

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE CENTESIMUS ANNUS PRO  
PONTIFICE FOUNDATION**

*Sala Clementine Hall*

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[Link](#)

I offer a warm welcome to all of you and I thank your President for his kind words. In these days of reflection and dialogue, you have considered the contribution of the business community to the fight against poverty, with particular attention to the current refugee crisis. I am grateful for your readiness to bring your expertise and experience to the discussion of these critical humanitarian issues and the moral obligations that they entail.

The refugee crisis, whose proportions are growing daily, is one especially close to my heart. In my recent visit to Lesbos, I witnessed heartrending scenes of human suffering, especially on the part of families and children. It was my intention, together with my Orthodox brothers, Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Ieronymos, to make the world more aware of these "scenes of tragic and indeed desperate need", and to "respond in a way worthy of our common humanity" (*Visit to Moria Refugee Camp*, 16 April 2016). Apart from the immediate and practical aspect of providing material relief to these brothers and sisters of ours, the international community is challenged to devise long-term political, social and economic responses to issues that transcend national and continental boundaries, and affect the entire human family. [...]