

## **HAROLD WOLPE MEMORIAL TRUST: ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE, 24 NOVEMBER 2011**

### **PRESENTATION SPEAKER: MR. PABLO SOLON**

Good Afternoon. Thank you very much for your invitation and to have this dialogue with you. I have been a chief negotiator for Bolivia for almost three years and I have been inside two COPs: COP 15 and COP 16, in Copenhagen and in Cancun. And of course the first question is: What is really the discussion in COP 17? What is the key issue, the most important issue? The key issue is what is going to be emission reduction of developing countries for the period from 2013 until 2020? That is the key discussion; all the other discussions are important but they are not the centre of the negotiation. If the emission reductions are very strong, we can say that in the coming future we will see an increase in the temperature but that the temperature will stabilise in a level that in some way cannot damage, cannot be a catastrophe for our mother earth, for humanity. If the figure that comes out of Durban is very low, the whole planet is going to suffer and the first place, Africa.

Now where are we in the number – that is the question? All developing countries, what we call the G77, an alliance of 131 developing countries, are asking for an emission reductions from 40% to 50% until 2020. That is the demand from the developing world. What came out of Cancun: the developing world that we in the negotiation is known Annex I parties said we're going to reduce between 13% to 17%. Some countries are going to reduce only 3% of their levels of greenhouse gas emissions that they had in 1990. That is the case of the US and Canada – 3% for the next decade. Some say that they are going to reduce 20%. If we summarised all of that, the reductions, it's going to be 13% to 17% for the next period.

What does that mean? If you go onto the Web, you will see many reports from UNEP, from the Stockholm Environmental Institute, and so on. With this level of only 13% to 17%, the increase in the temperature will be more than 4°C. More than 4 °C. So the planet is going to burn and Africa is going to be cooked because if the temperature of the world increases 4°C, that means for Africa 8°C – it's always double. This is the greatest problem. The issue of the agreement if it's binding or not binding; of course we want that the agreement has to be

binding. But the key issue is not the form, the key issue is the substance, it's the number.

Why we didn't as Bolivians supported the Cancun Agreement, it's because of this number. We clearly said we cannot be part of an agreement that would mean genocide, an ecocide. More than 4°C – what does that mean? I come from a country where we have mountains with glaciers. The temperature had increased only 0.8°C, not even 1°C. What has happened with our glaciers in our mountains – we have lost one-third of our glaciers. One-third. If the temperature goes 2°C or 4°C or more, we won't have any more glaciers in our mountains. Can you imagine the impact for the country over water resources, over our biodiversity, over indigenous communities [indistinct] evolution? We cannot be part of that; that is why we clearly said this is a suicide. At that time many diplomats and friends and other [leaders - unclear] came to me and said, yes, you are right, the figures that you are saying are correct, we know.

Well, come down by Durban, you will not only save the diplomatic process of negotiation, we're going to save the climate, now we have to save the negotiations in process with the UN, then we are going to save the climate. Now we are just days before COP 17 begins, and have those figures of Cancun increased a little bit. No. It's even worse. Many developing countries are saying we're not going to the high pledge but we're going to go to the lower end pledge that we can make. So the final figure can be closer to 13% than to 17%. This is the key issue, because all what it's about is how much the emission reductions are going to be in the next period.

Many can say, well, what we don't do until 2020, we're going to do it between 2020 and 2030. But that's not true because what you pollute now, you're not going to be able to erase it the next decade; it takes 100 years for the CO<sub>2</sub> that goes into the atmosphere to disappear. And you can read the last report of the International Agency of Energy and they are saying we are almost out of the scenario of 2°C, because with the current emissions it's not possible to be below or even at the level of only increasing 2°C. There is a report from PricewaterhouseCoopers that says last year for the first time emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> have grown more than they have grown of the GDP of the world: 5.2% have grown the emissions and only the production has grown 5%.

This is the situation, you understand. You can say numbers are [rated - unclear] in order to in some ways congregate the understanding of people. Europe says we're going to reduce 20% for the next period. So you say, oh, they're increasing their emission reduction. But there is a trap here because in the first commitment period, how much does Europe have to reduce: 8% - so in reality what they are going to do in the next eight years is only 12%. So in the first period, five-year period, they reduce 8%. How much did they reduce per year? You have to divide eight between five – that is 1.6% per year. How much they are going to reduce in the next period – you have to divide the [rest, twelve - unclear] by eight – you're only to reduce 1.5%. So instead of increasing the intensity of emission reductions, they are going to reduce it. That is not something that we can accept. We all should be increasing our efforts now that there is more evidence about what has happened with climate change.

So from tomorrow the key question that we all have to answer, the [indistinct] is: what is going to be the percentage of emission reduction of developing countries that has been adopted [into it - sounds like]. If it increases and it goes to 25% - 30%, we all can say it has been a success. If it keeps as low as it is in Cancun, it's a suicide, no matter what other agreement we support in Durban. That's the key problem.

The second issue in Durban COP 17 is developing countries are saying, okay, we're going to reduce 13% to 17%. How much is that in gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year? That is around 3 gigatons per year that they have to reduce by 2020. So you would say, okay, they are going to reduce 3 gigatons per year until 2020. But in reality if you read the UNEP report, they are going to buy from developing countries 1 gigaton through carbon market mechanism. So how much in reality are we have now to reduce in the next decade? Only 2 – because the other 1 is going to be reduced by developing countries; they are going to buy certificates of emission reduction so that they are going to account them as if they would have reduced them inside their own countries. So we in Bolivia do not support the carbon market mechanism – why? Because it's a way they cheat. You say you're going reduce 3 and in reality you're going to reduce 2. And who's going to do the effort? Developing countries.

And of course we all are responsible for climate change. But in the Climate Change Convention that we [indistinct], the 192 states of the UN, there is a principle, that principle is called common but differentiated responsibility. Why

differentiated responsibility? Because around 75% to 80% of the CO<sub>2</sub> that is in the atmosphere is made in the US, made in Europe and made in Japan. The history of emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> comes from developed countries. That is why in the Convention we all agree that the main effort should be from developed countries. It was a way to establish that there is a kind of debt; we're not all responsible in the same way. The carbon footprint of developed countries is more than 20 tons per year per person; of developing countries it's 2 tons per person per year. So who has to take the lead? Developed countries. That is why the Kyoto Protocol binds us [indistinct] developed countries.

Once they came out of Cancun; it was very interesting because pledges were made from developed countries and pledges were made from developing countries. The first that you all must know is that they have changed the words; in the Kyoto Protocol we don't speak about 'pledges', we speak about 'commitments' - and there is a difference to speak about commitments and to speak about pledges. Commitments you understand - you commit yourself; the other one, you promise. Now, the promises, the pledges - it happens that the developed world is going to reduce 3, I think the exact figure is 2.1 gigatons, but the developing world, including China, India, South Africa and all the other developing countries are going to reduce 5 gigatons. We don't say that is bad; we hope that we can reduce even more, but let's be clear who should be reducing more at this time? The developed countries. But that's not what's happening. And those are not the figures of Bolivia; you can see the report of the UNEP closed the gap. It happens that the pledges are shown that the developing world is going to do more than the developed world to reduce greenhouse gas emission even though the main responsible are from the developed world.

So when we speak about climate debt, in the first place we are not speaking about money, we are speaking about you are responsible for what you've done, you have to reduce in a way that guarantees my possibility, my opportunity as a developing country to have a space for development. The atmosphere has been distributed in a very unjust way: you have occupied 75% - 80% of the atmosphere and for us, the developing world, that where 80% of the population is, has only [indistinct] 20% to 25% of the atmosphere. That's not fair. When we talk about climate justice we are saying there should be a just access to the

atmosphere, and that is not what has happened and that is not what is happening.

Now what they want to do here in Durban, they want to erase their historical responsibility. When they speak about a new legal party agreement, I mean, the words sound very good, but what do they say? A new agreement where we all are part and where the principle of common but differentiated responsibility is erased or [indistinct]. And we're saying that's not correct. We want to have a stronger Kyoto Protocol, not a weaker Protocol. We want to see you taking more of the lead, not diluting your responsibility.

The negotiation here in Durban is not about substance, it's about form. I have been in the negotiations previous to Durban, that happened in Thailand and Bonn, Germany, and also followed the negotiations in Panama, they have negotiated the number of emission reductions, they negotiated the form. There are two positions: one that says, okay, we have just to keep this number but how do we list it? A group of countries in Europe saying we have to list it under the Kyoto Protocol because there is [nowhere else - unclear]. The other ones say, no, we have to list it in a decision of the COP 17. But the number is very low. But what is even worse is that the regime they want to approve is a voluntary regime – so that everybody lists what he wants to do. It's not like just now in the Kyoto Protocol: in the Kyoto Protocol there was a target, 5.2% for the first commitment period and then we see how much of each of the developed countries is going to do. Nowadays each one lists what he's going to do and we see what happens. So this voluntary regime is going to be adopted in the form of an empty shell, [second period - unclear] of the Kyoto Protocol or in the form of a decision. In any case, it's weaker than what we have now. This is the main problem in the negotiation here.

We're going to a more flexible voluntary, some call it a 'maybe' regime because maybe you will really do what you are saying you're pledging in your promise. So the situation is really, I would say, very, very dangerous here in South Africa. I must be very honest, I think we can have a worse result than in Cancun and worse even than in Copenhagen. And we can end COP 17 with a figure that leads us to more than 4°C, that creates a new market mechanism, that governments [use the present - unclear] market mechanism but doesn't solve the issue of the increasing temperature.

Why many countries are saying let's keep the Kyoto Protocol, because the only market mechanism that exists at this moment are under the Kyoto Protocol. Once I was at a dinner with the vice foreign minister of Japan, with other [indistinct], why is Japan about to the end the Kyoto Protocol – and he said, no, we don't want to end the Kyoto Protocol, we want that the commitments of emission reductions are [indistinct], we want to keep the Kyoto Protocol because of the current market mechanism. So the Kyoto Protocol is going to continue for the current market mechanism – because if there is no Kyoto Protocol, the current markets that are already in very bad shape, are going to collapse. So to keep the Kyoto Protocol in order to save the current market mechanism but not to save human life on our earth, we see it as really something not sustainable.

Now you'll be asking me, why is it that this was agreed in Cancun, what happened, because this is not something new; this is the continuation with what happened in Cancun. Why did governments accept that? Because there was the promise of money. Good promises: first, what is called the fast-start finance, 30 billion USD for the first three years, from 2010 to 2012. That means 10 billion USD per year. So many, many government, many delegations say, yes, the figures are bad but we want to have a share of those 30 billion USD. And then there was the second promise: the second promise is we're going to have Green Fund that's going to be fund of 100 billion USD by 2020. So many delegations of the developing countries said, ja, we're not going to be able to change what they want to do in relation to emission reductions, we accept the offer of the money.

Now what has happened with this fast-start financing of 30 billion USD? We are finishing the second year, so all developing countries should have received at this moment 20 billion USD – that was the offer. And if you go and see the webpage they have built that's called [faststartfinancing.org](http://faststartfinancing.org) you will see that there isn't those 20 billion USD. Most of the money they said was going to come for aid for climate change, is money that was already committed through other kinds of programmes of aid. So really fresh new money; very little. So many delegations that are coming to Durban are saying, hey, you're fooling around with us because two years have passed and we don't see the money. And when you read in black and white the letters, because the text of this agreement, one has to read it; they have changed the words. In the Climate Change

Convention there is a commitment that developed countries are going to provide, the word is 'provide' financial resources and transfer of technology of all things to developing countries. That is what the Convention says. What does the Cancun agreement say? It says: developed countries are going to mobilise. We know the difference between provide and mobilise. So the 100 billion USD is not a commitment that they are committing to provide 100 billion USD; they are going to mobilise 100 billion USD. So what are going to be sources of 100 billion USD? And they say, oh, one part of it will come from our public budget, the other part is going to come from private investment; the other part is going to come from market mechanisms; the other part is going to be loans from banks and the other part is going to be from the developing countries to developing countries. So we mobilise 100 billion USD, but in reality what is the real amount of money that's going to come from developed states, because we are going to sign an agreement between states, we are not signing an agreement with the private sector. Nobody can guarantee that the private sector is going to – we are signing an agreement with states – developed with developing countries.

We have asked during this year and the past year what is going to be the figure? Okay, it's not going to be 100 billion USD but what's the figure? 20 billion USD? They never said. The reality is that you have the US funders saying we are going to cut the [end - unclear] for climate change. So other 100 billion USD in reality it's all taxes. And even in the words it says 100 billion USD by 2020. Why it says 'by' – when are the 100 billion USD are going to begin to be delivered? In 2009 it says 100 billion USD by 2020; are they going to be delivered by 2019? Why don't you say when it will begin to be delivered or mobilised? So this is the problem in the negotiation.

So our proposal, we say if we don't want a debt; this is a debt, this is your responsibility. So what we as our responsibility is, we should establish a tax in international financial transactions, with a tax of 0.05%, we can get next year 600 billion USD and without having to wait if they approve it or not approve it, 600 billion USD. Those are our figures, those are the figures of ECLAC of the UN.

I have ten minutes and I want to use these ten minutes to the other question – that is something that's not being discussed here in climate change negotiation: what is the real cause of climate change? The real cause of climate change –

why do we have [indistinct] an increase in greenhouse gas emission? Because the negotiation is only about reducing but in fact is greenhouse gas emissions exist. What drives this? And in Copenhagen, civil society did express change the system and not the climate. The key issue that we have with greenhouse gas emissions is a system that puts in front profit instead of harmony with nature. It's a system that qualifies everything. They want to now make a new market mechanism with the tragedy of the people, a new carbon market mechanism.

So the key issue, if we want to put an end to climate change and other great imbalances with nature, we have to recognise that we all live in one system; the earth is a system, we humans are part of a community. The problem is that in this earth system, we humans are the only ones that have rights and we treat the rest of the system as a thing, as something that we can do whatever we want, with no consequence. It's an object of nature – we can explode it, we can pollute it, it doesn't matter; the only ones that have rights are us humans. Well, we think this has to change if we want to save the world; as a humanity we have to recognise that not only humans have rights, nature has also rights. We have to respect the vital cycles of nature, not only humans have laws, there are also rights. We have to respect the vital signs of nature. Not only humans have laws; there are also laws in nature. We don't respect them.

So, our decision has been all these years we want to begin a discussion inside the UN about these structural causes of climate change, from our point of view that we want to solve this issue, it's not a problem only of emission reductions, and it's key, but it's also a problem of recognising that we have to change our way, the way we relate to nature. We have to begin to recognise that there are laws that we are violating, the laws of nature, and that means that we have to recognise the rights of nature.

When I was in the UN, it was a very big battle to have approved the International Day of Mother Earth, because to speak about Mother Earth and it was approved by 102 nations of the UN, it means that your relation with the earth changes. First, when you put the word 'mother', it means you have to treat it with respect. The second thing, it means you are speaking about a living being and not just a thing. It was a very important step forward, but now we have to go even more to recognise our relation, the respect and the rights for nature, for our Mother Earth. Thank you very much. [applause].

[END]