Intergenerational Dialogues to the Systemic Transformation of Ibero - America:

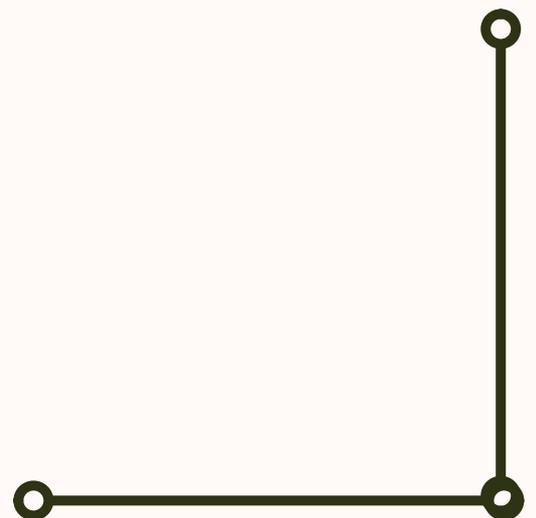## Strategies to achieve a sustainable and equitable world

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Introduction:

We live in a complex and variable world, where political and economic power structures play a fundamental role in the survival and continuation of certain social sectors and their traditions.

The Capitalist System controls various subsystems such as cultural, technological, institutional, economic, and military. In this scenario, conflicts and inequalities manifest themselves in various forms, with the economic dimension usually prevailing over any other consideration.

The inherent inequalities of this model generate negative impacts, particularly for Ibero-American youth who face specific challenges compared to the rest of the world. These challenges include environmental, social, cultural, and identity issues, and they arise in a context where the Status Quo focuses on economic growth and accumulation.

While some inequalities are more pressing in certain countries than in others, the need to unite our voices address everyday problems, and achieve structural changes in our political, economic, and social systems is a common matter that unites us. Historically, the voices of our ancestors have been silenced, but various ethnicities have managed to subsist in an industrialized and Europeanized world, strongly demanding to be heard to definitively leave behind this self-destructive model in which we are immersed.

This need to reconfigure the norms, institutions, and practices that perpetuate conditions of inequality has motivated us to come together over three meetings to discuss the challenges we face and their similarities, as well as to think about joint strategies to overcome the inequalities in which we are inserted and begin to walk the paths of true systemic transformation.

This report brings the initiatives proposed by the attendees of the Intergenerational Dialogue for the Systemic Transformation of Ibero-America, organized by The 50 Percent and the Club of Rome in collaboration with the entities that comprise the Coalition for a Second Chance on Earth.

The meetings allowed sustained dialogue among people of different generations who gathered virtually to discuss and reflect on the Capitalist System and generate proposals for overcoming a new systemic model.

Our Challenges:

The following are the main common issues that need to be addressed, which are categorized into specific thematic areas:

Environmental issues: We are facing an undeniable climate crisis due to the lack of political will and public policies to address it. In most Ibero-American localities there is no policy to support waste separation or to promote sustainable consumption habits. We are experiencing the consequences of the global climate crisis at the local level, such as extreme temperatures and heat waves that have broken historical records this past summer, or the scarcity of drinkable water in some regions.

The lack of action towards renewable energy is also concerning. In addition to this, we are governed by leaders who deny the catastrophic consequences of capitalism and climate change.

It is imperative to educate the majority of the population to recognize and address these problems.

Education: The educational system needs an update to teach active citizenship, decision-making regarding public policies, and promote children and youth participation.

The new educational agenda should include environmental care, mental health, sexual education, conscious eating, and critical thinking to discern between conspiracy theories and reasoning from experience.

Access to basic services: There is a part of our society that lacks access to clean water, sanitation facilities, essential health services (including mental and reproductive health), and education.

Access to employment: Young people are the most affected regarding economic and social rights. Nowadays, finding a job that offers benefits and social security seems like a distant dream. In many cases, forced migration is the only option for those who have been living in precarious conditions for years.

Inclusion, Equality, and Gender: In many Ibero-American countries, vulnerable populations often lack visibility and access to their basic rights. The LGBTQI+ community, for instance, is often

denied access to equal marriage, identity, decent work, and personal development opportunities. This situation is compounded by a significant gender gap, which affects mainly young women. They face inequalities in education, work, and political participation compared to men. Women often earn less money than men for the same work, have limited opportunities to access leadership positions in companies, and lack political representation.

The gender gap also contributes to high rates of femicides and domestic abuse, and weak or deficient support networks for women who need to overcome the barriers of social injustice.

Additionally, people with disabilities are often excluded from society. Schools are generally not equipped to receive students with special educational needs, and public buildings lack differentiated access points and trained staff in sign language, among other situations.

Preservation of Identity: The influence of European narratives has often relegated the identity of our people to a lower level, leading to an urgent need for reaffirmation and preservation. Throughout history, the voices of our ancestors have been silenced, generating a feeling of devaluation towards our cultural roots and their richness.

Indigenous communities have been particularly affected, facing marginalization and denial of their fundamental rights. It is important to recognize and address these issues to promote an inclusive and equitable society that values and respects the diversity of all cultures.

The Resilience of the Capitalism System:

Resilience refers to the ability of a system to withstand, adapt, and recover from crises. A system is complex but flexible, dynamic but also can transform itself permanently as long as actors within it insert demands, or as anti-systemic forces attack it.

The Capitalist System has not only dominance over other systems but also demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to challenges and threats posed by actors, social movements, conflicts, or recessions that have arisen throughout its existence. Capitalism has co-opted those who oppose it, such as environmental or social justice movements, through defense and adaptation strategies. It has embraced and imposed its influence and power at global meetings by adopting discourses and practices aligned with these demands, without the need for a comprehensive approach to underlying problems. This generates phenomena like greenwashing, where actors, especially economic ones, make minimal investments to feign non-existent environmental commitments and continue without implementing the fundamental changes required for truly sustainable and regenerative functioning.

The capitalist system has found ways to commoditize an ideology, turning a demand into merchandising through youth struggle spaces. This same resilience generates dominance over social and political systems, contributing to the generation of inequalities.

Places where extractive practices are carried out exhibit this model, where public policies and human rights are absent and incentivize population migration to exploit the territory, disregarding the environmental consequences.

Strategies to achieve a sustainable and equitable world:

The capitalist system has been the primary force driving worldwide economic progress for centuries. However, its emphasis on limitless expansion and maximizing profits has resulted in significant disparities in social and environmental aspects. Therefore, to bring about substantial changes to the system, it is crucial to critically analyze and reconsider this model. In this regard, we suggest:

Promoting responsible consumption: The current model of capitalism promotes excessive consumption, which has resulted in the overexploitation of natural resources and the generation of polluting waste.

To address this issue, stricter regulations are needed for both production and consumption practices. We should also encourage more responsible consumption habits to slow the depletion of natural resources. Economic growth strategies must be reconsidered to prioritize environmental conservation and long-term human well-being.

Equity: The capitalist model often favors powerful groups, leading to the disregard of the rights of vulnerable social sectors, and thus exacerbating existing inequalities.

To bring meaningful change, our focus must be on promoting equity, ensuring that everyone has access to basic needs, and promoting sustainable development that does not compromise the well-being of future generations.

Revaluing Ancestral Knowledge: Indigenous communities have been practicing sustainable and harmonious ways of living with nature for centuries. It is crucial to recognize and value their wisdom and learn from it to address modern-day overcome environmental challenges. It is imperative to stand up for the territorial and cultural rights of these communities. They should have an active role in the decision-making process that affects their territories and lives.

Reforming educational policies and promoting cultural change through collective action: Currently, the educational system tends to reproduce Eurocentric development models, which means replicating the model of production and consumption. However, to achieve social objectives and create a community that lives in harmony with nature, it is essential to educate in values such as equity and sustainability, promote critical thinking, empathy, and environmental awareness from an early age.

We need to reconsider our perceptions of success and happiness and move towards a worldview that rejects materialism and excessive consumption as synonymous with well-being. Instead, the new model should encompass solidarity, sustainability, and a greater appreciation for human relationships and our interdependence with nature as the true success of our time on earth.

To achieve these goals, intergenerational collaboration is crucial. The energy, creativity, and new perspectives of young people can be combined with the experience and wisdom of older generations.

Conclusions:

To achieve a systemic transformation towards a more equitable and sustainable world, it is essential to question and reconsider the development models that have guided our path so far.

Just over 50 years ago, the Club of Rome published the study "The Limits to Growth," which projected the consequences of continuing with the same way of production and life. In response, a coalition of Latin American organizations led by the Bariloche Foundation, in association with the Club of Rome, developed the "Latin American World Model," proposing solutions from an alternative perspective. Both studies were correct in their predictions: we are dealing with a collapse scenario.

It is critical and urgent to contemplate the paths we need to take to achieve systemic transformation, particularly now. This transformation must be based on the fundamental premise that growth cannot be achieved through the destruction of natural resources or the impoverishment of communities. This means challenging the current consumerist and capitalist paradigm that dominates the world today.

The current capitalist system tends to prioritize excessive consumption and wealth accumulation, which ultimately leads to unsustainability in the long run. As a society, we need to address both our production and consumption models and promote policies that encourage responsible use of our resources.

The world's population is facing a critical moment: while certain sectors experience excessive consumption, others still struggle to meet their basic needs. This inequality demands a profound systemic transformation that encompasses economic, social, and cultural structures.

The pathway to transformative change is based on challenging the prevailing paradigm by empowering all social sectors and promoting collective action. Only through active participation and the creation of alternative solutions can we progress toward a more equitable and prosperous future, not only for individuals but also for the planet as a whole.

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