

Perfect storm



Photo taken from Archivo/RHC (Associated Press)

By Guillermo Alvarado

The World Food Program, WFP, increased its projections from 42 million to 45 million human beings suffering from hunger on the planet, which means that instead of decreasing, this scourge is increasing due to the coincidence of several factors.

David Beasley, the organization's executive director, recently traveled to Afghanistan where he found that at least three million people are suffering from acute food shortages in a country where 23 million of its inhabitants need help to survive.

This is one of the net results of 20 years of war led by the United States and its Western allies, who occupied that territory in the name of freedom, democracy and human rights.

According to Beasley, the world is currently experiencing a "perfect storm" due to armed conflict, climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic, which is forcing hundreds of thousands of families to make heartbreaking decisions to obtain a little food.

In the midst of their desperation, they are marrying off their very young children, selling them, withdrawing them from schools or feeding them insects and leaves, says the latest WFP report.

The most terrible thing about this panorama is that it is not a problem that requires heroic acts, transcendental gestures or structural transformations in its solution. In the end, it is nothing more than a question of sensitivity or money, or rather both.

This is what the director of the WFP said a few days ago, when he expressed that with just 0.36 percent of the wealth of the few richest people in the world, this famine crisis could be put to an end.

Moreover, about 4 percent of the fortune of Elon Musk, the tycoon who spent a fortune on a few hours' walk in space, would be enough to ensure that 45 million people would not die of starvation.

According to Bloomberg, Musk, owner of the Amazon consortium, has a net wealth of 289 billion dollars and the World Food Program estimates that 7 billion dollars would be enough to feed the needy and prevent this drama from happening again.

Besley, a member of the U.S. Republican Party, invited the 400 billionaires of his country to go outside and see the people who, on average, are dying of hunger every 4 seconds.

In an ideal reality this problem would already be solved, only that, unlike what Leibniz or Voltaire believed, the one we live in today is still far, far from being the best of all possible worlds.

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