

# Margarita Declaration on Climate Change

Social PreCOP Preparatory Meeting,

July 15 -18, 2014

Margarita Island, Venezuela

*Changing the system, not the climate*

We, women and men representing social movements and organizations, gathered in Margarita Island from July 15<sup>th</sup> thru 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014, committed to the Good Living, in harmony with the ecosystems of the Earth as a way to counteract the current environmental crisis and the climate change, one of its most ferocious faces; concerned by the social dimension of this crisis that has been ignored for long, but filled with hope and faith in the creating powers of the peoples as the necessary driving force to achieve substantial changes in the system; salute and welcome the social processes that are being lived and constructed in various countries, communities and model societies.

*Whereas*, there is a social dimension of the climate change and an unalienable right of the peoples to be the protagonists in the construction of their own destinies;

*Whereas*, each country lives in a particular historic context within a complex world made up by diversity of experiences and visions from which transformational initiatives rise;

*Whereas*, the climate crisis results from unsustainable development systems that are incompatible with the happiness of the peoples;

*Whereas*, the environment is a political issue and it is the duty of the governments and the multilateral system to hear the voices of the peoples;

*Whereas*, the peoples endure the consequences of the climate change, and are the ones who live and understand its social dimensions, and whereas they are the actors that have the moral strength and the creative capacity necessary to change course towards systems that are fair and sustainable enabling a lasting happiness in harmony with the cycles of nature;

*Whereas*, the developing countries are faced with various kinds of problems and endure more and major consequences of climate change than the developed countries;

## **Hereby declare:**

As to the

### **INTERGENERATIONAL EQUALITY AND RIGHTS OF THE FUTURE GENERATIONS**

*“Let us go to the future, let us bring it and sow it here”*

*Hugo Chávez*

1. “Men and women have become consumerist monsters that consume all the resources given by the Earth”. *Génesis Carmona, aged 11, elected representative of the Venezuelan Children Environment Movements.*
2. We must share our experiences from all over the world to understand and construct true solutions. Expressing solidarity to comrades in other parts of the world means understanding their context, understanding their struggle for life, sovereignty and identity.
3. Change depends on the capacity of our generation to produce a counterculture, transform the consumption model into Good Living and global cooperative societies. We must generate a revolutionary counterculture. The task of youth is to open roads and generate cracks in a system that is unsustainable.
4. Youth must be politicized and empowered. Most importantly, youth must have the will and the capacity to transform things. We

must change the system and begin to mobilize our best efforts. It is not an environmental issue alone; it is an issue that is deeply social, ethical, political and cultural.

5. We must change our perception of power and promote diverse and inclusive spaces, open to intercultural thinking. We must move from the discourse to a transforming action.
6. The world needs corrective actions before damages become irreversible. We denounce the lack of political will of the wealthiest countries.
7. Education must look like the society we dream of. It must be revolutionary and transform reality. If it cannot undertake such transformations, it does not work. Education and communication are the cornerstones for transformation.
8. The environmental issue must be a pillar in curricula. It is necessary to re-think the way how people are educated on environment and Climate Change. We need to open new spaces where the ultimate causes of the environmental crisis are discussed. Youth need to promote such changes. The hegemonic system is frightened of peoples that are educated because they may call into question the structures power.
9. Colonialism continues to operate. Climate change occurs within a historic context where a group of countries based their development on practices generating the current environmental crisis, including Climate Change, while others suffer the worst consequences. The developed countries causing the Climate Change intend to side-track the discussion towards technological or market solutions, thus eluding their historic responsibilities.
10. The struggles of the South must be supported in the countries of the North. The wealthiest countries must commit themselves to finding a solution to the Climate Change. Youth in the North must exert pressure on their governments in that sense. There is not much time left, the global North must take on its historic responsibility and youth must exert pressure for this to happen.
11. We need to recover the notion of solidarity, understand the differences existing among the countries, their different historic contexts, the right to Good Living and also the responsibilities of development. Transition may not be restricted to a reduction of

emissions. It has to be a fair transition guaranteeing that the peoples of the South will not be adversely affected.

12. We need to create our own dreams, forget the perverse developmentalist dream, and find inspiration in ourselves. We need to share a new narrative based on our own experiences.

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## ***BUEN VIVIR (GOOD AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING)***

### **Climate Ethics: Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capacities**

13. It is necessary to reach an alternative development model based on the principles of living in harmony with nature, guided by absolute and ecological sustainability limits, and the capacity of mother Earth as well; a fair, egalitarian model that constructs sustainable economies that moves us away from energy models based on fossil fuels and hazardous energies, that guarantees and recognizes the respect to Mother Earth, the rights of women, children, adolescents, gender diversity, the impoverished, the vulnerable minority groups and the original indigenous peoples – A fair and egalitarian model that fosters the peaceful coexistence of our peoples. We likewise want a society where the right of Mother Earth prevails over neoliberal policies, economic globalization and patriarchy, because without Mother Earth life does not exist.
14. The main sources for climate crisis are the political and economic systems commercializing and reifying nature and life, thus impoverishing spirituality and imposing consumerism and developmentalism that generate unequal regimes and exploitation of resources. This global crisis is exacerbated by unsustainable practices of exploitation and consumption by the developed countries and the elites of the developing countries. We demand the leaders in the North not to continue such wicked practices that destroy the planet and demand the leaders in the South not to follow the development models in place in the North which lead to this civilizing crisis. We urge them to construct an alternative path to achieve fair, egalitarian and sustainable

- societies and fair economies. For such purposes, it is required that the developed countries meet their moral and legal obligations, especially vis-à-vis vulnerable and marginalized countries and communities by lifting barriers such as intellectual property rights which prevent the attainment of the preservation of life over the planet and the salvation of human species. We likewise urge them to comply with the financial contribution and the transfer of safe and locally suitable technologies free from barriers such as intellectual property rights, strengthen capacities and embrace the principles set forth in the Climate Change Convention and in the Rio Earth Summit, especially as to the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and the principles of precaution and gender equality.
15. According to scientific evidence, in order not to exceed 1.5 degrees increase of temperature, it becomes necessary not to produce 80% of the fossil fuel reserves known. For this purpose, the developed countries require to immediately reduce consumption and production of fossil fuels. Also, they need to recognize the rights of the developing countries that rely on the production of fossil fuels as a source of revenues. The developing countries require time for a fair transition to reduce their dependence on such activity, as the developed countries should provide unconditional assistance to the developing nations so that the latter may carry out such urgent transition.
  16. We demand the change of the production and consumption patterns taking into account the historic responsibilities of the emissions from nations and corporations and their cumulative nature, thus recognizing that the carbon atmospheric space is finite and needs to be equally distributed amongst the countries and their peoples.
  17. The historically unequal overconsumption of the global emissions budget managed by mainstream corporations and economic systems has contributed to cause inequalities in terms of the capacities of the countries. Some key indicators to measure such disparity would be the national per capita emission of greenhouse effect gases since 1850, the distribution and size of the wealth and national income, and the technological resources owned by a country. Such indicators may be used to determine the fair portion of effort corresponding to each country (emissions

- budget) if the Earth limits are respected and if the historic responsibilities, the needs for sustainable development, the losses and damages caused by climate change and the need of technology transfer and financial support are recognized.
18. We demand the implementation of a Justice, Ethics and Moral Court on Climate Change, where humanity at large may file complaints against crimes related to this topic.
  19. We reject any attempt to implement or promote dangerous and unethical solutions or responses to Climate Change, solutions whereby wealthy industrialized countries and corporations ultimately seek to use climate change as a means for profit. Some of such false responses, such as carbon production and markets have caused damages in our forests and soils, whereas the implementation of the “United Nations Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD)” and the production of agrofuels, have already caused seizure and fragmentation of lands.

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### **Social Impact of Climate Change**

20. The environment is a political issue, which has to do with power, and therefore it is necessary that the peoples and the social movements are empowered and participate on the making of the decisions that affect them.
21. Risk management must have deep social and local roots, and include national, local and community-based risk alert, prevention and management systems as an essential part of the adaptation process.
22. Planning must be participative and lean towards a habitat (either urban or rural) constructed and managed by everybody to meet the needs of the inhabitants in their specific contexts of action.
23. It is necessary to generate structural changes in the mainstream production, distribution and consumption models that reject the commodification of nature as a solution to climate change.

24. We demand the repair of historic debts, and reject the financing proposals which do not bring about effective transformations for a sustainable solution.
25. Buen Vivir (Good Living) practices should be promoted: To feel good, live fully and stay in balance and harmony with the others, and respect the cycles of life and the Mother Earth.
26. We must promote territory participative management by fostering social dialogue and ensuring the participation of women in the decision-making and in the implementation of mitigation and adaptation mechanisms vis-à-vis climate change.
27. It is necessary to recover the ancestral technologies and promote the training and support of popular technology experts with the capacity to create new technologies which contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
28. Communities must have access to information on the Climate Change negotiations through strategies devised for such purposes.
29. We must include Climate Change as a topic in the curriculum at all levels and in the programs of all disciplines, focusing on the structural causes for climate change.
30. It is necessary to design strategies to guarantee social security of workers and the dialogue between them and the governments in the transition to a new economic model that respond to Climate Change problems.
31. Forms of penalization, penalties and repair mechanisms are necessary for crimes against nature. Violation of Human Rights need to be seen not only as a weapons use problem, but also as a result of other forms of aggression, such as the pollution of the Earth by the use of agrottoxics and the restriction of access to water.
32. Promote small-scale family farming without agrottoxics as an alternative economic model that guarantees good and healthy nourishment for the peoples.

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### **Social Participation in the Decision-making**

33. We must organize ourselves to guarantee life on the planet through a great world social movement. A change of attitude for a conscience of power keeping the peoples united becomes necessary. As organized peoples we can push for the transformation of the system.
34. We must guarantee compliance with the Convention, especially in the matter concerning the participation of the Social Movements and Organizations.
35. The current spaces need to be broadened, and new broad and permanent spaces for participation need to be created so that Social Movements and Organizations may contribute their proposals to guide the decisions in the negotiation process of the Convention.
36. It is necessary to establish nationwide information and full citizen participation mechanisms to be aware and include the vision of the peoples with regard to climate problems and promote transparency in the dissemination of information on the status of the negotiation of the Convention.
37. The accreditation and financing mechanisms for participation shall be revised and improved so that they do not constitute an obstacle that hinders effective participation of the Social Movements and Organization in the negotiation process of the Convention.
38. Transparency and access to relevant and adequate information in the processes associated with the participation of Social Movements and Organizations in the Convention are to be guaranteed.
39. It is important to take into account diversity in the forms of social organization as basis to broaden their participation on the Convention.
40. We must propose the creation of a high-level committee to restructure the participation mechanisms in the Convention. It



should include social movements and Non-Governmental Organizations and count on the participation of countries with significant experience on this issue.

41. We reject the interference of the corporations in the decisions of the United Nations Organizations to the prejudice of the rights of the Peoples and the sovereignty of the States.
42. Citizen consultation processes need to be established to guide the decision-making of each government within the Convention, such as national consultation referenda with a direct impact on the climate agreement.
43. We demand the UN the public dissemination and access to the sessions, meetings and negotiations with translation in the languages of the peoples.
44. Material conditions need to be guaranteed, such as time, space and the necessary resources for the mobilization and participation of social movements and organizations in the processes associated with the negotiations on climate change and binding topics within the UN.
45. It is necessary that the ancestral knowledge of the Peoples be deemed as equally important and valuable as scientific knowledge for decision-making and for actions against climate change by the UN and by the governments.
46. We demand that the use of specialized language and the profusion of acronyms in the UN do not constitute exclusion mechanisms preventing the understanding of the climate negotiation process by the peoples of the world.
47. Synergies should be created between the governments and the Social Movements and Non-Governmental Organizations to promote the attendance of the latter to the work sessions and their coordinated participation on the decision making of the negotiation process.

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## **Fighting Climate Change: Direct Action for Transformation**

46. The structural causes for climate change are linked to the current capitalist hegemonic system. Fighting the climate change involves changing the system.
47. The change of the system must provide for a transformation of the economic, political, social and cultural systems at local, national, regional and global levels.
48. Education is a right of the peoples, a continuous process of fair, free, and transversal comprehensive training. Education is one of the fundamental driving forces for transformation and construction in diversity of the new women and men, for the Good Living and the respect of life and Mother Earth.
49. Education should be oriented to reflect value, create, raise awareness, coexist, participate and act. When we speak of education to face the climate change, we speak of the main roots of such change and the historic and current responsibilities. We also speak of poverty, inequality and vulnerability of the peoples, especially the indigenous peoples and other historically excluded and victimized groups.
50. Social participation is a fundamental driving force for transformation. It is necessary to facilitate the integration of social movements and include the peoples and their organizations in the decision-making process at all levels.
51. Any transformation mechanism must include the principles of respect to life and human rights; sovereignty of the peoples,

solidarity, fair transition and the recognition of the ecological limits and the rights of Mother Earth. It should also consider the common but differentiated responsibilities; the ancestral character of the indigenous peoples, the various forms and degrees of vulnerability of the countries and the peoples, especially the indigenous peoples and other historically excluded and victimized human groups.

52. We reject the implementation of false solutions to climate change, such as: carbon markets and other forms of privatization and commodification of life; geo-engineering, agrofuels productions, and measures favoring agribusiness and harming the production of food in an agro ecological manner, such as the use of transgenic seeds and agrottoxics, synthetic fertilizers and any other measure lessening the priority of the right to Good Living, health and the eradication of poverty enshrined in the Convention. We likewise reject the green economy, the intellectual property rights; the mega water dam projects, monocultures and nuclear energy.
53. It is necessary to know and take into account the extraterritorial effects of climate solutions.
54. We propose the following actions to change the system:
  - Transformation of the power relations and the decision-making systems for the construction of an anti-patriarchal people's power.
  - Transformation of food production systems into agro ecological systems, thus ensuring food sovereignty and security and valuing knowledge, innovations, ancestral and traditional practices.
  - Transformation of the energy production systems, eradicating dirty energies respecting the right of the peoples to fight poverty and keeping fair transition as a guiding principle.
  - Transformation of the energy consumption patterns through education, regulations to large energy consumers and empowerment of the people over community-scaled systems of renewable energies production under control of the communities.

- Implement participative government of territory and city planning systems, thus ensuring fair and sustainable access to land and to urban services, as well as other means that are necessary to face the Climate Change impacts.
- Shift from an energy and materials profligate system to a cyclic system that emphasizes the eradication of the unsustainable exploitation of nature and promotes reduction, reutilization and recycling of residues.
- Ensure the financing by the developed countries to developing countries for such transformations, and for compensation and rehabilitation of the impacts of Climate Change. Financing must not be conditioned, and the management of the funds supplied shall be in the hands of the Peoples.
- Create accessible mechanisms for the protection of the displaced people and the defenders of the environmental rights.

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### **North-South Responsibilities: Commitments of the North to Promote Actions in the South**

55. The financing of mitigation and adaptation actions by the developed countries in the developing countries is a moral and legal obligation under the Convention by virtue of the historic responsibilities of the former. Funding must be reliable, predictable, sufficient and adequate.
56. All obligations of the countries in the North in relation to finance, technology transfer and support for the compensation of losses and damages should be legally binding under the Climate Change Convention.
57. Financing mechanisms must not respond to the logics of market supply and demand, but to compliance with responsibilities. It

must be guaranteed that funds promote development and reach the most vulnerable communities.

58. Technology transfer from countries in the North to the South must promote the process of appropriation, innovation and endogenous technology development. In this connection, it is essential to consider specific mechanisms to lift the barriers created by intellectual property rights. South-South technology transfer and cooperation need also to be promoted, and the value of the knowledge of the ancestral people and of the senior citizens as well.
59. Adaptation transcends the construction of infrastructure. Injustice, marginalization and social exclusion adversely impact on the vulnerability and the possibility to adapt. These aspects need to be considered in the Climate Change adaptation programs and in the financial mechanisms.
60. Loss and damages caused by Climate Change must be considered from the perspective of justice and human rights. The governments of the South must receive from the North the necessary funds to compensate loss and damages. South-South solidarity systems need to be endorsed. The experience of Venezuela's assistance to Caribbean countries and their massive housing programs constitute an example of solidarity vis-à-vis the loss and damages generated by climate change.
61. The military sector is one of the main consumers of fossil fuels and one of the largest gas-emission contributors in the planet. This needs to be included in the global discussions on Climate Change. The military sector shall be responsible and accountable.
62. Our task as civil society is to work for the transformation of our societies and the production and consumption systems which constitute the cause for climate change by generating new development paradigms determined by the peoples. Part of this task needs to aim at influencing the national governments and international settings such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Friday, July 18th, 2014