HOLY SEE REPLIES TO U.N. COMMITTEE

Recently, the Holy See replied to a report issued earlier this year by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The Holy See took this U.N. committee to task on three levels: the international body does not understand the reach of the Holy See's authority; it unjustly involved itself in canon law; and it advanced positions on parental rights and sexuality that are unacceptable.

The U.N. committee does not understand the difference between the Holy See, the Vatican City State and the universal Catholic Church. While the Holy See's "religious and moral mission" is universal, it is a mistake of monumental proportions to conclude that it therefore has universal juridical authority. It is important to recognize that "the Holy See does not ratify a treaty on behalf of every Catholic in the world, and therefore, does not have obligations to 'implement' the Convention within the territories of other States Parties on behalf of Catholics, no matter how they are organized."

The Holy See criticized this U.N. body for the way it "plunged into canon law," improperly equating this juridical system with that of other member States. Importantly, it emphasized that canon law is a "complex unity of divine positive law, divine natural law and human law."

On the issue of parental rights, the Holy See took the U.N. committee to task for disregarding the text of the U.N.'s Convention: the text affirms parental rights, yet the committee holds that the U.N. has a right to instruct member states on "sexual and reproductive health" issues. In effect,

it is telling the Catholic Church to change its teaching on abortion. And by lecturing the Church to align itself with contemporary "gender" issues, and matters of sexual orientation, it is also showing its contempt for the Church's autonomy.

In short, those who wrote the U.N.'s report on the Holy See haven't a clue how the Catholic Church operates. Moreover, they unjustly injected themselves into the internal affairs of the Church.