

# Holistic vision of the World Latin American Agenda'2010

Each year, the Agenda tries to take the pulse of the historical moment and discover the current state of Latin American utopian hope. In 2010, we want to address this hope with all the urgency of the entire planetary "Patria Grande." At the rate we are going, if we do not profoundly change our lifestyles, we are heading towards an ecological disaster that will put at risk our very survival as a species.

This may sound overly dramatic, a rhetorical exaggeration, but it is a certainty. Since the Fourth International Panel of Experts on Climate Change, scientists from around the world have come to agree that there is a 90% probability that this change is happening. What was, until just a few years ago, only a good topic for a science fiction movie, today is a real and verifiable fact: we are living a process of large-scale climate change and global warming that is already producing a massive extinction of species. It has the potential to cause an unquantifiable destruction of human civilization, possibly even the disappearance of the human species. That's been confirmed. And it is now taking place. The only thing we can do is—if we begin acting immediately—ameliorate the catastrophe, but not avoid it.

This phenomenon is not "natural." Rather, we ourselves have induced it. Now we are realizing it. For several centuries, we have been changing the atmosphere, thinking that it would be able to absorb everything. But, all of the sudden, we have come to realize that we have already raised the temperature 0.7°C and that, if we continue as we are going, we may raise it by up to 5°C, which would truly be lethal.

This, then, is a real emergency for the Planetary Patria Grande. This is an issue that is Latin American as well as global, but on which Latin America still has not taken a leadership role. It is critical that we call attention to this so that we can begin to take our place in the lead, joining with the many who are already working hard to change the course of our planet.

It is urgent because we are falling behind and because the period in which we will still have time

to act is rapidly coming to a close. In 2012, a global summit in Copenhagen will outline the new program to "Save the Planet" and to save all of us with it. But it will not be an effective summit if, before its convening, we have not changed our mentality or if there is insufficient pressure in the streets to adopt radical necessary change.

This Agenda wants to call everyone to this urgency. We offer these pages as instruments of transformation so that we may change our ideas and the ideas of others. They are tools for construction workers of the social conscience, the workers of ideas, forgers of opinion, popular educators. That is, they are for all of us who opt for a "theoretical practice," convinced that we will not stop planetary deterioration nor will we diminish the coming disaster unless we change our mindset.

The top priority at this moment is to change both the image we have about what is happening to the planet and the image we have about ourselves in relation to it. Only with these new ideas, only with new images, will this planet be able to renew its covenant with Life. This is the only way the human species will be able to transform itself from an unconscious renter to an intelligent and responsible caretaker. Perhaps, in this way, cosmic evolution will begin to make sense, a process in which we are called to take part in (reflection), opening up a new era for the planet, the "eozoic" era (Thomas Berry), copiloted by nature and intelligence.

Faced with the need for efficacious and radical change, what is most urgent is not simply concrete action, but an educational and radical "theoretical practice." It demands a change in old ideas—which have brought us to this situation—and substitutes them for a new vision, a "new paradigm," in ecology. This "Agenda of Urgency" obeys this option, and puts itself at the service of those who want to change the course of the world, cultivating efficacious ideas. For those who are ready to take action, we invite you to develop activities of popular ecological formation in

your communities (pages 16-21, 240).

In reality, we are not going to “save the planet,” because it is not really at risk...It is just being altered by our action. For the planet, this alteration is just a small, acceptable variation. For us, our very survival is in jeopardy. The planet, in any event, will continue on, with or without us. We are not essential. Nevertheless, we believe that we can offer something. We do not want the evolutionary cosmic possibility that we represent to be frustrated. Because of this, we want to amend these last few pages—badly written—of our recent history.

Saying, “Let’s save ourselves along with the Planet!,” we want to express the conviction that our future—ours, and what we can give to the future of the cosmos—will only come through a grand alliance with nature, returning to her as the home from which

we have been exiled, recognizing her as our ecological niche, our ignored ancestor, and putting our heart beats in synch with the rhythm of our planet.

2010 is also the Bicentenary of National Independence for 22 countries of the Continent. From Mexico, which also celebrates the Centenary of its Revolution, we are reminded of this critical Latin American anniversary (p. 192).

In 2011 this Agenda will celebrate its 20th year. For this occasion, we are thinking about addressing another powerful “paradigm shift” in our current situation: that of religion. Until now, this theme has never been explicitly considered in this Agenda. This is the theme we will broach: “God? What God? What religion?” We await your commentaries, suggestions, and even criticisms. Thanks, until then.

Fraternally/sororally yours,

**José María VIGIL**



### **Pedagogical Use of the Agenda**

In addition to personal use, this Agenda is designed to be a pedagogical instrument for communicators, public educators, pastoral agents, group leaders, and activists...

The texts are always brief and agile, presented under the pedagogical concept of one page, formatted such that they can be directly photocopied and distributed as “work material” in schools, group meetings, adult literacy programs, or on literature tables. They can also be published in the bulletins of organizations or in local magazines.

The format of the texts is dictated by an “economic” criterion which possibly sacrifices aesthetics in the form of white spaces and illustrations in favor of a greater volume of message. This also allows us to keep a low price so the Agenda is more accessible.

### **Ecumenicism**

This agenda is dictated by a “total ecumenicism,” not a “remainder ecumenicism.” Because of this, we do not eliminate what is only Catholic or only Protestant, but we

unite the two. Thus, in the list of the Saints, the Protestant and Catholic commemorations have both been included. When they do not coincide, the Protestant commemoration is in cursive. For example, the Apostle Peter is celebrated by the Catholic Church on February 22 (“the Chair of Peter”), and for the Protestant Churches on January 18 (“the Confession of Peter”); the differences can be distinguished typographically.

Kindly, the Lutheran Bishop Kent Mahler, in an earlier version of the Agenda, presented us with the “Protestant Saints.”

The Agenda is aconfessional, and, above all, “macroecumenical.” The world of common references, beliefs, values, and utopias among peoples and men and women of good will—which Christians call “the Reign”—is shared by all who are partners in this humble, serving, brotherly, and sisterly search.

### **A Non-Profit Work**

In many countries, this Agenda is edited by popular and non-profit organizations that use the money received from the sale of the agenda

to support their work for popular service and solidarity. These centers ensure the non-profit character of each edition.

In all cases, the Latin American Agenda, in its central coordination, is also a non-profit initiative. It was born and developed without help from any agency. The money generated by the Agenda, after adequately compensating the authors who write in its pages, is dedicated to works of popular alternative communication and international solidarity.

Servicios Koinonia, permanently maintained, constantly improved, and freely accessible around the world, the “Tiempo Axial” Collection, and some of the prizes financed by the Agenda are the most well-known.

### **A Collective Agenda**

This is a collective work. Because of this, it has gotten to where it is today. We continue to gladly receive suggestions, materials, documents...

In this way, it will continue being a “collective work, a community patrimony, an annual anthology of the memory and hope of our spiritual Continent.”