

“Order!”

On the 75th anniversary of United Nations, building a new world order has become an urgent matter

“Order!” shouted in the House of Commons John Bercow, the peculiar and efficient speaker, with his strong and resolute voice. And we all felt comforted to see how the diverse and sometimes extravagant representatives of UK peoples managed to keep the composure they need to carry out the tasks they have been entrusted with.

The time has come for “We, the peoples” –as so wisely and prematurely proclaimed at the beginning of the Charter of the United Nations– to bear in mind future generations and request “order” from worldwide political leaders, because for the first time in history we are faced with global threats that are potentially irreversible and, unless we take urgent action to redirect current trends, points of no return could be reached regarding the Earth’s habitability.

For decades, scientists have insisted that we must urgently do whatever is needed to see that economy guarantees the full exercise of rights inherent to all human beings without exception, and consumption patterns do not cause any prejudice to nature and our standards of living.

In the 1950s, UNESCO created the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the International Geological, Hydrological and Oceanographic Programmes, and soon after “Man and the Biosphere”... and the Club of Rome which, under the charismatic leadership of Aurelio

Peccei, already warned us about “the limits of growth”... and United States Academy of Sciences who in 1979 alerted that “greenhouse” gas emissions were not only experiencing a steady increase, but still worse... the reuptake capacity of seawater was also decreasing due to continued damage to phytoplankton caused by offshore dumping and washing of oil tankers, instead of using adequate port facilities...

Not only did the “Great Dominion” (military, financial, energetic and media powers) remain deaf to the urgent appeals of Ecology organizations, but it also committed a true crime with the creation of powerful foundations that hired “pseudo-scientists” to argue exactly the opposite.

And this was happening precisely when neoliberalism, headed by President Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, embarked in a long process aimed at marginalizing democratic multilateralism –which had already been openly opposed by the Republican Party of the United States in 1919, with the League of Nations–, thus challenging the spheres of competence of almost 200 countries, and entrusting planetary governance to an oligarchic and plutocratic group, the G6 which really was one sole power –the American G1– and later became the G7, G8 and G20. That was the beginning of the drift we are faced with today at a global scale, together with the added urgency of having to tackle uncontrollable phenomena such as the climate change. As put forward by the European Union in Lisbon in 2000, corrective measures to tackle the economy and the serious social unbalances must necessarily “be based on knowledge”.

Despite the fact that –with the aim of allowing the new Century and Millennium to start under a good omen– relevant benchmarks-roadmaps were approved during the 1990s such as the “Earth Charter”, the “Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace”, the “Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union”, the UNESCO Resolution on the “Responsibility Towards Future Generations”... despite the end of the abominable racist practices of the *apartheid* thanks to the magical action of Nelson Mandela, and the no less surprising transformation of the Soviet Union into a Community of Independent States thanks to the unexpected Mikhail Gorbachev... despite the happy presence of extraordinary leaders in Europe, Latin America, Asia... despite the fact that, thanks to digital technology, thousands of “uninformed” human beings –who were born, lived and died in a few square kilometres, and knew nothing about what was going on beyond their immediate environment– would at last become “citizens of the world” and, what is still more relevant, could start to express themselves freely, giving voice to peoples that up to now had remained silent, fearful, obedient, submissive... despite the fact, above all, that women, who were placed under the dominance of male absolute power since the dawn of time, will now gradually take hold of the public scene, and will finally achieve full equality with men, and become –in the words of Mandela– “the cornerstone of the new era”... despite the fact that young people began to peacefully put forward –as symbolized by the 15M and Fridays for Future– their demands for brighter prospects...

... Despite all the above, the dawn of the 21st century has been marked by the overwhelming power of “markets”, the untamed privatization, the

gradual influence of mass media that transform human beings into abducted spectators instead of actors willing to defend their principles, the abuse of technology that could, if well managed, be useful to channel many of the current excesses...

The big “magnates” of the Earth have succeeded in their incessant, unscrupulous attempt to globalize non-solidarity, indifference, ignorance, irresponsibility... They used simulation and lies as a rationale for Iraq's invasion, and they didn't allow United Nations to look for appropriate solutions for conflicts such as the ongoing tragedies of Syria and Yemen... nor did they agree to discussing alternative ideas other than those offered by “dominant countries” to deal with the “Arab Spring”.

In the Autumn of 2015 –thanks to President Obama who had already solved high risk situations such as those affecting Iran– an Agreement was reached in Paris, within the framework of UN, in order to restrain climate change –even Pope Francis wrote the ecological letter “Laudato si”!– and Obama also signed together with the most densely populated countries the UN General Assembly Resolution on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at “transforming our world”.

Everything seemed to have been at last appropriately rearranged with global governance entrusted to democratic multilateralism and the simultaneous decay of plutocratic groups... until some months later Donald Trump was elected as President of the United States and only a

few hours later he proclaimed “America first” and he said that he would not implement neither the Paris Agreements nor the 2030 Agenda.

And these unfortunate decisions did not give rise –in the era of the Anthropocene!– to the immediate opposition of other worldwide leaders... Because, contrary to what had happened at the end of last century, these leaders no longer exist today.

In the four months that have elapsed since 2015, the situation has deteriorated at a global scale and, in some respects, as in ecology, we are about to reach limits that should never be crossed. Wherever we look: Latin America with Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia...; Africa with Libya...; the Arab world with Syria...; or the East...

On the 75th anniversary of the creation of United Nations by President Roosevelt, there seems to be only one solution, as in 1945, to tackle the multiple and complex issues we are facing today: multilateralism, “We, the peoples”... the possibility for 196 countries to join together, discuss and decide, by proportional voting, which urgent measures must be taken without delay... the actions needed to efficiently implement the SDGs, the new concept of security that will allow not only the defence of territories but also of their inhabitants. I must insist once again that it is intolerable to invest 4,000 million dollars per day in weapons and military expenses while thousands of people are dying from hunger and extreme poverty, most of them girls and boys ranging from one to five years old.

In October 2020, on the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, a great popular clamour –especially from women and young people– must give rise to a great historical shift that will allow the world governance to be entrusted to a multilateral democracy. It is up to “We, the peoples” to proclaim “order!” in the face of the current troubled situation of the world.

Federico Mayor Zaragoza

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