



Milestones

World People's Conference on Climate Change and Rights of Mother Earth

The World People's Conference on Climate Change and Rights of Mother Earth, convened by Bolivian President Evo Morales, was held in Cochabamba, Bolivia during 19-22 April, 2010. This conference, hailed as the alternate climate summit, was held in the aftermath of unsatisfactory negotiations in Copenhagen. It brought together over 30,000 participants including grassroots activists, social, indigenous, environmental and cultural organizations, NGOs, climate experts and scientists from more than 100 countries, including official representation of 48 countries. Many more people participated via the Internet and in campaign actions on the final day of the conference, 22 April, which coincided with the UN-designated Mother Earth Day.

The conference adopted "The 'People's Agreement'". This questions the sustainability of the world's current capitalist system, which promotes climate change, while separating human beings from nature. It calls for a new system that restores harmony with nature and creates equity among human beings: "To face climate change, we must recognize Mother Earth as the source of life and forge a new system based on the principles of: harmony and balance among all and with all things; complementarity, solidarity, and

equality; collective well-being and the satisfaction of the basic necessities of all; people in harmony with nature; recognition of human beings for what they are, not what they own; elimination of all forms of colonialism, imperialism and interventionism; and peace among the peoples and with Mother Earth."

The agreement calls upon States to recognize, respect and guarantee the effective implementation of international human rights standards and the rights of indigenous peoples, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples under ILO Convention 169, among other relevant instruments, in the negotiations, policies and measures used to meet the challenges posed by climate change.

The agreement also calls upon developed countries to acknowledge the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth; to commit to ambitious short-term targets for reducing emissions as to avoid an increase in average world temperature of more than one degree Celsius; and to recognize their climate debt in all of its dimensions as the basis for finding a just, effective, and scientific solution to climate change. ❖