

Rights of Mother Earth and Harmony with Nature as a pre-condition for sustainable development

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Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Dear Panelists, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am very grateful to be here to celebrate with you the International Day of Mother Earth. We are offering Her, to our Mother Earth, as a gift, these intercultural dialogues. We wonder how to see, how to feel and how to treat the Earth as our Mother, with the same look as our grandfathers and grandmothers had. When April 22nd was designated to be the International Day of Mother Earth, this Home, the United Nations, welcomed a non-anthropocentric worldview, centered on the Earth, also named as Earth Jurisprudence, or even, *Pachamama* Consciousness, as it is known in Latin America.

We have progresses to commemorate ...Yes, we do... We have some progresses. It raises, day by day, everywhere, the awareness that Mother Earth can survive without ourselves, however we cannot live without Her.

In Latin America, originating peoples from the Andes and the Amazonia already see the Earth as this Great Mother, called *Pachamama*. The indigenous peoples of other countries and regions - of course, they also give us some ideas of what would be a full life in harmony with Nature. But, please, let me share a personal experience with you. Last week, I have been, in the heart of Andes, near Cusco, Peru, with a group of *Pachamama Nation*, a movement that I am one of the co-founders, in a long and tough trip only possible by walking and horse riding. We have reached the valley where the Amazon forest starts. In the middle of the wild and the beautiful nature we could breathe The real Life. The real Life in the most touching way. There, on that very high mountains that the indigenous people called *Q'eros Nation* live, still keeping alive a relationship of love for the Earth. And we do still keep alive a relationship of love for the Earth. With them, we are learning about the real life, and trying to understand what is this consciousness that humanity have lost and need to recover.

As we know and have heard in this morning, in Ecuador, Bolivia and Mexico, this consciousness is expressed in the Law, reflecting that original wisdom.

So we are facing the challenge of reconciling the ancestral perception with the development based on the Technologies. It seems to be a contradiction. But it isn't. This apparent contradiction can be resolved by the comprehension that the Rights of Mother Earth and the Harmony with Nature constitute a pre-condition for the sustainable development. There is no Life for Humankind without the Mother Earth. There is no sustainable development without Harmony with Nature. The human rights depend on Nature's

rights." *There is no development harming nature*". (as says Professor Cristiane Derani, one of the Brazilian experts present here).

The sustainable development concept has yet to be entirely attained. The implementation of these 17 SDGs depends on the principles and values of Harmony with Nature, meaning...What does it mean? It means, as explained our brother, His Excellence, the representative of Bolivia, Harmony of the human being with himself, Harmony among themselves, with the other beings, like birds, flowers, fruits, animals, and, with Mother Earth. Poverty, hunger, gender inequality, among other issues, are examples of disharmony with Nature that are shaming all of us. They show the need of boosting more and more the Mother Earth Consciousness.

Where are we placing the Mother Earth in the Nations Governmental Agendas? Are we going to insist in the illusion of the anthropocentric proposal? Do we really understand that there are biophysical limits to human activity? Do we really feel that we are part of the Earth, that we are daughters and sons of Mother Earth?

Well, in Brazil, we are not waiting for the Governments, neither for the corporations... Social movements and networks, schools and universities have been awakening and nourishing the consciousness of Harmony with Nature as a pre-condition for the sustainable development. As an example, under the incentive of our colleague Professor Vanessa de Oliveira, there is a mobilization in the biggest Brazilian city (São Paulo), to propose laws with policies and practices in line with this new paradigm, like the Ecological Citizenship Week. Furthermore, the Network for the Latin American Democratic Constitutionalism have been pushing forward researches, dialogues, events, and papers about Rights of Nature. Law conferences are taking place and law universities started to include in their curricula subjects like rights of nature, waters and animals, as in UFC (Federal University of Ceará), where I teach. In the fields of the Holistic Sciences and Architecture we see similar approaches.

In the ecological economy, innovative experiences stand out, such as ecovillages or peasant communities and the social movement of solidarity economy. Many movements as *Pachamama Nation*, here represented by Doraci Guimarães, our NGO's President, promote actions like these to spread *Pachamama* Consciousness around the world, in Brazil, Peru, Senegal and India, for instance, and fight to have the Earth seen as our Mother and recognized as the center of Life. These movements show that small groups of people, with a clear purpose and passion, can be role models to seed change.

Nevertheless, it is not enough! There is much more to be achieved in Brazil and everywhere! I feel that each one of us can dare much more to respond the invitation done by this General Assembly in April 2009 to observe and raise awareness of International Mother Earth Day.

As it was recommended in the last Dialogue's Report, we need to disseminate this worldview across the media; to promote it through all fields of education, and work on the creation of metrics measuring the

progress towards the SDGs based on this new perspective. In summary, we need to engage all stakeholders in a robust action plan facilitated by the UN, to achieve these goals accordingly.

One of the recommendations most frequently mentioned in the Report is to adopt a United Nations "Declaration of the Mother Earth's Rights". This house helped humankind to survive during the times of the world war in last century, with the emission of international declarations of Human Rights. His Excellence, Mr. Antônio Guterres de Oliveira, the UN Secretary-General said that the United Nations were born from wars, but now exists for Peace. The Sustainable Development Goals seek Peace and Life. The culture of Life and Peace. Humankind finds itself again in a crossroad that demands the respect of the Nature's rights. Once again, people and nations are pressured to re-unite and make a choice for Life, proposing a Resolution with the principles of Harmony with Nature and the Rights of Mother Earth.

Dear sisters, dear brothers

We still have time.....but time rushes...

Please, let us invite all of you to join us, today and tomorrow, to keep in touch with the Nature...We invite all of you to put your feet in the ground. Take off your shoes...Put your feet in the ground. We invite all of you to enter in a river, in the see or waterfall, to walk in the forest or in a park, to hug who you love, to feed an animal in the street, and tell everyone you meet that April 22nd is the International Day of Mother Earth. Do it! Don't hesitate...Do it, then share your pictures in the social media, in the social networks with the hash tag #MotherEarthDay. Doing so, in a very simple way, we can achieve the Harmony with ourselves and we can spread the seeds of connection with the Mother Earth. Only with our feet in the ground we can feel and understand what the Life in Harmony with Mother Earth is! What life in Harmony with Nature is! What Harmony with Pachamama is!

Thank you for your attention...

