

The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences

Disability and the Human Condition

Casina Pio IV, April 9-11, 2024

Dear Chancellor Cardinal Peter Turkson and President Helen Alford,

Dear Academicians,

I am honored to have been appointed as an academic member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. I am also grateful for the invitation to participate in the Plenary Session dedicated to “Disability and the Human Condition”.

I was born in La Plata, Argentina, on October 12, 1982. I am an economist who has dedicated his adult life to understanding the causes and consequences of economic instability and how to tackle them. I was motivated by my personal recollections of my childhood in Argentina, a country that has suffered from virtually chronic economic instability.

I graduated as a PhD. in Economics from Brown University, in Providence, Rhode Island, US, in 2013., I had received a B.A. in Economics (2005) and a B.A. in Economics (2007) from the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, in Argentina. I moved to the US in 2008 to pursue graduate studies with the goal of strengthening my education to be better able to serve my country.

In 2013, I moved to Columbia University, where I held different research positions a Columbia Business School for 6.5 years, including being the director of Columbia University’s Initiative for Policy Dialogue program on sovereign debt sustainability and crises resolution.

From December 2019 to July 2022, I served as the minister of economy of the Republic of Argentina. During my tenure, I led the management of a sovereign debt crisis that included the second largest sovereign debt restructuring with private creditors in history, debt restructuring negotiations with the Paris Club, and negotiations with the International Monetary Fund to refinance an unsustainable debt burden; the economic policy to manage the Covid-19 pandemic in the context of the debt and inflation crises; and the policies for the fast economic and employment recovery in 2021 that led to a reduction in poverty and inequality.

I am now a Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University and continue doing research on macroeconomics and sovereign debt. I’m also the co-President, together with Professor Joseph E. Stiglitz, of the Initiative for Policy Dialogue, an academic center at Columbia University Business School which works to broaden dialogue in development policy by bringing the best ideas in development to policymakers facing globalization’s complex challenges and opportunities. In Argentina, I created a think tank, Suramericana Visión, that contributes to the creation of knowledge for the inclusive and sustainable development of Argentina and South America.

I believe the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences can make a unique contribution to the state of global debate on the most critical economic, ecological, and social affairs of our time, including on themes such as access to medicines, tax justice, climate justice, and debt crises.

As Pope Francis said in *Laudato Si*, “*true statecraft is manifest when, in difficult times, we uphold high principles and think of the long-term common good.*” I pledge to follow these principles, and to give the best of me to honor this appointment with which the Holy Father honors me. Under your leadership, I will aim at identifying and promoting actions that are conducive to building intra and inter-generational social justice.

Fraternally yours,  
Martin Guzman