

U.N. POPULATION CHIEF LECTURES VATICAN

Thoraya Obaid, the head of the U.N. Population Fund, admonished the Vatican today to change its teachings on condoms. Speaking of the need for the Catholic Church to endorse condom use, she said, "We are hoping the new pope will take this message further, because it makes no sense sending people to their death." She urged the Church to adopt a "morally correct decision" on how to stop HIV.

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to this issue today:

"Is there anyone on the planet who doesn't know about the alleged wonders of condoms? Yet, it is indisputably true that as condom use has increased, so have sexually transmitted diseases (STD's). This is not to say that condom use causes STD's, but it is to say that condom use has not prevented the explosion in STD's. And this is because the same culture that prizes sexual license—in all its expressions—is morally incapable of sending a message of restraint.

"If Thoraya Obaid is truly concerned about HIV in Africa, she should get the U.N. to endorse the teachings of the Catholic Church on matters sexual. That is because the only real success story on that continent is Uganda, a nation that has tailored its anti-HIV strategy to the wisdom of Catholic sexual ethics. According to Edward C. Green, a professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, 'basic behavioral changes in Uganda of 1987-95 have kept HIV prevalence declining up until now.' The reason why the progress that has been made is now in jeopardy has more to do with dropping the emphasis on abstinence, he says, in exchange for a more condom-centered approach.

“Obaid is not only wrong on the issue, she is wrong on the cause of deaths due to AIDS. It is near impossible for anyone to die of AIDS (save for a blood transfusion) who follows the teachings of the Catholic Church on sexuality. It is not the Catholic Church that is causing Africans to die—or is responsible for a new strain of HIV among homosexuals in New York City—it is behavioral recklessness.”