

Caffeine-free Summit

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Frustration and anger were widespread inside and outside the venue. Photo: www.aa.com.tr

By Guillermo Alvarado

More than with substantive agreements, the UN summit on climate change held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, ended with an open divorce between the pressing reality of global warming and the interests of the rich countries, which are, in turn, the most polluting.

As is often the case, a last-minute maneuver negotiated in secret and accepted by the meeting's management dashed hopes that sanity would finally prevail and that we could leave a more habitable planet for our descendants.

When the final declaration was being debated, a seemingly innocent change suddenly appeared, which threw the work of previous months into disarray.

Instead of calling for the elimination of the use of fossil fuels and coal, a "gradual reduction" was proposed, leaving things as they were before.

Moreover, the rich countries did not commit to maintaining the \$100 billion annual fund that would finance energy transition and adaptation to climate change in poor nations.

They also refused to pay for the losses and damages caused by the irrational and unbridled exploitation of natural resources in the less developed world.

There was frustration and anger inside and outside the venue, and although the chairman of the summit, the British Alok Sharma, apologized for what happened at the end, several delegations harshly criticized the attitude of a small group of powerful people.

Pyrrhic victory, insufficient and empty of content for now, was that the principle of preventing a global temperature increase above 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century was saved, that is to say that artificial respiration was put to the Paris Agreements of December 2015, but nothing more.

Perhaps the most accurate description of what happened in the Scottish city of Glasgow was given by Gabriela Bucher, executive director of Oxfam International.

"Clearly," she said, "some world leaders think they don't live on the same planet as the rest of us. It seems that no amount of fires, sea level rise or droughts will make them come to their senses to stop rising emissions at the expense of humanity."

The substantive issues were then left for the next meeting, which will be COP-27 and will be held in 2022 in Cairo, Egypt, which will once again be called "the last chance to save the world".

It will not be the last, of course, but it will be one more towards climate collapse.

Covid-19 taught us to live behind a sanitary mask; will the next step be to get used to wearing an oxygen tank?

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