

Saving Life

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Photo taken from the newspaper 5 de septiembre

By Guillermo Alvarado

With less than three weeks to go before the start of the Climate Change Summit in Glasgow, United Kingdom, numerous social organizations, environmental defenders and citizen movements are demanding greater commitments from governments to save life on the planet.

The meeting, known as COP-26, will be an attempt to avoid the failure of the Paris Agreements, adopted in 2015, but which to date remain unimplemented due to the lack of political will of several of the main emitters of polluting gases into the atmosphere.

In the French capital, most of those present signed their collective commitment to prevent the global temperature increase from exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius, with respect to the pre-industrial era, by 2050 at the latest.

However, at the rate the situation is going, that mark will be crossed much earlier and, according to estimates by UN experts, the planet will face a catastrophic increase in global warming of 2.7 degrees, a point that will probably not be reversed.

Hence, recently, in the city of Brussels, Belgium, some 50,000 people marched through the streets to demand drastic measures and prevent the Glasgow summit from passing as just another event.

It is normal that many heads of state and government, as well as high-ranking personalities, arrive at these meetings to give a speech full of good intentions and fine words, but then leave without having listened to their colleagues and without the intention of putting new ideas into practice.

This despite the fact that recent climatic events have demonstrated their destructive potential in both developed countries and the poor world, leaving a trail of human and material losses that are far from negligible.

Devastating fires, prolonged droughts and increasingly frequent and intense storms show that there is no time to lose.

COP-26 is expected to produce a balanced and negotiated package of measures to reduce the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, with visible effects by 2030 at the latest.

Decisions must also be taken to help all countries adapt to climate change and its most harmful effects, including the rising sea levels that threaten small island states.

It is imperative that financial agreements be reached to eliminate the use of fossil fuels, both in industry, transportation and homes, and to make way for clean energy systems.

This is not too much to ask, if we take into account that it is a question of saving the planet where we all live, rich and poor, good and bad.

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