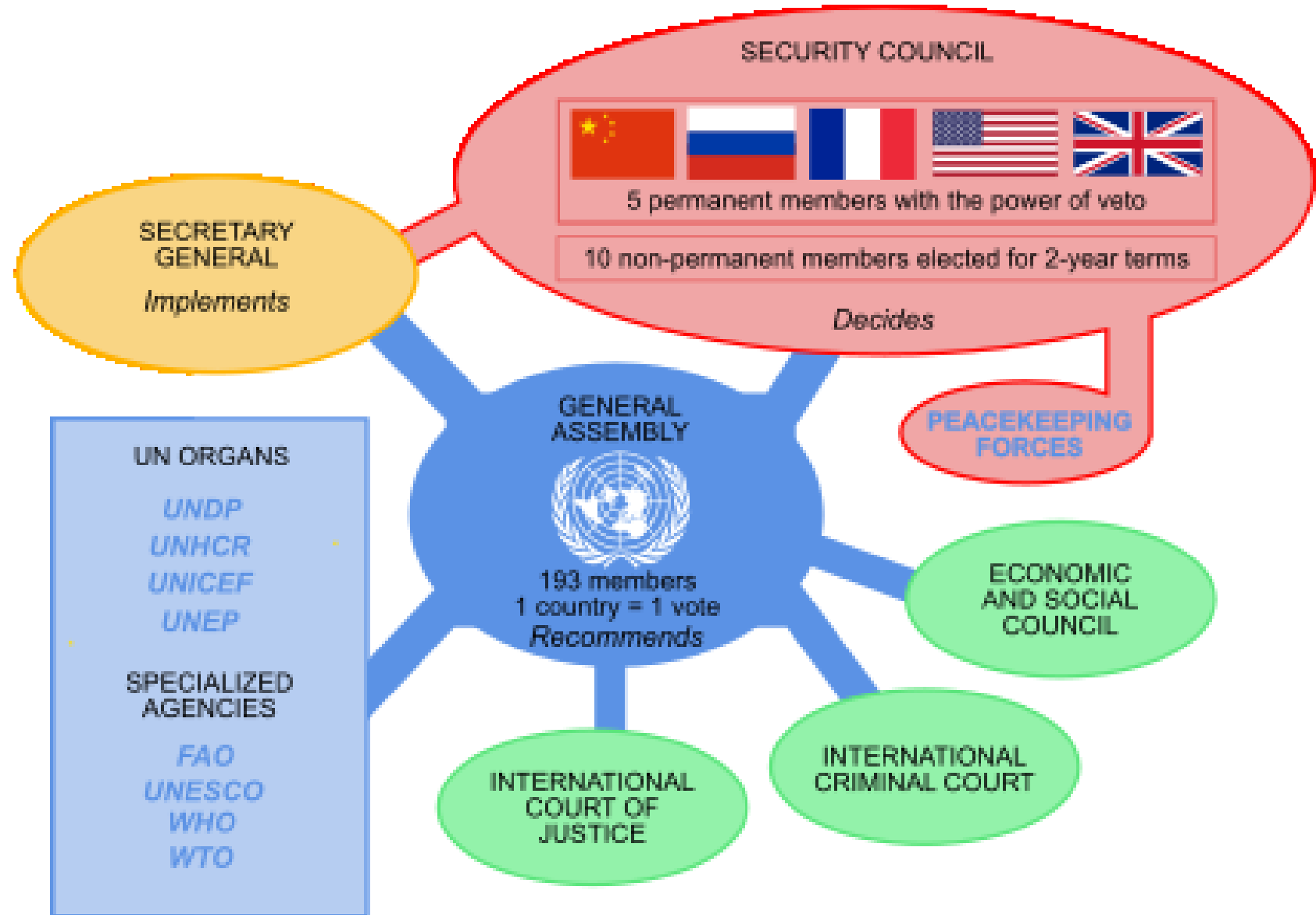
The Ministry of Religious NGOs
at the United Nations

The Role of Congregations of Religious at the UN



NGOs at the UN

- In the UN system, we are considered NGOs (non-governmental organizations)
- Just over 5,000 NGOs have UN accreditation



What does it mean to be accredited?

Accreditation allows NGOs to participate in UN proceedings by:

- Making oral statements
- Submitting written statements
- Sponsoring events inside and near UN Headquarters
- Meeting with diplomats
- Attending UN conferences
- Making formal or informal recommendations on new UN declarations and resolutions as they are being negotiated
- Submitting reports and comments to national review processes (e.g. Voluntary National Reviews on SDGs, Universal Periodic Review at Human Rights Council)

Religious Presence among NGOs at the UN

- Over 30 NGOs collectively represent over 200 congregations of Catholic women and men Religious
- Bring **credability** by providing insights from members' work ministering to the poorest and most vulnerable populations "on the ground"
- Bring **impartiality** as most are present in many nations and have no national identity
- Bring **moral voice** as faith-based groups known for a life of dedication to human dignity of all and care of the natural environment

ROLE OF NGOs in the UN SYSTEM

- Get “*in* the way”
- Get “*out of* the way”
- Model a *new* “way”

GETTING “IN THE WAY”

Occupying space in places of power on behalf of those who can't be present in order to infuse the conversation with the perspectives, experiences, and needs that would otherwise be absent

- Speaking on the floor of the UN or submitting written statements and recommendations (literally termed "interventions")
- Participation in own country's political system (via voting, lobbying, etc.)
- Physical protesting or demonstrating

GETTING “OUT OF THE WAY”

Creating space within places of power for those who face the greatest barriers to the occupation of that space so that they can assert their own voices, perspectives, and experiences

- Organizing events and opportunities for marginalized individuals to speak at the UN and supporting their travel to do so
- Collecting written comments of marginalized groups and submitting them to UN processes
- Ensuring marginalized groups are aware of open forums outside the UN in which they can express their concerns
- Sharing statements of marginalized groups with our networks via social media, newsletters, or other platforms available to us

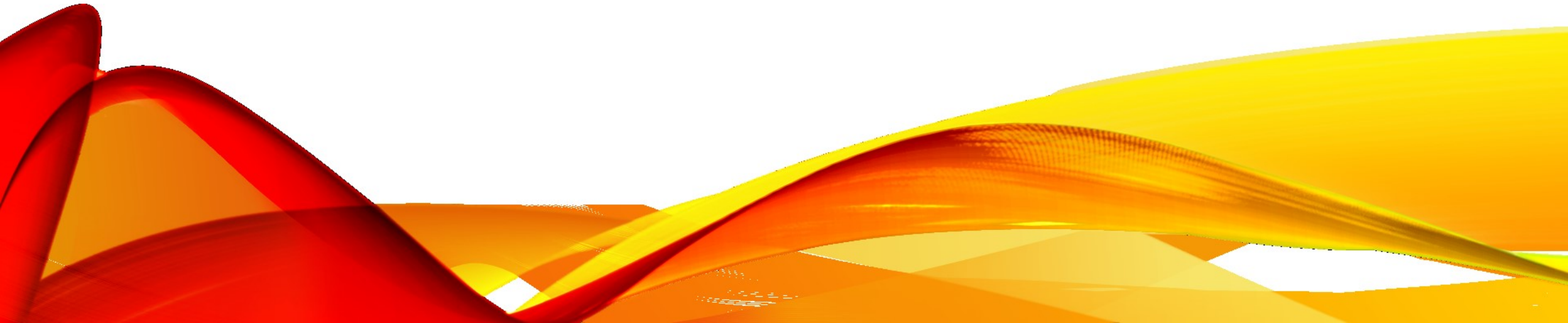
MODELING A “NEW WAY”

Continually evaluating our role in unjust systems and modifying our behavior to lessen the burden our actions place on other's ability to access their basic needs

This includes assessing:

- What we buy, wear, and eat
- What we dispose of as waste and how
- How we travel
- Where we invest our money
- How we work with others
(committees and coalitions that place a common goal ahead of individual credit)

The Role of the UN in the Charisms & Prophetic Call of Religious Life



THE UN CHARTER:

WE, THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DETERMINED

- to **save succeeding generations from the scourge of war**, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to **reaffirm faith** in fundamental human rights, in the **dignity and worth of the human person**, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to **establish** conditions under which **justice** and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and **better standards of life in larger freedom**,

THE UN CHARTER:

AND FOR THESE ENDS

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as **good neighbours**, and
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and
- to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and
- to employ international machinery for the **promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples...**

The POLITICAL is SPIRITUAL

“It is important to realize that there is an element of spirituality needed in what we do...”

Stop the trend of dividing humanity to ‘us’ and ‘them.’ The most important word in the world is **TOGETHER.**”

-H.E. Jan Eliasson
former UN Deputy Secretary General

...and the **SPIRITUAL** is **POLITICAL**

Lk 4/18-19: “The Spirit of the Lord ...has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. [It] has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Mt 25/ 40: “Whenever you did it to the least of my brothers/sisters, you did it to me.”

Pope Francis: “A prayer that does not lead you to practical action for your brother—the poor, the sick, those in need of help, a brother in difficulty—is a sterile and incomplete prayer.” (Angelus, 7/21/13)

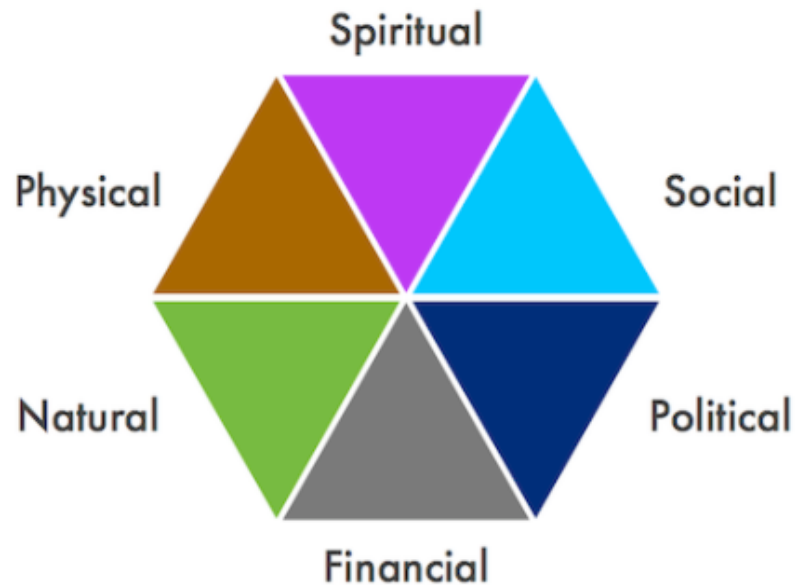
...and ECONOMIC

“A way has to be found to enable everyone to benefit from the fruits of the earth, and not simply to close the gap between the affluent and those who must be satisfied with the crumbs falling from the table, but above all to satisfy the demands of justice, fairness and respect for every human being.” (Pope Francis, Address to the Food and Agricultural Organization, 6/20/13)

“Politics, though often denigrated, remains a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good...be courageous and do not be afraid, in political and economic projects, to allow yourselves to be influenced by a broader meaning of life as this will help you to truly serve the common good and will give you strength in ‘striving to increase the goods of this world and to make them more accessible to all’”. (Pope Francis to business leaders focused on “Feeding Our Planet – Energy for Life”, Feb. 7, 2015)

St. John Chrysostom: “Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs. The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity.” (Quoted in Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2446)

...INTEGRAL to all DIMENSIONS of DEVELOPMENT



“ We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.

Strategies for a solution demand an integral approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and, at the same time, protecting nature.”

(Pope Francis, Laudato Si, 139)