

The truth of what happened at the Summit

The youth is more interested than anyone else in the future.

Until very recently, the discussion revolved around the kind of society we would have. Today, the discussion centers on whether human society will survive.

These are not dramatic phrases. We must get used to the true facts. Hope is the last thing human beings can relinquish. With truthful arguments, men and women of all ages, especially young people, have waged an exemplary battle at the Summit and taught the world a great lesson.

It is important now that Cuba and the world come to know as much as possible of what happened in Copenhagen. The truth can be stronger than the influenced and often misinformed minds of those holding in their hands the destiny of the world.

If anything significant was achieved in the Danish capital, it was that the media coverage allowed the world public to watch the political chaos created there and the humiliating treatment accorded to Heads of States or Governments, ministers and thousands of representatives of social movements and institutions that in hope and expectation traveled to the Summit's venue in Copenhagen. The brutal repression of peaceful protesters by the police was a reminder of the behavior of the Nazi assault troops that occupied neighboring Denmark on April 1940.

But no one could have thought that on December 18, 2009, the last day of the Summit, this would be suspended by the Danish government --a NATO ally associated with the carnage in Afghanistan-- to offer the conference's plenary hall to President Obama for a meeting where only he and a selected group of guests, 16 in all, would have the exclusive right to speak. Obama's deceitful, demagogic and ambiguous remarks failed to involve a binding commitment and ignored the Kyoto Framework Convention. He then left the room shortly after listening to a few other speakers. Among those invited to take the floor were the highest industrialized nations, several emerging economies and some of the poorest countries in the world. The leaders and representatives of over 170 countries were only allowed to listen.

At the end of the speeches of the 16 chosen, Evo Morales, with the authority of his indigenous Aymara origin and his recent reelection with 65% of the vote as well as the support of two-thirds of the Bolivian House and Senate, requested the floor. The Danish president had no choice but to yield to the insistence of the other delegations. When Evo had concluded his wise and deep observations, the Danish had to give the floor to Hugo Chavez. Both speeches will be registered by history as examples of short and timely remarks. Then, with their mission duly accomplished they both left for their respective countries. But when Obama disappeared, he had yet to fulfill his task in the host country.

From the evening of the 17th and the early morning hours of the 18th, the Prime Minister of Denmark and senior representatives of the United States had been meeting with the Chairman of the European Commission and the leaders of 27 nations to introduce to them --on behalf of Obama-- a draft agreement in whose elaboration none of the other leaders of the rest of the world had taken part. It was an antidemocratic and practically clandestine initiative that disregarded the thousands of representatives of social movements, scientific and religious institutions and other participants in the Summit.

Through the night of the 18th and until 3:00 a.m. of the 19th, when many Heads of States had already departed, the representatives of the countries waited for the resumption of the sessions and the conclusion of the event. Throughout the 18th, Obama held meetings and press conferences, and the

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same did the European leaders. Then, they left.

Something unexpected happened then: at three in the morning of the 19th, the Prime Minister of Denmark convened a meeting to conclude the Summit. By then, the countries were represented by ministers, officials, ambassadors and technical staff.

However, an amazing battle was waged that morning by a group of representatives of Third World countries challenging the attempt by Obama and the wealthiest on the planet to introduce a document imposed by the United States as one agreed by consensus in the Summit.

The representative of Venezuela, Claudia Salerno, showed with impressive energy her right hand bleeding from strongly slamming on the table to claim her right to take the floor. Her tone of voice and the dignity of her arguments will never be forgotten.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba made a vigorous speech of approximately one thousand words from which I have chosen a few paragraphs to include in this Reflection:

"The document that you, Mister Chairman, repeatedly claimed that did not exist shows up now. [...] we have seen drafts circulating surreptitiously and being discussed in secret meetings..."

"...I deeply resent the way you have led this conference."

"...Cuba considers the text of this apocryphal draft extremely inadequate and inadmissible. The goal of 2 degrees centigrade is unacceptable and it would have incalculable catastrophic consequences..."

"The document that you are unfortunately introducing is not binding in any way with respect to the reduction of the greenhouse effect gas emissions."

"I am aware of the previous drafts, which also through questionable and clandestine procedures, were negotiated by small groups of people..."

"The document you are introducing now fails to include the already meager and lacking key phrases contained in that draft..."

"...as far as Cuba is concerned, it is incompatible with the universally recognized scientific view sustaining that it is urgent and inescapable to ensure the reduction of at least 45% of the emissions by the year 2020, and of no less than 80% or 90% by 2050."

"Any argument on the continuation of the negotiations to reach agreement in the future to cut down emissions must inevitably include the concept of the validity of the Kyoto Protocol [...] Your paper, Mister Chairman, is a death certificate of the Kyoto Protocol and my delegation cannot accept it."

"The Cuban delegation would like to emphasize the preeminence of the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities,' as the core of the future process of negotiations. Your paper does not include a word on that."

"This draft declaration fails to mention concrete financial commitments and the transfers of technologies to developing countries, which are part of the obligations contracted by the developed countries under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change [...] Mister Chairman, by imposing their interests through your document, the developed nations are avoiding any concrete commitment."

"...What you, Mister Chairman, define as 'a group of representative leaders' is to me a gross violation of the principle of sovereign equality consecrated in the United Nations Charter..."

"Mr. Chairman, I formally request that this statement be included in the final report of the works of this

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regrettable and shameful 15th session of the Conference of the Parties.”

The representatives of the countries had been given only one hour to present their views. This led to complicated, shameful and embarrassing situations.

Then, a lengthy debate ensued where the delegations from the developed countries put a heavy pressure on the rest to make the conference adopt the abovementioned document as the final result of their deliberations.

A small number of countries firmly insisted on the grave omissions and ambiguities of the document promoted by the United States, particularly the absence of a commitment by the developed countries on the reduction of carbon emissions and on the financing that would allow the South countries to adopt alleviating and adjustment measures.

After a long and extremely tense discussion, the position of the ALBA countries and Sudan, as President of the G-77, prevailed that the document was unacceptable to the conference thus it could not be adopted.

In view of the absence of consensus, the Conference could only “take note” of the existence of that document representing the position of a group of about 25 countries.

After that decision was made, --at 10:30 in the morning Denmark’s time-- Bruno, together with other ALBA representatives, had a friendly discussion with the UN Secretary to whom they expressed their willingness to continue struggling alongside the United Nations to prevent the terrible consequences of climate change. Their mission completed, our Foreign Minister and Cuban Vicepresident Esteban Lazo departed to come back home and attend the National Assembly session. A few members of the delegation and the ambassador stayed in Copenhagen to take part in the final procedures.

This afternoon they reported the following:

“...both, those who were involved in the elaboration of the document, and those like the President of the United States who anticipated its adoption by the conference...as they could not disregard the decision to simply ‘take note’ of the alleged ‘Copenhagen Agreement,’ they tried to introduce a procedure allowing the other COP countries that had not been a part of the shady deal to adhere to it, and make it public, the intention being to pretend such an agreement was legal, something that could precondition the results of the negotiations that should carry on.”

“Such belated attempt was again firmly opposed by Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia. These countries warned that a document which had not been adopted by the Convention could not be considered legal and that there was not a COP document; therefore, no regulations could be established for its alleged adoption...”

“This is how the meeting in Copenhagen is coming to an end, without the adoption of the document surreptitiously worked out in the past few days under the clear ideological guidance of the US Administration...”

Tomorrow our attention will be focused on the National Assembly.

Lazo, Bruno and the other members of the delegation will be arriving at midnight today. On Monday, the Minister of Foreign Affairs will be able to explain in details and with the necessary accuracy the truth of what happened at the Summit.

Fidel Castro Ruz
December 19, 2009

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Published on FIDEL Soldier of Ideas (<http://www.fidelcastro.cu>)

8:17p.m.

Date:

19/12/2009

Source URL: <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/articulos/truth-what-happened-summit?width=600&height=600>