

**COMMUNIQUE ON CLAIMS IN AN ITALIAN TELEVISION PROGRAMME ABOUT THE IOR AND THE AIF**

Vatican City, (VIS) - Given below is the text of a communique issued early this afternoon by the Holy See Press Office.

"The television programme, 'Gli intoccabili', transmitted yesterday evening by Italy's 'La7' television network, included unfounded claims and false information about the Institute for the Works of Religion and(IOR) and the Vatican Financial Information Authority.

"On this subject, and with reference to the declaration issued by the Holy See Press Office yesterday 8 February, the following points must be made:

"(1) The affirmation that the IOR is a bank is incorrect. The IOR is a foundation in both civil and canon law, regulated by its own statutes. It does not hold reserves or grant loans as a bank does. Even less so is it an 'offshore bank', and the aforementioned television programme used that term not to illustrate the true nature and function of the IOR but to create an impression of illegality. The IOR lies within a sovereign jurisdiction and operates on the basis of a framework of norms and rules which include the Vatican's anti-money laundering legislation: Law No. 127, adopted precisely in order to conform to international standards.

"(2) The insinuation that Vatican norms do not allow for investigations or criminal procedures regarding the period prior to the coming into force of Law No. 127 on 1 April 2011, is untrue.

"The discussion during the aforesaid programme referred to words contained in a 'private memo'. That document has no official value and merely reflects the opinions of the individual who wrote it. Moreover, it does not state that investigations or criminal procedures regarding the period prior to 1 April 2011 are impossible, or suggest that the IOR is unwilling to collaborate in investigations or criminal procedures on events prior to 1 April 2011. As regards cooperation between the IOR and the AIF, the IOR has cooperated in providing information on transactions that took place before that date.

"Therefore, the claims made during the programme are untrue. According to Vatican anti-money laundering norms, the Vatican judicial authorities have the power to investigate suspect transactions that took place during the period prior to 1 April 2011, also in the framework of international cooperation with judges in other States, including Italy.

"(3) Relations between the IOR and non-Italian banks have always been active and, contrary to the claims made, activity with Italian banks has been reduced only to a limited extent. The IOR, like Italian financial institutions, uses the services of foreign banks (Italian and non-Italian) when they are more efficient or cost less. Moreover, all movements in cash are certified with customs documents. As standard practice, all movements of money are regularly traced and archived.

"(4) As regards the norm regulating the movement of money in cash, it must be made clear that the IOR monitors, and has monitored, step transactions for a total of euro 15,000 in ten consecutive days. Furthermore, article 28 paragraph 1(b) of the new text of Law No. 127, modified by Decree of the President of the Governorate on 26 January 2012, states that the parties subject to that Law (including the IOR) must honour 'their obligation of adequate monitoring ... when they carry out occasional transactions the value of which is equal to or more than euro 15,000, irrespective of whether they are carried out in a single transaction or with a number of interconnected transactions'.

"(5) The affirmation made by the magistrate, Luca Tescaroli, according to which the Vatican failed to respond to rogatory letters concerning the case of the Banco Ambrosiano and Roberto Calvi, is untrue. On this subject, it must be made clear that there is no record of the rogatory letter of 2002 having reached the Vatican. Nor, following a preliminary search in the archives, is there any record of the international rogatory letter presented by the Tribunal of Rome in 2002 ever having reached the Italian embassy to the Holy See. The other two rogatory letters received a regular reply, addressed to the Italian embassy to the Holy See. As yesterday's declaration said, the Holy See and the Vatican authorities have duly cooperated with magistrates and other Italian authorities, and this is evident from documentation in the possession of officials both of the Holy See and of the Republic of Italy.

"The facts described above show that the presentation given in the aforementioned programme was biased and does not contribute to forming an objective picture of events".