

**VII SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE  
BOLIVARIAN ALLIANCE FOR THE PEOPLES OF OUR AMERICA-  
PEOPLES' TRADE TREATY (ALBA – TCP)**

**The Sunrise of The Peoples**

**Cochabamba, October 17<sup>th</sup> 2009**

**SPECIAL DECLARATION FOR A UNIVERSAL DECLARATION  
OF  
MOTHER EARTH RIGHTS**

1. In the 21st Century it is impossible to achieve full human rights protection if at the same time we do not recognize and defend the rights of the planet earth and nature. Only by guaranteeing the rights of Mother Earth we can guarantee the protection of human rights. The planet earth can exist without human life, but humans cannot exist without planet earth.
2. Just as World War II caused a serious humanity crisis that in 1948 led to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human rights, today we are suffering the enormous consequences of Climate Change making it essential to have a Universal Declaration of Mother Earth Rights.
3. The ecological crisis, which global warming is a part of, is showing so palpable an essential principle that has been argued for centuries by the native and indigenous peoples all over the world: that human beings are part of an interdependent system of plants, animals, hills, forests, oceans and air that require our respect and care. This system is what we call Mother Earth. "Earth does not belong to man, but man belongs to earth." The Earth is not a group of things that we can appropriate of, but it is a group of natural beings with whom we must learn to live together in harmony and balance respecting their rights.
4. The rule that only human beings have rights creates a growing unbalance of the entire system while providing free access to the violations of rights of the other natural beings. There are differences among human beings and the other members of Mother Earth that have to be taken in consideration in a Universal Declaration of Mother Earth Rights.
5. It is inconceivable and unacceptable that in the midst of the 21st century we do

not recognize the rights of mother earth who gives us life.

6. The Universal Declaration of Mother Earth Rights must recognize among others:
  - 6.1. The right to life, that means the right to exist. Every ecosystem, animal or vegetal species, river or lake, has a right to exist without being threatened by human activity whose rights end there where they threaten to damage the survival of Mother Earth and to break the balance and life with nature.
  - 6.2. The right to the regeneration of its bio-capacity and its vital cycles. If humans consume and squander most of what Mother Earth can replace and recreate then we are choking the Planet, all living beings and ourselves.
  - 6.3. The right to a healthy environment, which means the right of Mother Earth, the rivers, fish, animals, and trees have the right to live, like humans, in an environment free of contamination, poisoning and intoxication.
  - 6.4. The right to harmony and balance between everyone and everything. Is the right to be recognized as part of a system in which we are all independent. It is the right to live in balance with human beings. There are millions of living species in the planet, but only human beings have the awareness and ability to control our own actions to promote harmony with nature.
7. For the full compliance of Mother Earth Rights, States will apply precaution and restriction measures for the activities that can conduce to the extinction of species, the destruction of ecosystems or to the permanent alteration of the natural cycles.
8. The fact that natural beings cannot directly practice the defense of their rights cannot deprive them from this exercise. Just as society and the State assume the defense of rights of children and the disabled, the same way they must exercise the promotion, defense and compliance of Mother Earth Rights. It corresponds to the United Nations to promote and enforce the respect of the Mother Earth Rights globally.
9. The Universal Declaration of Mother Earth Rights has to be promoted within the framework of the United Nations as a common ideal in which all peoples and all nations should strive, so that both, individuals and institutions, constantly being inspired by it, promote through teaching and education, the respect for these rights and liberties and ensure, through national and international progressive measures, their universal and effective recognition and application.