

**“FAITH AND CLIMATE: SACRED WATERS”
INTERRELIGIOUS DECLARATION
RIO DE JANEIRO, MAY - 2017**

We are young people from eighteen countries across the Americas. We have come from Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, United States of America and Canada, and we belong to different social sectors and spiritual perspectives. We met from **April 30 to May 4** in the wonderful city of **Rio de Janeiro** for the *Faith and Climate: Sacred Waters* Convergence, to dialogue around **ecothology, ecofeminism and inter-religious cooperation**, and in search of alternatives for our communities of faith, so that they assume more active roles in the face of the urgent and serious socio-economic and environmental crisis. Our conversations lifted up the wisdom of ancestral and indigenous communities, including Tewa (New Mexico, United States of America), Qom-Toba (Northern Argentina), Aymara (Bolivia), Yanasha (Peru), Quichua of the Napo River in the Ecuadorian Amazon, and Afro-descendants like Candomblé and Umbandista. We listened to the perspectives of monotheistic religions as well as non-monotheistic spiritual traditions, including Islam, Christianity (Roman Catholic and Protestant Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed Presbyterian, Methodist, Mennonite, Baptist, and Evangelical churches), Mormonism, Buddhism, Brahma Kumaris, and Hare Krishna. Our public interfaith celebration during the Convergence also included native peoples of Brazil, shamans and representatives of the Jewish community.

We are clearly at a fork in the road in the history of humanity and Earth, our common home.

We feel that we are the present and future of our nations and that now is the moment to make a global inter-religious network in favor of the environment of which we are part, becoming protagonists in the defense of our planet.

We have chosen to reconcile with Earth and to promote relations of peace between religions and nations. We move away from a paradigm of fossil fuels and extractive industries, and adopt a solidarity economy that promotes fair trade and living-wage jobs for all people, and preserves the environment.

We denounce the current economic market system, which has generated a socio-environmental crisis in which the poorest are suffering the most serious consequences in favor of privileged sectors. Such inequality and depredation is based in particular on the unlimited exploitation of the goods of nature at the expense of the life of the people, often with support of the governments, highlighting the terrible persecution and criminalization that has arisen in a systematic way against those who oppose it.

We urgently call on governments to direct their policies towards full compliance with the Paris Agreement, with the goal of avoiding an increase in average global temperature. We join the call of the global climate movement for this increase not to exceed 1.5 ° C and for countries to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions and commit to more ambitious goals progressively.

We demand that countries refine their plans to mitigate the effects of climate change, with special attention to those regions of the world that are most vulnerable, such as the least industrialized nations and island countries.

We affirm the importance of intergenerational equity in the process of implementing the Paris Agreement. We want to leave a prosperous and healthy planet so that our children, especially those who are impoverished, oppressed, marginalized, excluded, and vulnerable, enjoy sufficient conditions to reach human fullness in harmony with the environment.

We demand that Nicaragua subscribe to the Paris Agreement, and Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Suriname and the Dominican Republic ratify and implement it.

We are committed to combating climate change in our different communities of faith and spiritual movements, mindful of our local and institutional realities, and with special attention to the effects of climate change on the sources of water within our continent. We will continue in permanent communication, sharing initiatives, materials, experiences, questions and struggles.

We greet and acknowledge the Foro Social Pan Amazónico (Pan-Amazonian Social Forum), meeting in Tarapoto, Peru, at this same moment, so that they continue their work in the care of this important biome, key to the sustainability of life on Earth and the mitigation of climate change.

We are people who protect nature, and in this we realize we are not alone. Our motivation is rooted in our spiritual traditions, from where we gain strength and momentum and enthuse our hearts. There is something that identifies us that goes beyond the common or every day, and makes this Convergence transcend borders and beliefs. We recognize ourselves as a spiritual force that defends the community of life.

We would like to send forth this passion that moves in us to the communities we come from. Whoever reads this message, know that we will remain united in this struggle for the future of Earth and humanity.

We invite the other communities and spiritualities of the Americas, to strengthen ties across traditions in the care and defense of our planet.

We are grateful to the city of Rio de Janeiro and to the Brazilian people for their hospitality and we offer a special recognition for the 25 years that have passed since the Earth Summit (1992), years during which diverse socio-environmental and religious gatherings have taken place. At the same time, we hope that Rio will continue to be a place that welcomes these kinds of meetings where dreams are conceived and plans are made to realize them. Moreover, we offer a special mention of gratitude to GreenFaith for the initiative to organize this Convergence in Latin America and to Gestão de Interesse

Público (GIP) and Instituto de Estudos da Religião (ISER) for being such excellent hosts. Last, we give special recognition to all the organizing institutions and sponsors of this unforgettable experience.

Thank you very much!



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