**THE SOUTH FACING THE SYSTEMIC CRISIS AND MULTIPOLAR GOVERNANCE**

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**1. Some historical background**

The current international crisis is much more than an economic or financial crisis and includes other structures and spheres of the society and governments activities, and these are now the current energy crisis, food crisis, the environmental crisis and the crisis of culture and ideology. This makes it characterize as a systemic whole crisis, even as a crisis of civilization. The consequences of this crisis are harmful, not only in highly industrialized countries but in all continents: mass impoverishment, destruction of nature and the disturbance of the environment, unemployment and ruin at a global scale.

The crisis of 2007 - 2008 had multiple backgrounds: the Mexican crisis in 1995, the financial crisis in Southeast Asia in 1997, with impact and resonance in other regions of the world, the Russian crisis of 1998, the Brazilian crisis of 1999 and the crisis in Argentina in 2001. In the same year, the US economy was hit hard by the crisis in the New Technologies of Information and Communication industry, which led to an expansionary monetary policy pursued by the US Federal Reserve and the attacks of 9-11: the interest went down to 1% in 2003, implying a stimulus to the expansion of credit and investment to revive the economy, determining a significant impact on the housing sector, which experienced a rapid growth of supply and demand.

Millions of people got mortgages in some banks known as "subprime" or high risk mortgages, i.e. loans to people with poor credit histories and weak ability to pay mortgages. 12,000 million were granted a variable credit that is upgradeable and can be decreased by Banks. Thus arose the so-called "bubble", one related to the housing market and the other based on credit.

This type of behavior led to the global concentration of immense fortunes in the hands of a minority of speculators who took advantage of neoliberal policies: deregulation control of banking, bank disintermediation and relocation. Interests went from 1.5% to 5.25%, payments became impossible, and houses could not be sold for lack of customers.

**2. The formation of large global blocs**

As is known, during the Second World War, in 1944 took place the Bretton Woods Conference, where a new monetary system was created. Since the United States had two-thirds of the stock of gold in the world and the currencies of other countries were weak because of the cost of the war, only the dollar was convertible into gold at $ 35 an ounce. The other currencies could be convertible into dollars and they compromised in not varying it in more or less of 1%. Thus, the Keynesian economic policy -the state should intervene in the economy to inject the funds needed to revive the economy if crisis occurs- was terminated. This doctrine then softens one of the principles of liberalism, which is not to involve the state in the economy. This policy had already been implemented by President Roosevelt in the 1930s with the "New Deal" to get the United States out of the crisis.

After the conflict ended in 1945 with the occupation of Germany by Allied and Russian armies, began a period of reconstruction of Europe. In 1947, with the agreement of the Marshall Plan, the United States contribute to the economic recovery in Western Europe, thus giving opportunities for production and contributes also to the containment of socialist policies applied in the Soviet Union and the countries that had been freed by them.

Thus two blocs were consolidated with economic and military alliances. On one hand, the Western bloc under the control of the United States, which in 1949 forms the NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as a military complement; and on the other hand, the Soviet bloc which in response constitutes the CMEA Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, consisting of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Albania and the USSR. Militarily the Warsaw Pact was formed. The scenario of what would later be called the "Cold War" is well established.

Some institutions were established, often as part of the UN, which was also recently created. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) to verify compliance with the rules of Bretton Woods. An International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), better known as the World Bank is also created. From the perspective of trade, the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) offer regular international conferences ("rounds") to ensure the principles of free trade.

In this system, the United States had a preponderance role because it is they who financed most of these various institutions. The dollar is the main currency for trading and guard. This way they can influence the prices of raw materials and control the economic policy in many countries.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon decided to suspend the convertibility of the dollar into gold. The dollar had lost much of its value and that was the end of Bretton Woods. United States questioned themselves their role in stabilizing the global economy rather than their immediate interests. Treasury Secretary John Connolly told Sites: "The dollar is our currency and your problem". In 1973, the oil crisis was one of the triggers for a period of crisis in which most States had a significant deficit. The IMF essentially became an international body that controls the economy of countries in debt, especially the ones in the South, placing them under supervision to ensure payments.

In the North, the state often chooses the path of withdrawal from the economy, inspired by the neoliberal economic doctrine, with a high social cost. In this American economic hegemony, the USSR strongly opposes, who organized the economic governance of the block following different principles of liberalism.

**3. Particular impacts of the global crisis**

**a) The food crisis**

Among the immediate causes which have led to rising food prices: the drought in major grain producing countries, a decrease in grain stocks, rising oil prices have increased fertilizer costs and the cost of transporting products, duplication of meat consumption per person in some Third World countries and agro-fuels deviation of 5% in cereals. This extension of crops to be allocated to plant products to replace fossil fuels has caused a huge land grab and expulsion of thousands of farm families.

However, the original cause of the food crisis lies in the corporate monopolization of the world food system. Built during the second half of the last century -mainly by public funds to subsidize grain, official support for research and international "development”- the food and agriculture complex is composed by multinational corporations in the areas of trade, seed, chemicals and fertilizers, large processors and supermarket chains.

Although difficult to quantify the exact amount of financial investment in agriculture that can be considered speculative, non-productive, a conservative estimate considers that at least 55% of the total financial investment in agriculture meets these characteristics; a volume increasing as agricultural production is liberalized.

Prices, which in other matters by a simple law of supply and local demand are regulated, in the case of soybeans, corn, wheat (and others) are traded on the stock exchanges, the most important of them, the Chicago Stock Exchange. The large operators do not wait for the time to come to sell or buy the material produced or needed, but they do it in advance within the so-called "futures market". A large feed mill or a multinational food company can buy all the cereal you need with one or more years in advance, ensuring a price, which is the quote that is expected in the future. The contract will force you to "run" (buy) the goods on schedule. But only a portion (about 20%) of the total stock exchange transactions is ultimately executed. Most of these are speculative stocks that sell or buy shares on the basis of forecasts of supply and demand, and rentier interests of transnational corporations.

Agricultural policies that have globalized agricultural trade have weakened peasant agriculture and sacrificed domestic food production in order to globalize the market for transnational agribusiness

**b) The ecological crisis and climate change**

The increase in greenhouse gases resulting from human activities of different type and magnitude (anthropogenic effect), has generated global warming which has also caused a serious climate change with alterations of ecosystems. This climate crisis affects the whole planet as a result of a model of extractive production and consumption, predator of natural resources in the interests of transnational corporations and gross abuses of the rights of individuals and peoples of the world.

As an expression of the strategy of capital in search of greater concentration of wealth and power, in recent years the privatization, commodification and financialization of nature have worsened, expressed in the principles of the green economy, which presents false solutions to the climate crisis. Some of them are: Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), projects Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), GMOs, agro fuels, geo-engineering, hydroelectric, nuclear megaprojects, hydraulic fracturing ("fracking "), climate-smart agriculture, among others.

**c) Extractivism**

The modalities of socioeconomic metabolism, i.e., the differential use of consumable goods, processing and waste of societies, and the corresponding energy production are linked to the processes of colonization of nature-or activities that deliberately alter natural systems trying to make them seen as more useful to society. The concept of "socioeconomic metabolism" allows the study of how societies organize themselves to maintain exchanges of matter and energy with nature. It is based on an analogy between the operation of an organic system and economy. It is then interpreted, that industrial economies of the North, are 'fed' with the ecological flows that are extracted in the South, to meet the needs of matter and energy with their production systems. However, the realization of these exports leave a heavy burden in the territory of origin, both ecological and social effects arising from extractive processes.

**4. The crisis as decomposition of the capitalist model**

**a) The planned obsolescence**

The economic rationality of capitalism tends to shorten the average life of values of consumption, making them always more disposable products. With this planned obsolescence, capital makes more value in less time increasing capital turnover, but simultaneously accelerates the depletion of natural resources.

When a natural resource is depleted capital replaces it by another, leaving less reserves for the future, jeopardizing the lives of future generations. To live as capital, this recovery machine, feeds off natural life around us, destroying it. Capital seeks not only to shorten the life of the products but also that of the workers by finding another workforce wherever it comes from.

Thereby generating employment, economic and social instability, i.e., structurally insecure life. To compete in the market, capital also seeks to shorten the life of the technology used in business. To obtain the latest technology, existing becomes obsolete in less time. Capitalism in which everything that incorporates in its logic becomes obsolete and disposable. Just to give life to capital, the system denies life to everything.

The denial of life is more than the negation of the lives of the majority of the world population. Growing death in so many areas, capital tends to obstruct both the life of capital as equity and thus promotes self-destruction. It is the phase of senile capitalism that we are witnessing.

**b) The downward trend of the rate of profit**

The Trans nationalization of capital from outsourcing was not only due to the increase in the cost of the workforce, as they raise it neoliberal thesis. The obsolescence of the technology used in business has contributed more to the process of outsourcing that the increase in the cost of the workforce. The neoliberal discourse only speaks of the high labor costs and not the other since it is not in its interest to mention it.

To survive in this competition, capital shorten the average useful life of fixed capital (essentially buildings and machinery) used in their companies to obtain the technology of the moment. This trend has given a tremendous boost to productive capital in the postwar period as well as technological inventions. However, towards the end of the sixties and early seventies, technological substitution has reached its limits to increase the rate of profit.

The average useful life of fixed capital was reduced so much that technological costs for transferring the product (or service) is no longer offset by the reduction in labor costs by employing this new technology. The capacity for technological replacement (the development of the productive forces) becomes an obstacle to increase the rate of profit, i.e., one's relationship to current production.

Shorten the lifetime of the technology then encourages a decline in the rate of profit. From the eighties, the West capital seeks to avoid lowering the lifetime of the technology by all kinds of patents. The 'outsourcing' of productive capital to peripheral countries is accompanied by all kinds of monopolies based on intellectual property rights. Developing and monopoly on knowledge concentrates on transnational headquarters.

Patenting knowledge means living of the monopoly rent on knowledge. It is a parasitic and temporary way of making an unproductive rent to own a senile phase of capitalism. Innovation and knowledge economy can grow more in the central countries, but innovations applicable to the production process usually develop more in places where the production plants are located, i.e. in emerging countries. The monopoly rent on knowledge, then, will not have a lasting nature.

**c) The financialization of the economy**

Given the falling rate of profit in the productive sector and to the rising cost of labor in central countries, big business often leave the real economy and take refuge in the financial field. This seeks to sustain the accumulation regardless of labor. And promotes the accumulation of capital fictitiously, i.e. without creating value. The financialization of the economy is in the hands of a financial elite of a few megabanks concentrated on Wall Street and the City of London. The fictitious capital occurs mainly from by products .The most elementary example of a "by-product" are mortgage loans with banks, which are resold in package as a new'producto' to third parties. This gains new fresh funds to other mortgages "subprime" and so on. When interest rates rise, these debts become unpayable. The underlying asset (property) loses value by decreasing the demand for houses.

With this, bank after bank failed, especially small ones but even large ones were at risk too. The bank bailout program by the States by issuing bonds means making a private debt public. The debt crisis in the banking system is now a sovereign debt crisis. We saw this phenomenon thirty years ago in Latin America particularly in peripheral countries. From 2008 we talk about the crisis of government bonds in the central countries as governments can no longer meet its obligations. From then on, Thereafter credit derivatives thrive. These are 'products' which price is based on the creditworthiness of an issuer. The most common are the "Credit Default Swap" (CDS) and 'Equity Default Swap' (EDS) to finance public deficits.

The risk that derivatives are intended to cover is transferred by "securities" (re-assurances) chains, often very long. With this, the pyramid with titles over debts on profit in the real economy constantly increases and thus the inverted pyramid of notes. In the City London financial center there is no limit to reinsure against inability to pay sovereign debt. These limitations do exist in Wall Street. Hence the importance of the financial center of London. Given the negative outlook to resume a new cycle of accumulation of real capital in the center of the world system, fictitious capital opts for 'parasitic' accumulation.

**d) The war economy and its implications**

The arms race has as its main cause, seeking control of renewable and non-renewable natural resources of the planet, whether global or regional level (involving both territorial control and hegemonic potential challengers). This involves the breakdown or cancellation of the rights of nations to their own existence and fundamental rights of individuals. The desire for control of these resources has been almost permanently in the development of humanity, regardless of the economic system in question.

The control of natural resources and therefore the objective of maximizing profits at low cost, involves heightened need for national self-protection and control of nations and international markets; which implies an increase in defensive and offensive measures.

The XXI century will continue to accommodate arms races, although in some cases there are agreements in budget spending on weapons; in 2014, global spending will grow by 0.6% to reach 1.547 billion.

What is important for the countries concerned, is to achieve a micro, regional or globa hegemony.

**Budget spent on weapons in 2013:**

**Country millions in dollars**

**United States 600,400**

**China (\*) 112,200**

**Russia 68,200**

**Saudi Arabia 59,600**

**UK 57,000**

**France 52,400**

**Japan (\*\*) 51,000**

**Germany 44,200**

**India 36,300**

**Brazil 34,700**

1. **The breaking of the current international monetary system**
2. The Dollar Crisis as an international trading currency

Oil is a nonrenewable natural resource very strategic because it is the main energy source and basis of all growth and capital accumulation steadily. Oil is both a strategic resource to sustain the current international monetary system based on the dollar. At the end of World War II, the Bretton Woods left the US dollar anchored to the gold standard to establish an exchange rate of $ 35 an ounce. This gave great benefits to the United States since the world had to change their currency for dollars to enter international trade. Everyone demanded dollars. However, as Riffin raises, the growth rate of the gold reserves held by the United States was much lower than the rate of growth in world demand for international reserves in dollars.

Gold reserves stopped growing support to the mass of dollars in circulation. European central banks, and France in first line, converted their dollar reserves into gold at a profit and quickly reducing stock holdings of gold that the US owned in Fort Knox. US gold reserves fell in short time from 20000 to 8100 tones. To avoid bankrupt the country, Richard Nixon decided in 1971 to end the convertibility of the dollar into gold and transformed the green bill in a universal fiduciary currency issued and accepted by decree.

In April 2013, OPEC confirmed that in 2014 China could overtake [the US](https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&prev=_t&sl=es&tl=en&u=http://actualidad.rt.com/tag/estados_unidos) as the largest importer of oil. In that year 16% of foreign trade in China was already done in yuan. In 2014 this percentage may even be doubled and mainly due to the purchase of energy outside the scope of the dollar. The great Chinese energy demand changes the geopolitical and global grid of black gold. This also eliminates the basis for sustaining the petrodollar. The future control of oil price in particular and energy in general from 2014 will be increasingly in the hands of China and Russia. So China and Rusia have the tools to drop the dollar as an international currency of reference. Soon the dollar will be replaced by the petro-Yuan or other international reference currency.

1. **The Dollar crisis as an international reserve currency**

In December 2013 China's international reserves in Treasuries were $ 1.3 billion. A massive sale of these treasury bonds implies a devaluation of its price and a huge loss of assets. A depreciation of 50% of the bonds, for example, involves a loss of 650 billion dollars to China. Creditor countries like China apparently would depend on the world's largest debtor USA. Apparently being a debtor or creditor entailed the same: the subordination to the empire. With this argument one would believe that the US would have under control the whole world holding the dollar and thus the unipolar world.

The physical gold does not lose its intrinsic value over time and operates as a safe haven to the eventual devaluation of the dollar as the international reserve currency. The Chinese central bank, Indian and Russian, which are in the process of diversifying their reserves and especially buying gold. Before releasing massive Treasury bonds, emerging countries like China, India and Russia are accumulating as many gold to offset the loss that they will suffer with the sell of their devalued international reserves in Treasuries.

[China is today the largest producer](https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&prev=_t&sl=es&tl=en&u=http://www.oroyfinanzas.com/2012/11/diez-mayores-regiones-productoras-oro-china/) of gold in the world with only 428 tons in 2013 and the country is both the largest importer of gold, leaving this year to India in second place.

Chinese reserves in physical gold would reach 10,000 tons in late 2014 near 294.ooo million dollars, while the United States has almost no gold reserves to the point that they could not answer to Germany when asked for the repatriation of their gold.

**6. An international resistance pioneer in the periphery: the Bandung Conference and its postcolonial calendar**

Like several European countries, many developing countries also questioned the economic domination of the North over the South so they made ​​a call to gather and unify their views and make policy proposals to release, as many of them were still under colonial regime. It is in this context that took place in April 1955, the Bandung Conference, a city on the island of Java, Indonesia.

So, called by the rulers of Indonesia, India, Ceylon, Pakistan and Burma, countries liberated from colonial tutelage, representatives of 29 States of Asia and Africa gathered in Bandung, willing to develop a common strategy in a world that with increasing clarity, appeared as a game of interests between two great blocs, one led by the US and the other by the Soviet Union. Representing 1,500 million human beings with only 8% of the world income. There was China, represented by its Premier Zhou En-lai; Vietnam with Ho Chi Minh and Ngo Ding Diem; Philippines, US fief from its war with Spain; Japan, will soon launch its developmental miracle; Turkey, Iran and Iraq nearing completion of defensive agreements with Britain; Ghana, still under the name Gold Coast and about to achieve independence, with the only sovereign States of Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia and Sudan ...

In a world divided by the Cold War, the peoples of Asia and Africa proclaimed its neutrality, its equidistance between social systems demonstrating antagonistic and willingness to stay away from some differences outside of their interests. A sort of liberating doctrine spread all colonial territories. Nasser, Sukarno, Nehru and Nkrumah were the mirror looking at a new generation of leaders in Africa and Asia.

In addition to promoters countries, participated in the Conference the following countries: Afghanistan, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, Philippines Saudi Arabia, Sudan, China, Thailand, Turkey, Democratic Republic of North Vietnam, South Vietnam State, Yemen ...

The Conference was organized into three working committees: political, economic and cultural. The final statement collected the following conclusions:

1. *Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.*
2. *Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.*
3. *Recognition of the equality of all races and all nations, large and small.*
4. *Abstention of intervention or interference in the internal affairs of other countries.*
5. *Respect the right of every nation or defend itself or in collaboration with other States, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.*
6. *Abstention to participate in collective defense arrangements in order to promote the interests of the great powers.*
7. *Abstention of all countries to exercise pressure on other countries.*
8. *Abstention of acts or threats of aggression or force in the fields of territorial integrity or political independence.*
9. *Solution of all international differences with pacific means, as treaties, conciliation, arbitration as well as other means of free selection of the parties in accordance with the United Nations Charter.*
10. *Promotion of the interest and mutual cooperation.*
11. *Respect for justice and international obligations.*
12. *Enforcing the beliefs of the different international cultures of the Movement.*

The Bandung Conference gave birth to what would later be called the "Third World", a term coined by the French sociologist Alfred Sauvy in 1952 in reference to the "Third Estate", a term used before the French Revolution that gathered the common people in the National Assembly, in contrast to the two minority and underprivileged groups that made ​​the clergy and nobility. For Sauvy, this was the world of underdeveloped countries, exploited and forgotten, to which the first capitalist world and the second communist world did not pay attention. For the first time the leaders of the former colonized world meet to reaffirm their commitment to end the imperial domination, to proclaim his refusal to join in the bipolar order of the Cold War, his opposition to choose between the United States and the Soviet Union. The nationalization of the Suez Canal Company by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1956, the independence of many African countries in 1960; the victory of the Algerian revolution in 1962 marked the early stages of what would become the *Non-Aligned Movement,* an organization that was proposed to play an active role on the international stage and officially born in 1961 in Belgrade.

The tasks that the Movement was proposed were huge, from the revolution of social structures to the recovery of natural resources, through the changing of the international economic order. However, despite the high hopes and revolutionary fervor, from the guerrilla struggle in Latin America to Vietnam to fight against US aggression, the first divisions were visible in emancipation movements in which the radicalization of revolutionary wings is already facing neo-colonial elites who see salvation only in alliance with the old or new Northern metropolis.

During the 1970s, by resolution passed at the Conference of Algiers in 1973, the idea of a *"New International Economic Order"* was launched by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, then at the height of its influence. It was dismantling a system that reduced the Third World to the role of supplier of raw at low prices and purchaser of equipment and services that became more expensive.

At the end of the 80s, with the collapse of the socialist bloc and the end of the Cold War, NAM lost many supporters and their meanings are blurred by having to confront the hegemonic unilateralism of the United States and the process of globalization. Thus, in the Jakarta Summit in 1992, his concern was to establish strategies against the already formed European Union and the G8, prioritizing the principles related to political independence and sovereignty of States, non-intervention in internal affairs of the countries and resolving conflicts without the use of threats or the use of force.

Meeting in Algiers, Algeria, from 28 to 29 May 2014, representatives of 106 countries, over 120 members raised the same claims again almost 60 years after its foundation: reform of global governance and system of the Organization of UN Security Council, expansion with new permanent members emerged from the "forgotten continent", relaunch of financial relations questioning multilateral institutions like the IMF and the World Bank.

**7. The construction of a new paradigm for life**

To discuss alternatives to the capitalist economic model that prevails today –because of its globalization and its multiple dimensions, social, political and cultural- means reviewing the fundamental paradigms of the collective life of humanity on the planet.

These are: (1) the relationship with nature; (2) production of the material bases of physical, cultural and spiritual life; (3) the social and political collective organization; (4) reading of reality and self-involvement in its construction, i.e. culture.

Every era has to perform this task, depending on the particular contexts. "Modernity" as a result of a profound transformation of European society has defined its own paradigms, which represents undeniable progress. However, it also led to the overexploitation of nature. They gave birth to the capitalist market economy. Politically the Jacobin state was formed and culturally it generated a major individualism. The concept of unlimited progress of mankind, which lives in an inexhaustible planet that can resolve all contradictions through science and technology, has guided the development model in the twentieth century, even in socialist societies case.

1. **Relations of respect for nature as the source of all life**

Modern civilization with its strong control over nature, its high degree of urbanization, has made ​​human beings forget that, ultimately, they depend entirely on nature to live. Climate change reminds us, sometimes with great brutality, this reality. Then it comes to defining the relationship, not an exploitation of the earth, as a source of natural resources capable of being reduced to the status of merchandise, but as the source of all life, in an attitude of respect for its ability to physical and biological regeneration.

That obviously means a radical philosophical change. It criticizes the purely utilitarian nature of the relationship, that capitalism comes to consider the ecological damage as collateral, but inevitable, or even worse, as externalities' because they don’t come into the market calculations and consequently in the accumulation of capital.

Some authors go further and call into question the anthropocentric approach such prospects (E. Gudymas, 2009, 68), proposing new concepts like right of nature, which the Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff (2000) has argued in several of his writings. It is on this basis that the president of the United Nations General Assembly, Miguel D'Escoto proposed in 2009, in his farewell speech, a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth and Humanity. A Mother Earth day was approved by the same Assembly with an unanimous vote of the 192 countries represented.

We must remember that man is a part of nature and that there is a dichotomy between the two, but a symbiosis. Several advocates of this position estimate that only an anthropocentric attitude can consider the human being as the center of the world, regardless of other living beings and even the planet itself, which causes the negative ecological effects that we are beginning to know.

However, what is called the common good of Mother Earth can only be addressed through the mediation of mankind. Indeed, it is only through them that the problem of the possibility for the Earth to regenerate or not, against its predatory and destructive activity arises. That is why the Common Good of Humanity involves the survival of nature, that is, essentially, for the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem protection.

If you talk about the "rights of nature" (E. Gudynas, 2009) is in a sense derivative or secondary, because it is only mankind that can express it in these terms, i.e. breaking them or respect them. Neither land nor animals can claim respect for their rights. It is Humans who are responsible for the destruction of ecosystems.

Thus, in the process of extending the legal subject, you can talk about climate justice and the rights of nature, without necessarily going through a customization of the earth and its elements. At the same time, one cannot ignore the link between the relationships with nature and social relations. Not all social classes behave the same way towards Earth. It is a relationship of power, implemented by the logic of capitalism. However, the principle is the ability to defend the planet from being sustainable, i.e. preserve the integrity of its biodiversity and to renew the face of human activities. Humans can also embellish nature, using its vegetable richness to create new landscapes or gardens, using their elements to produce beauty. The Earth is also generous and can contribute, even with non-renewable elements, production and reproduction of life. However, this perspective is totally different from the exploitation to produce a profit rate.

In the great philosophical traditions of the East, the deep bond between humans and nature is a characteristic of thought. The Respect of all life, found in Hinduism and Buddhism translates this conviction, like the belief in reincarnation as an expression of the unity of life and continuity. The man created from clay (earth) of the Judeo-Christian and retaken by Islam tradition expresses the same idea. The Bible presents man as the guardian of nature (Gen. 1: 26-28). Even if it is stated that it is at your service, this obviously excludes its destruction. In many creation myths we can find similar conceptions in several cultures of Africa and the Americas.

In the indigenous peoples of the Americas, the concept of Mother Earth (Pacha Mama) is central. Source of life, its personalized and anthropomorphic representation includes features and elements of nature which also live with their own personality.

Indeed, it should be recognized while facing the logic of capitalism, the development of urbanization and the attractions of mindless consumption, both large Eastern philosophies, as the traditions of indigenous peoples cannot resist.

1. **The subordination of exchange value to the value of consumption.**

The paradigm shift in their relationship with the economy is favoring the value of consumption rather than exchange value, as capitalism does. It’s called value of consumption when a good or service is useful to meet the needs of one's life. They acquire an exchange value when they are the subject to a transaction.

For capitalism, the most developed form of commodity production, the latter is the only value . A good or service that is not converted into merchandise has no value because it does not contribute to the accumulation of capital, goal and engine of the economy.

In this perspective, the use value is secondary. It can produce goods without any utility provided they are paid (the explosion in military expenditure, for example, or the white elephants of international cooperation). Artificial needs through advertising also create or expand financial services also creating speculative bubbles. Instead, emphasize on value of consumption makes the market serve human needs.

**c. The spread of democratic processes**

A third axis in the review of the foundations of collective life, based on the new paradigm of the Common Good of Humanity is constituted by a generalization of democracy, not only in the political sector but also to the economic system, in relationships between men and women and in all institutions. In other words, formal democracy, often used as a way to establish an artificial equality, reproducing in fact social imbalances, it must be transformed into a solidarity policy formulation. This implies, in particular, a review of the concept of the state and a vindication of human rights in all its dimensions, individual and collective. It’s about making every human being without distinction of race, sex, class, a subject of social construction and by doing so, to revalue the subjectivity.

In this field, the concept of the state is central. Erasing all differences to build citizens equal in principle, is not sufficient to reach a true democracy. Undoubtedly, the liberal state was a step up from the political structures of the European ancient régime. But today not only must be consider the oppositions of classes that allow one or coalition of these to use the State apparatus to establish the domination of their interests but also the various nationalities that constitute a territory and have the right to claim their cultures, their territorial references, their social institutions.

It is not about falling into a communitarianism undermining the state, as in certain European countries in the neoliberal era, or to return to a romantic past, like certain politico-religious movements, or to accept uncritically the neo-anarchism of certain legitimate and massive protests, or to fall into the trap of the economic powers (transnational corporations and international financial institutions) who prefer to negotiate with local, small entities.

The goal is to strike a balance between these various dimensions of collective, international, regional, local life, recognizing their existence and setting up mechanisms for participation.

The state's role cannot be conceived without taking into account the situation of the most marginalized social groups, the landless, lower castes and dalits (outside castes) ignored thousands of years, indigenous peoples of America and the Afro-descendants excluded for over 500 years and in these groups, women often doubly marginalized. Even constitutional, legal processes are not sufficient to change the situation, even if they are useful. Racism and prejudice will not disappear quickly in any society. In this sector the cultural factor is of great importance and may be the subject of specific initiatives. Social policies, of protection against attacks from the total market and allowing the satisfaction of basic needs, are an important step in the transition, provided they’re not only paternalist and detached of structural reforms.

**d. The intercultural**

The aim of the cultural paradigm is to give all knowledge, all cultures, philosophies, religions, the possibility of contributing to the "common good of humanity". That cannot be the exclusive role of Western culture which is currently identified with the concept of development, eliminating or marginalizing all other perspectives of interpretation. It should decolonize the imaginary. That involves both reading of reality, its interpretation or its anticipation as the necessary ethics to the development of the Common Good of Humanity. Multiculturalism integrates, of course, adopting new guidelines of the three other grounds, (about) the relationship with nature, the production of the basis of life and a widespread democratic organization. It is also important for the transmission of ideas and values ​​in the societies. Speaking the language of each other and expressing in culturally understandable terms is the demand of Democracy.

However, multiculturalism is not enough. It is promoting an open multiculturalism, i.e. cultures in dialogue, with possible exchanges. Cultures are not museum objects, but living elements of a society. Internal and external migrations, linked to the development of the media, have created many cultural changes.

That brings us to the practical aspects, such as the organization of multicultural state, which in countries like Bolivia or Ecuador has resulted in the constitutions of multinational states, not without difficulties of applying the concept in practice. The central idea is the obligation of the State to guarantee the basics of cultural reproduction of different peoples and in particular, to defend against the assaults of economic modernity and cultural hegemony.

Therefore, bilingual education is a privileged instrument. But the notion of multiculturalism should also have an impact on general education, like teaching the history and transformation of an educational philosophy guided by market logic.

Also ethical instances must be able to express, as Defense of Human Rights agencies, observatories of various kinds, religious institutions.

Culture includes a spiritual dimension of the human being itself, which takes you beyond the everyday. This theme is central in a time of crisis of civilization. Exists in the world the search of meaning, the necessity to redefine goals in life. Spirituality is the force that transcends the material and gives it a meaning. The sources of spirituality are many and are always placed within a social context and they cannot exist without a physical and biological base. The human being is one, its spirituality presumes matter and materiality does not make sense without the spirit. A culturist view of spirituality, ignoring the materiality of the human being, i.e. the body for the individual and the economic and political reality for society, is a conceptual aberration, leading to reductionism (culture as the single factor in change) or the alienation (ignorance of social structures). Spirituality, with or without a reference to a supernatural, gives meaning to human life on the planet. Its complete translation is conditioned by the social relations of every society, but at the same time it can give guidance to the latter. A paradigm shift is not carried out without spirituality, according to multiple paths and numerous expressions.

The worldview, the reading of reality and analysis, the development of knowledge, ethics of social and political construction and the aesthetic expression and self-involvement of the actors, are essential parts of the development of alternatives to the capitalist model. They are all part of the new orientations of the basics in terms of alternative paradigm, both the relationship with nature, and the production of bases of life and the redefinition of the economy and ultimately the way of conceiving collective and political organization of societies. In their diversity they can contribute to the necessary changes to the survival of humanity and the planet, the definition of the new paradigm of the Common Good of Humanity.

1. **Transitions**

The transition to a new paradigm will not be achieved without transitions or without social struggles. The Transitions are times when a new logic is taking place at the impossibility of the pursue of social reproduction. We are facing this situation, in a full system crisis. Regulate the latter is no longer enough. The crisis of civilization requires a new basic orientation.

This means that the transitions in all areas, must be a true paradigm shift, not a simple adaptation of the system to request a new ecological or socio-cultural character. This is the difference between post-neoliberal policies and post-capitalist initiatives. Furthermore, the capitalist system, despite its contradictions and weaknesses, will not disappear by itself. Only social and popular movements will force the politics for change. This is not an illusion, because in the great social axes of a paradigm transformation there are thousands of initiatives worldwide. They are often local and segmented and do not have the necessary force to tilt the existing structures and institutions. But they exist, and point the way to new directions. It means, bringing stakeholders together to convergence actions.

This convergence cannot be a simple integration trade, transport or energy. Some recently promoted experiences in South America considered as the most advanced in a search for balance and equity between members or participants (UNASUR, CELAC, ALBA ...) are designed in a submission to the economy market without jeopardizing the interests of large national oligopolies, reducing their reach in the regulation of trade and small tariff reductions. In the case of countries called "emerging", the BRICS, the prospect is even more limited because their objectives are centered in the creation of a bank and can be a counterweight to world financial institutions dominated by the West democratizing access to credit.

It is in this perspective that the South-South relations can contribute to a change in paradigm. If they only fit into the logic of a destructive capitalism of the planet and human communities, they will serve only to the reproduction of the system. It is perfectly possible to set concrete goals for social struggles to this purpose. This is what the last chapter of the World Forum for Alternatives Document offers and is annexed to serve the basis for the discussion of Tunisia.

**Annex**

The proposed transitions for South-South relations are grouped according to the four fundamentals that every society must resolve for their existence and to contribute to the reproduction of their existence and life on the planet.

**1. Relations with nature**

- Combating deforestation and the establishment of regional bodies for this purpose: Amazon jungle; forests of central Africa; forests of South-East Asia

- Establishment of common rules for extracting: oil, mining and single crop farming and organization of controls

- Common Support for peasant agriculture in appropriate conditions

- Exchanges of technologies in soil regeneration, water and air

- Production and application of clean energy in appropriate conditions

- Regulation of climate change

- Establishment of a fund for land regeneration

**2. Prioritize the value of consumption over exchange value**

- Develop a common financial architecture: common currency, mutual funds, and development banks

- Elimination of tax havens and creating common standards against speculation

- Common strategies against multinationals

- Common strategies in international financial and trade institutions

- Establishment of fair trade circuits

- Organization of complementarity and solidarity (similar to the model of ALBA: Bolivarian Alliance of the countries of the Americas) on energy, trade, crafts, food

**3. Acceleration of democratic processes**

- Alliances between Popular powers

- Participation of social movements in regional instances

- Democratic mechanisms within regional organizations

- Creation of common courses on human rights

- Institutionalization of the presence of women at all levels of institutions

- Prohibition of economic intrigues before regional institutions

- Common measures for the democratization of the UN

**4. Intercultural**

- Regional cultural institutions for the promotion of non-Western cultures

- Common guarantees for the promotion of the rights of indigenous people

- Regional and interregional initiatives to promote languages, philosophies, spiritualties and cultural expressions

- Establishment of common ethical standards that lead to the Common Good of Humanity

- Promotion of public media for another view of the life of peoples and cultures.

1. World Forum for Alternatives – Instituto de Altos Estudios Nacionales. Realized with the collaboration of Rosa Luxemburg Foundation [↑](#footnote-ref-1)