International Committee for October 17

INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

International Committee for October 17: Appointment of Fr. Mario Serrano

November 21, 2014, Pierrelaye, France — We are pleased to announce the appointment of Fr. Mario Serrano to the International Committee for October 17. The Committee was established in 2008 to promote and support the observance of the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty, observed on October 17th each year, which is recognised as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty by the United Nations.

Donald Lee, President of the International Committee, said “I am delighted to welcome Fr. Mario Serrano as a member of the Committee. He has demonstrated his commitment to defend the human rights of people living in poverty, particularly through his key role in advocating for policies to reduce poverty and promote social justice in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The Committee will be strengthened by his strong commitment to the spirit and objectives of October 17.”

Fr. Mario Serrano, who was born in the Dominican Republic, currently serves as the National Director for Jesuit Social Ministries in the Dominican Republic. He is also the Coordinator for Jesuit Refugee and Migrant Services for the Caribbean, as well as the Coordinator for the Haitian Ministry for the Dominican Conference of Bishops. Fr. Mario Serrano plays a key role in defending the rights of Haitian migrants and native-born Dominicans, many of whom are of Haitian descent, who have been rendered Stateless due to a recent court ruling. After the earthquake in 2010 that devastated much of Haiti, Mario was on the ground in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic, coordinating relief efforts of local and international aid groups.

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To know more

The International Committee for October 17 was established in 2008 with the following goals: to promote the 17 of October as International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, as recognised by the United Nations, uniting those who are striving together to end poverty; to promote the observance of the 17 of October in its original spirit; and, to promote opportunities where people from a variety of backgrounds, including those whose lives are most difficult, can work together in the fight against extreme poverty as a violation of Human Rights.

(http://overcomingpoverty.org/article/international-committee-for-october-17)

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty was first celebrated as the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty at a major public rally held on the 17 of October 1987 in Paris, where one hundred thousand people from all backgrounds responded to a call from Father Joseph Wresinski, founder of ATD Fourth World, to gather at the Plaza of Liberties and Human Rights. On this day, a declaration was engraved on a Commemorative Stone proclaiming that extreme poverty is a violation of human rights and affirming the need for all people to unite to ensure that these rights are respected.

(http://overcomingpoverty.org/article/history-of-october-17)

In 1992, the United Nations proclaimed the 17th of October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Since then, governments, local authorities, members of civil society and the private sector have recognized the importance of this International Day, which has become a key rallying point for a growing number of citizens and organizations from all backgrounds, in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty.

(http://www.un-documents.net/a48r183.htm)