

World Environment Day 2007: A Call to World Public Opinion

On the occasion of World Environment Day 2007 we, the undersigned organisations and individuals, wish to state that:

. In the context of the 2001 World Environment Day, and also at the initiative of the World Forum of Civil Society Networks - UBUNTU, what was said included these points:

- *“One of the chief global problems facing us today is global warming. The importance of this process for the planet and the scale of its multifarious detrimental effects are the subject of near-universal consensus within the international scientific community.”*
- *“In view of the gravity of the threats posed by our current development model, in the context of the recalcitrance of political leaders in bringing about a reversal of current trends, the Kyoto Protocol emerges as one of the chief means at the disposal of the international community for tackling this phenomenon. In this context, stances opting for national non-compliance with the Protocol, such as the position adopted by the President and Government of the USA, are unacceptable. We add our voice to all those peacefully demanding that the Kyoto Protocol be signed by all the world’s States and, more particularly, that it be fulfilled.”*

. Today, six years later, we know that the situation has unfortunately worsened considerably, that its gravity is now beyond doubt, and that still no action is being taken in response to the demands for measures – such as the adoption of that Kyoto Protocol – long made from many quarters, including civil society worldwide.

. In view of the increasingly serious problems posed by the environmental impact of anthropocentric behaviour, humanity is facing an array of great challenges:

- a) The problem of a development model which, as the United Nation’s Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development stressed, is based on **unsustainable production and consumption patterns**; for indeed as long as we remain committed to an economic-growth model based on ever-rising yet often gratuitous consumption, we will never reach a state of equilibrium with the planet that provides us with our home.
- b) The problem of **shared yet differing responsibilities**, as that same Summit likewise recalled and emphasised with its reminder of what had already been agreed... way back in 1992! For the “developed” countries have historical and present-day responsibilities that are far greater qualitatively and more especially quantitatively than those of the “developing” countries; hence it falls to the “developed” countries to make radical changes in their economic-development models, and thus to make it possible for the “developing” countries to embark forthwith on other models resting on sound energy use and appropriate, clean and renewable technologies. For their part, the “developing” countries must do what they can in this direction.
- c) The problem of the political institutionalisation of democratic governance in the world. As we often recall in the context of the “World Campaign for in-depth Reform of the System of International Institutions”, **one of the handicaps of the present system of international institutions is that it was originally based on a theoretical absolute sovereignty of States, though we now find that ever more of our current problems**

– such as the environmental ones – go beyond the frontiers of those States.

Accordingly, in this context international institutions must also be urgently reformed so that, in certain issues of global public concern, no State may drag the world towards irremediable disaster. International actors – whether they are States, international corporations, etc. – must be bound to global policies democratically established for the good of mankind.

. The only way forward in the face of these challenges and for surmounting these problems is for Humanity as a whole to take action energetically, swiftly and effectively in the three spheres outlined above. Only in-depth reforms in the democratic governance of the world facilitating the resolute and immediate adoption of policies fostering sustainable human development in the world's "souths", together with a change in the economic-growth model in the world's "norths", can finally "cool down" global warming and make our generation a responsible one, evincing solidarity with respect to future generations.

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Edgar Morin	
Fatma Alloo	DAWN – Development Alternatives Women for a New Era
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Chico Whitaker	Right Livelihood Award
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