



ESTADO PLURINACIONAL DE BOLIVIA  
MINISTERIO DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES

**TO THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, MINISTERS, AMBASSADORS, CO-  
CHAIRS OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS, SOCIAL AND CIVIL SOCIETY  
ORGANIZATIONS,**

***“Live in harmony with Mother Earth  
has to be the horizon of the Post 2015 Agenda  
and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)”***

Brothers and sisters,

The undersigned wish to reaffirm our commitment to elaborating Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and a Post-2015 Development Agenda that aim to strengthen sustainable development in harmony with mother earth. In accordance to this approach it is of great importance to include in the future Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) the concept and principle of Harmony with Nature and the protection of the integrity of Mother Earth.

Harmony with nature and protection of the integrity of Mother Earth as principles are of great importance in order to build a different and better world recognizing and respecting the different worldviews of peoples with respect to nature and development, understanding that the strengthening of the ecosystems, biodiversity, and nature's environmental functions will only be possible if all living beings live in complementarity with Mother Earth

Principle 1 of the Rio 1992 Declaration on Environment and Development establishes that human beings are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 outcome document “The future we want” also reaffirms the call for holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development that will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystems

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 reaffirms in paragraph 4 the need to achieve sustainable development by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and human development while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration and restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges.

Bolivia has hosted and organized in June of this year the Summit of Heads of State and Governments of the Group of 77+China in the city of Santa Cruz with the chairmanship of the president of the Plurinational State of Bolivia Evo Morales Ayma. This Summit had a large presence of members of the group and all of the representatives approved a declaration at our 50<sup>th</sup>

anniversary calling to pay attention to the situation of our Mother Earth and recognizing the importance to promoting development in Harmony with Nature.

Some of the calls of the G77+China that are part of the “Declaration of Santa Cruz of G77+China” are expressed in the following terms:

- We affirm that the twenty-first century is the time for the countries and the peoples from the South to develop their economies and societies in order to fulfill human needs sustainably, in harmony with nature and respect for Mother Earth and its ecosystems. (par. 14)
- We acknowledge that the Earth and its ecosystems are our home and we are convinced that, in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature and the Earth. We also recognize that “Mother Earth” is a common expression for planet Earth in a number of countries and regions, which reflects the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet we all inhabit. (par. 31)
- We understand that sustainable development involves a change in the order of priorities from the generation of material wealth to the satisfaction of human needs in harmony with nature. The excessive orientation towards profit neither respects Mother Earth nor takes into account human needs. The continuation of this unequal system will lead to further inequality. (par. 51)
- We reaffirm the recognition that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our home and that “Mother Earth” is a common expression in a number of countries and regions, and note that some countries recognize the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development. We are convinced that in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environment needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature. We call for a holistic, integrated approach to sustainable development, which may include, among others, the recognition by some countries of the principles mentioned above, to guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystems. (par. 210)
- We welcome the interactive dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature, held on 22 April 2013, to commemorate International Mother Earth Day. At the event, different economic approaches were discussed in the context of sustainable development, to promote a more ethical basis for the relationship between humanity and Earth, as was the need to promote the sustainable use of natural resources, bearing in mind the importance of exploring the adoption and implementation of policies to build national developmental strategies that promote a better distribution of benefits, going beyond the mere production of raw commodities, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/214. (par. 211)

Harmony with Mother Earth as principle is of great importance in order to build a new world in which we live in happiness, peace and harmony with nature. Hence we recall the different resolutions and declarations that in the context of UN were issued constituting guides to the design of the Post 2015 agenda. Let us summarize some of the resolutions:

- On 22 April of 2009 the UN General Assembly, at its 63rd Session, proclaimed 22 April "International Mother Earth Day" ([A/RES/63/278](#)). The first UN General Assembly Resolution on Harmony with Nature ([A/RES/64/196](#)) was adopted that year. This Resolution requests the Secretary-General to issue a first Report on Harmony with Nature. In 19th August of 2010 the first Report of the Secretary-General on Harmony with Nature was published ([A/65/314](#)). On 20 December of 2010 the UN General Assembly, at its 65th Session, adopted the second Resolution on Harmony with Nature ([A/RES/65/164](#)).
- On 15 August of 2011 the second Report of the Secretary-General on Harmony with Nature ([A/66/302](#)) was published. On 22 December of that year the UN General Assembly, at its 66th Session, adopted the third Resolution on Harmony with Nature ([A/RES/66/204](#)). This Resolution requests the Secretary-General inter alia to: Strengthen the development of the Harmony with Nature website on time for the Rio+20 Conference.
- On 20 to 22 June of 2012 the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) took place. Its outcome document "The Future We Want" recalls and strengthens "Harmony with Nature" as a principle as well as Mother Earth.
- The Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2012 ([A/RES/67/214](#)) encourages parties to improve indicators related with development and to build a new vision of development on the basis of the teachings of indigenous cultures. The Resolution underscores the following:
  - a) Recognizing that gross domestic product was not designed as an indicator for measuring environmental degradation resulting from human activity and the need to overcome this limitation with regard to sustainable development and the work carried out in this regard,
  - b) Recognizing that many ancient civilizations and indigenous cultures have a rich history of understanding the symbiotic connection between human beings and nature that fosters a mutually beneficial relationship,
- On August 15 of 2013 the fourth Report of the Secretary-General on Harmony with Nature was published ([A/68/325](#)). And on December 4 of 2013 The UN General Assembly, at its 68th Session, adopted the fifth Resolution on Harmony with Nature ([A/RES/68/216](#)). This Resolution requests the President of the General Assembly inter alia to **encourage giving appropriate consideration to the issue of Harmony with Nature in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.**
- The Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2013 invites countries to promote harmony with the Earth, as found in indigenous cultures, and learn from them, and to provide support for and promote efforts being made from the national level down to the local community level to reflect the protection of nature.

Brothers and Sisters,

We sincerely believe that the next step to consolidate the configuration of a new view of development having human beings together with nature as part of mother earth is to have a reference to mother earth and harmony with nature in the SDGs.

We would like to express our concern about the fact that the economic emphasis given to the SDGs in the different drafts are not allowing to have an adequate balance regarding the environmental dimension. Mother Earth is claiming for a holistic approach where living well and harmony with nature have to be central in this moment of the history. We should not repeat the classical approach based on the promotion of patterns of consumption and pollutant patterns of production that will condemn mother earth to its destruction and humanity to its extinction. The Sustainable Development Goals have to express a real and deep improvement regarding the classical approaches of development.

We believe that the goals should highlight the importance of changing the world into one where mother earth has to be protected and that growth, industrialization, infrastructure and development have to be in the context of harmony with nature.

We respectfully request all the parties that are engaged in the process of definition of the Post 2015 Agenda to take on account this call, that is also the call of indigenous peoples and the peoples of the world.

We invite all brothers and sisters who feel identified with this called for our mother to sign this letter.

**July 9, 2014**



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**Plurinational State of Bolivia**