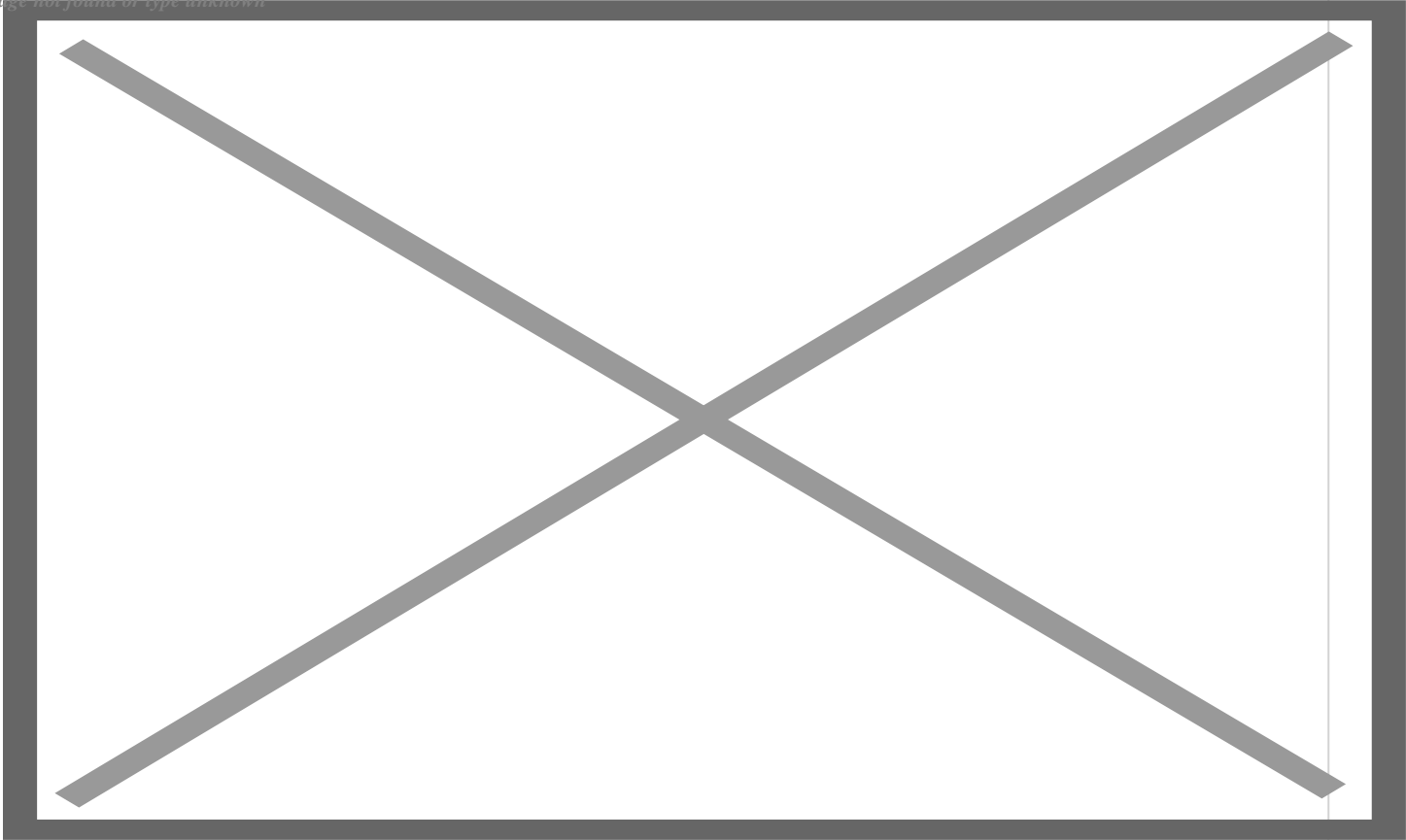


# *Adios Año Viejo / Goodbye Old Year*

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## **The Third Millennium Cross**

By Guillermo Alvarado

The year 2023 is living its last hours and is about to enter the drawer of memories leaving behind a humanity incapable of resolving its serious contradictions, increased by the evidence of climate change and all the calamities that accompany it.

This was expected to be the year of recovery after the global health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, but in reality it served to show how little we learned from those moments, when we were in danger of perishing before a microscopic enemy.

Wars remained the order of the day and, in fact, we are living through one of the cruelest wars known in recent times when one of the most powerful modern armies, that of Israel, uses its force against a defenseless population in the Gaza Strip.

Attacks by air, sea and land are devastating entire cities and more than 21,000 people have been killed, two thirds of them innocent women and children, without any concrete efforts among the international community to stop this genocidal brutality.

We are the only species of nature capable of perpetrating such acts.

But it is not the only thing, because the voracity of an irrational system of production and consumption is destroying our only possible home, this planet, which every year suffers devastating climatic phenomena that hit hardest those who pollute the least.

In our region, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean stated that in 2023 poverty will affect 29.1% of the population, which means that 183 million human beings lack the essentials for a dignified life and 72 million of them are living in poverty.

All this in one of the richest areas of the world, with sufficient resources to produce food and goods for all its inhabitants and many more.

At the end of the 23rd year of the third millennium of modern history, every day we demonstrate with greater crudeness our inability to relate in harmony with the environment and with ourselves. In the Mayan civil calendar -because they had others- there were five days at the end of each year to meditate on what happened and prepare for what is to come.

How good it would be to recover that practice and help us in that way to prevent our moral or physical extinction, I do not know now which of the two is more serious, and to turn this earth into the home of all, where no one is surplus or lacking and thus demonstrate, perhaps, that we are the superior species.

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