

CCC 7.1 — Editorial

Climate Warming, Global Warning — A new awakening of the World

As the year 2009 was getting to a close, the “Fifteenth United Nations Climate Change Conference” (COP15) was the focus of world media. Convened in Copenhagen it debated for twelve days (December 7 to 18) to reach a collective agreement: the climate change must be controlled with its worldwide consequences. In modern history, it has been the largest international gathering of 192 national delegations, 46,000 or so participants (scientists, officials, journalists, television crews, interpreters, translators, observers, staffs, etc.). All at work to prepare the final discussions and concerted decisions expected from 120 heads of states and governments. The consensus of the scientific community on the facts of climate change and its human causes, the expertise employed to make projections of its evolution and future consequences, the technological solutions proposed to control — if not to reduce — the progressive “climate warming” and, last but not least, the financial and juridical means and institutions to be envisioned, requested and distributed among nations, all have been detailed by the media. Would this shared awareness of a “global warning” give the World any will for some self-awakening?

In present times the World community has in many occasions experienced what it entails to live on the same planet, for the better or for the worst. For the better, mass communication media give millions of people to enjoy in real time Olympic Games, soccer or tennis world competitions, universal exhibitions, etc., to mention only a few instances; everyone can take part in these frequent festive events. For the worst, through instant information people are also affected by man made actions, be they social disputes, military conflicts, terrorist insurgencies, world economic downturns, financial crisis, etc. Natural disasters, like earthquakes, tsunamis or even epidemics have equally a world dimension, at least through the collective effort launched to help the victims of these catastrophes. But as far as “climate change” is concerned, humankind as a whole is now facing a global “natural” threat caused by “human” activity of the world community: industrialized, emergent and developing countries, all share to various degrees the same global responsibility. This is new. Changes therefore are needed in the World self-awakening.

Take for instance the financial means needed to diversify energy resources and to transfer new technologies to the nations that need them most, unless they will become, through growing industrialization, new polluting countries. This financial solidarity should not first of all be seen in an emergency loan, no matter how large it is, that would have to be later refunded. It has much more to be, as Brazil President Lula da Silva said, the payment of some compensation due to the World community by the industrialized countries: the damage done on the global climate balance has its origin in their early development they have been the first to enjoy. In other words, “international solidarity” has some historical dimension that appears now and calls for a new understanding: “sustained solidarity” fostering “sustainable development”.

If such reading of the “global warning” has some validity, the challenges facing the World community should somehow change the common understanding of “national sovereignty”. At Copenhagen, all delegations were agreed to share responsibility in controlling the climate change. As such this shared responsibility of nations conditions the way they can exercise their sovereignty, be that at the executive level or through any eventual legislation. Responsible sovereignty should therefore have no better expression than a self-binding commitment to reach the common goal.

Many tensions have prevented the Conference from achieving its intended results. Further discussions and gatherings will no doubt help to increase the mutual trust so much needed to accept the many pressing challenges of the times. World ecology, finances, security and well being cannot be deprived from some global governance. This is perhaps the “global warning” that lay hidden in the “climate warming”. With all best wishes in this new year 2010!

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