

Third Dialogue Meeting between civil societies from China, Europe and South America

Diálogo entre las sociedades civiles de
China, Europa y América del Sur
第三届中欧南美民间组织三方对话

Lima, Peru
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*We talk in order to grow as human beings and peoples, aspiring to a new
sustainable and caring world order, seeking to address climate change, ward off
resentment and oppose the logic of war.
The path is made by walking... and talking.*

WE, CITIZENS OF CHINA, SOUTH AMERICA AND EUROPE,

Gathering on the occasion of our “Third Dialogue Meeting between the civil societies of China, Europe and South America” in the framework of the Peoples Summit, taking place in conjunction with the U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP20) held in Lima, Peru, in December 2014,

As citizens of the world, we leave this footprint on the path of our collective reflection and commitment, and we raise our voices to speak to the conscience of humankind:

WE ARE A COMMUNITY OF DESTINY

We are part of a profoundly diverse global community, in connection with each other and also with the planet, and we share an inescapable common destiny.

Today contacts are multiplying between the various citizen, public and private, professional, commercial and cultural sectors from a variety of geographical origins around the world. However, they do not always have the pro-active objective or intention of expressing a common voice to help change the current global political system in such a way that it can represent and contribute to a world that is moving towards a different future.

We assume our active responsibility in the need to remove frontiers by means of constructive dialogue of mutual respect, without ignoring the different cultural and conceptual contexts, the challenges and complexities of communication between diverse groups, so as to respond to the common challenges that the crisis of civilisation, accelerated by climate change, poses all of us, and to seek our survival and happiness as a species.

A PRESSING NEED FOR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Not only does the persistence of policies currently imposed by dominant sectors prevent the bases of an efficient and just economy from being laid, an economy that is able to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities, but it is also responsible for social and environmental degradation, as climate change, triggered by these very policies, clearly shows.

Different environmental, social, economic, political and ethical crises converge in a crisis of civilisation that seriously jeopardises our coexistence as a human community, and even our very existence as a species living in harmony with the Earth.

Existing institutions have proved themselves to be incapable of solving on-going crises, which without radical change will become increasingly serious; thus the urgency of our individual and collective responsibility.

TO CONSTRUCT A DIFFERENT SHARED CODE OF ETHICS

Only new ethical foundations will allow profound changes to be made in policies and institutions designed to overcome persistent and serious economic, political and socio-environmental crises. The ethics of individual interests, competition and consumerism between human beings in conflict with the planet no longer apply, produce irreparable environmental damage and increase social and political inequalities to such a point that they can become violent and painful ruptures.

Both material and spiritual development must counterbalance each other. We need to consolidate alternative sources of satisfaction based on new paradigms, the enjoyment of cultures, and the promotion and better use of the imagination of both citizens and nations as in, for example, “Buen vivir” in Latin America, the “Society of Harmony” in China and the “Commons” in Europe.

Given today’s global interdependence, we need to promote basic values shared by all humankind, respecting the cultural diversity of ideas and ideals, accepting that there are multiple solutions instead of just one in the knowledge that shared

cooperation and management of the planet are essential for our future survival and happiness. Either we cooperate or we lose our way.

TO CONSTRUCT A NEW ECONOMY AT THE SERVICE OF ALL

The current paradigm of development is leading humankind down a blind alley and must be replaced. An economy based on uncontrolled growth and consumption reveals its limits and its exhaustion.

Although in certain countries the economic growth model benefits the expanding middle classes, it of course exacerbates inequalities and keeps large sectors in poverty. Moreover, it has brought us to a critical stage in history at which human beings are about to destroy the conditions for life on the planet.

More radically, the experience and knowledge of those persons living in poverty must be contemplated, since they are the true actors of change, not merely the beneficiaries of aid programmes. We must realise that the wealth of societies directly depends on and is gauged by the wellbeing of its most vulnerable citizens.

FOR THE CONTROL OF CLIMATE CHANGE THAT IS ONLY POSSIBLE WITH PROFOUND CHANGE IN THE DOMINANT MODEL OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

Social and environmental sustainability is vital if we are to recover and preserve the connection between the Earth and human beings, and between these humans, since it has been damaged by an economic system based on individual utilitarian interests that take precedence over the common good.

We need to replace the logic of the capitalist market and its false solutions, such as that which seeks to continue contaminating on “payment” of ever larger sums for such contamination.

The action and mobilisation of large groups of persons, actors, movements and peoples is essential. This question is crucial and it must be understood that the

reduction of poverty and inequality is a condition that is inseparable from an environmentally sustainable economy, and that both are inextricably linked.

FOR A NEW POLICY TO DEMOCRATISE POWER AND PLACE IT AT THE SERVICE OF THE COMMON GOOD

New social movements around the world: young people, angry individuals, students, indigenous peoples, citizens' assemblies, etc., are being born as a consequence of distrust in the system and its crises. They demand that political systems and international bodies operate in a more participatory, inclusive way that will heed the voices of the citizens, and that decisions should be less bureaucratic.

Within the European Union they are calling for a more open, more democratic operation that will allow all voices to be heard. In South America, they are energising progressive governments or are standing up to the neo-liberal policies of conservative governments, with a more autonomous programme and new methods of citizen mobilisation. In China, better understanding has been fostered between the different groups of interested parties, and has facilitated their future cooperation, thus confirming the positive role played by civil society.

It is an on-going process. To strengthen it, we must foster the hope that drives the new struggles and emancipation processes. We must reaffirm multiple, diverse, intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The construction of new institutions and solutions must be nurtured.

TO UNDERSTAND AND PROMOTE TRANSITION TOWARDS A JUST, SUSTAINABLE AND CARING WORLD

These changes involve a long, unequal transition that is already taking place but which will take much longer. A much-needed future order is emerging with difficulty from the obsolete old order that is now in crisis. We must also recognise that there is no single solution but multiple solutions, according to the diversity of contexts and cultures, which must be reflected in a common, shared platform for humankind. Very significant progress has been made, but present limitations must be overcome and expectations of change must be fully satisfied.

The countries known as the BRICS are breaking the traditional monopoly of global economic power, but they need more resolute leadership if they are to change their current model of unsustainable development. In Europe, the crisis has led people to question the dominant capitalist models, in their search for new models not geared to uncontrolled consumerism and growth to replace the threat of austerity policies producing greater poverty and inequality. In South America, important changes have come up against the lack of ideological coherence and minimum consensus in the countries within different regional integration processes. In China, the government supports Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in making their contribution, especially in the implementation of sustainable development, but the governance of the CSOs requires further improvement and the creation of a suitable environment to afford them greater space.

The goal, signposted by reality and history, is to rethink and reconstruct the architecture of global power in the search for a biocivilisation, and new citizen, plural, caring, responsible and just governance constructed on solid ethical and philosophical pillars, in which everything, including ethics, politics and the economy, is interrelated and in which it is necessary to act on all aspects at the same time.

SIGNATORIES

China

- China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)
- China Civil Climate Action Network (CCAN)
- China Youth Climate Action Network
- China Center for Climate Change Communication
- Greenovation Hub
- Green Zhejiang (China)
- Youthink Center in China

- United Nations Association of China
- China-Europe Forum
- China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation
- South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (China)
- The Maple Women's Psychological Counseling Center (China)

Europe

- Alternatiba (France)
- Association 4D (France)
- ATD Fourth World
- Climate and Energy Programme at the Brussels-based European Union office of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung
- The Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind (FPH) (Switzerland)

South America

- Ibase (Brazil)
- Office the Andean Parliamentary Alberto Adrianzén
- Forum for a new World Governance (Chile and Switzerland)
- Iniciativa para las Inversiones Sustentables China-América Latina (Ecuador-USA)
- Le Monde Diplomatique (Chilean edition)
- Cross Cultural Bridges (Belgium-Peru)

- Forum Solidaridad Perú
- The Citizen Movement on Climate Change (Peru)
- Commission of Food Sovereignty – Consultative Council of Civil Society (Argentina)
- Network of Environmental Educators of Argentina