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REPUBLICA DE VENEZUELA MINISTERIO DE LA FAMILIA INTERNATIONAL
 CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (Cairo, Sept. 5 - 13, 1994)

REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA DELEGATION CHIEF'S STATEMENT Mercedes Pulido
 Briceno Social Development Ministry Cairo, Sept. 5, 1994 INTERNATIONAL
 CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Intervention of the Minister Mercedes Pulido in the first International
 Conference Population and Development. (Cairo. September of 1994)

It. is a symbolic opportunity that we meet, to very few years of
 the XXI century to dialogue about what we desire of the future of the
 population and the development of the inhabits of the planet. precisely
 here. in Cairo where began to germinate good part of the civilization.

Particularly, it is all interesting commitment that this continent
 is the host of the world nowadays, since the African wisdom for much
 time, has alerted us through the proverb. " the world is not something

that we have received from our parents it is something that our children have lent us". that the goals that we should pursue as a Conference should not be signed by the tragic vision of our circumstances but filled by optimism in human beings

It is the moment of thanking the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund Nafis Sadik and the other members of the team of the United Nations who have succeeded in gathering the international community and numerous N.G.O. in the warm and friendly Arab Republic of Egypt for the purpose of conversing and tracing goals about this complex thematic.

Latin American having experienced diverse thesis and models like the liberalism, the socialism and the neo-liberalism has begun to understand that the challenge that represents overcome the underdevelopment cannot be focused through the application of a programme, a recipe or a model that pleases the official statistics due to the increase of the economical growth and the production of wealth.

The challenge goes further on to the satisfaction of mathematical objectives. Our underdevelopment obeys more to cultural causes rather than the variables of the economical model that we propose to our countries

Venezuela, with a demographic density of 13 inhabitants for square kilometer and with an appraisal of population growth of the 2.3% annual, desire to express that the solution of population and development should not be limited to diminish, still more, our rhythm of growth but to create the social, cultural and economical conditions that allow to incorporate to a worthy and productive life to 60% of our citizens that now live in critical poverty.

As expressed with concern our President Rafael Ángel Calderón Fournier: In Venezuela, almost the half of our territory is practically uninhabited and there are, however, those who think and say before our demographic

growth that the remedy is to limit the population instead of assuming the task of putting the world to the service of the human beings; there are those who, as the Pope Paul the VI has said, want to remedy the scarcity of the bread in the table, not putting more bread, but searching for fewer people to eat."

This Conference is adequate so that we attempt to clarify some of the dilemmas that the topics of population, development, poverty and environment raise to current society: what quantity of development is compatible with ecological rationality?, In what measure social justice will play a role in the technological and educational cooperation? How do we share the responsibilities and duties about the degradation of the planet? and lastly How will we establish alternatives to development and which institution should decide it?.

The majority of the international analysts, the politicians, the scientist and the thinkers of the world agree in highlighting that facing the future, the fundamental problem that will confront the international community with the thesis of the "sustainable development" is to decide who and in what place will be taken the measurements on the environmental preservation of our planet. In this sense, there are two alternatives: either the idea of creating an International Leviathan or the thesis of decentralize the instances of environmental decision and development. In the first option, we will have to reinforce an international instance, maybe the United Nations, who subtracting great part of the particular sovereignty of each State would guide and sanction the behavior of the countries that abuse with the common commitment of achieving a development that does not commit the opportunities of future generations. The second option implicates, to decentralize the organs of decision and promote that each small community, within each State takes the last decision about the use of their own resources.

As we see, each solution generates new problems and so, within

very few years, when the worldwide dynamic carries us either to the alternative of the International Leviathan or the alternative of decentralizing the instances of decision. The obvious fact for both cases is that we have to reach an intense grade of cooperation without hypocrisies and without double discourses. As happens in the "Theory of Games", it is the moment of beginning to understand that "cooperate" is the best alternative that we could adopt.

It is a fact that most of the global contamination of the environment comes from advanced countries. In the last years, the industrialized countries have provoked the 82% of the worldwide emissions of CO₂. Also the emissions of green house gases effects is several times higher in the industrialized countries than in the underdevelopment countries.

On the other hand the South should not neglect the fact that the environmental degradation, caused by poverty and underdevelopment increases faster than those of the development countries.

In this way, the challenge that represents to give well-being to all the inhabitants of our planet, without fading off opportunities of the future generations, should begin to be negotiated within the parameters of the social international justice, technical and educational cooperation as well as other viable alternatives of development.

I am speaking as a representative of a new group of countries that are being born in the intricate road of the universal history. and on behalf of Them, I want to express our anxiety about what should be the hierarchy of our goals as Intentional Community.

If we want to be realist, our effort should be focused in the achievement of a global development that not only preserves the resources of the underdevelopment world, but rather in achieving a radical and structural change in the patterns of production and consumption in the industrialized countries. These countries moved by

the necessity of selling, impose under the idea of fered, products, values and conducts, which frequently forbidden in their countries of origin, find in our countries either a docile market or a deposit of toxic remainders.

Human Beings have committed a mistake distorting our relationship with environment, family, poverty and society. We have put the accent in a antropocentric conception of life on the earth. In this way, we have understood human beings as the sources of all meanings. purposes and values. This has driven us to a scheme of artificial life which has allowed man to domain the world.

The occidental civilization has also engendered a binary system of meanings which confront the mind against the body. the reason against the feelings, human beings againts nature, male againsts females, individual againts society. So, those that have the privileged properties(mind, reason,human being, male, individual) has, indiscriminately. the right of dominating those that posses the inferior properties (body, feelings, nature. female, society) in an attempt that threatens to destroy the life in our planet.

If we keep this outlines of consumption and production and this distorted relationship between male and female. If we keep the scheme of exploitation; we will finish transforming the earth in a monumental and useless factory that will increases poverty, migrations and uncertainty.

Throwing the underdevelopment countries to compete within the same outline that.has guided our civilization in the last centuries could be a terrible mistake. However, it is a challenge that the underdevelopment world has taken on it. In any case, we are aware that in this race of all against all there won't be winners

Stopping a society fed by these values of subordination and exploitation should constitute the goal toward we should aim as a Conference. Achieving low appraisals of fecundity. enlarge the access

to education for girls develop the role of women in society control migration; without any doubt constitute important objectives toward we should advanced. However I make a call so that we do not lose the real perspectives and challenges of our time: transforming the manner in that human beings are related among them and the form they related with environment, family , poverty, society and development.

Venezuelan case could serves as an example in order to come to understand that it is possible to reach an adequate growth without a public policy which control the population. Our country duplicated their population in hardly 20 years (1950-1970) and triplicated in hardly 30 years (1950-1980). According to the XII General Census on Population and Housing. 1990. we are 18.105.265 of Venezuelans and also, according to our projection we will be in 15 years more than 28 millions people. In 1960, a venezuelan woman had between 6 or 7 children average. and hardly in 3 decades, this average diminish to 3 children per woman. This drastic change is due to our concern in our educational and health system and is also due to our social programs which search for the well-being and dignity of venezuelans. We rest in the responsibility, criterion and freedom of our citizens the decision about the number and timing of births.

Any kind of problem can be attacked either by their causes or by the effects. I think that upon arguing the topics about population and development, we make the frequent mistake of pretending solve the problems of humanity through their effects, i.e. through control births, migrations,international cooperation and lastly the freedom of human beings.

We thought that the goals and the cooperation that expounds this Conference should be better guided toward the causes of underdevelopment: poverty and education. This means to dignify the family institution as the unique road that allows to reach

education, values, productivity and dignity.

The disintegration of the family. in the context of a perverse society produces a vicious circle of poverty that is sponsor of the daily death of more than 3.000 children in Latin America due to malnutrition and illness and also. the phenomenon of the "children of the street". being valued that exists more than 40 millions of children abandoned in our streets without protection. affection and future.

At the same time. we are suffering a dramatic unemployment among the young population In venezuelan case. this situation produces that of each 4 youth. 1 is unemployed. 2 of them are informal workers. and only 1 has a stable employment. Besides it. of each 3 youth unemployed 2 of them are women

In the same manner, we are suffering a growing process of empowering of our middle class. This phenomenon threatens to mine great part of our family, intellectual and productive reserves This pathetic picture gets worse due to a violent system of values and social aspirations fed by the Mass. Media. In this context the family is kept out as the natural canal of socialization of values and ethical patterns.

We thought that exist serious reasons to attack underdevelopment and poverty by their real causes. We need a society that for educated and worthy achieve by itself the rhythm and its way of growth

This process might commit the whole world in the common goal of beginning to teach the people how to live with dignity and security. This should be our principle concern We should not be only worry for those that should not be born yet, but for those that has already been born and that live in a shameful poverty

Searching for justice through a sincere commitment is the best homage that we can give to more than 1.000 million of poors in the world who are waiting from us an answer that give them certainty of being simple humans.

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