Ressentiment and World Governance

From the South and Down Below
Overcoming Ressentiment: an historical challenge for constructing a responsible world governance rooted in solidarity

Seminar held in Iquique, Chile
5 and 6 December 2008
with the participation of citizens from Chile, Peru, Bolivia and Argentina
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The old world is dying away, and the new world struggles to come forth: now is the time of monsters.

Antonio Gramsci

Barricades of ideas are worth more than barricades of stones.

José Martí
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It is no easy thing to refer to ressentiment without touching on the composite aspects the term conjures up. Broaching the question of ressentiment is complicated, since it often gives rise to misunderstandings and stirs up confused and contradictory feelings. When Arnaud Blin and I suggested the theme of Ressentiment and Governance to our colleagues in the Southern Cone, the unexpected and unusual nature of our proposal no doubt came as something of a surprise. But this approach was intentional. As part of our efforts to devise and construct a new world governance, the purpose of the regional seminars we organize is precisely to use an unusual and innovative approach to analyze governance. This approach will allow us to open up new horizons in the quest for a new world governance that is the fruit of the ideas and thoughts of the citizens themselves.
This was the tactic we used in Brazil. Together with Cândido Grzybowski, Director of the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analyses (IBASE), and our Brazilian partners, we decided to embrace a much wider standpoint than the role of the Brazilian state or the prospects held out by Lula’s government, and position Amazonia at the centre of the debate on world governance. We resolved to focus our deliberations on a crucial issue: what sort of Amazonia does the world need? This focus meant that we could tackle subjects not usually included in discussions on world governance, by taking an in-depth look at aspects such as territory, indigenous peoples, transnational businesses, states and international bodies. This process was enabled by an all-embracing approach that took into account the complexity of the architecture Amazonia needs to become capable of contributing to a solidarity-based and effective governance.

We also felt that, for the Southern Cone, it would be useful to change our approach and find a new departure point for deliberation. We could have chosen to discuss, for example, regional integration, access to energy resources or Bolivia’s access to the sea. These subjects are not devoid of interest. But in the light of the many and various seminars and conferences that have already examined these issues, we felt that our efforts would not add anything new or provide any added value.

We therefore decided to tackle the issue of ressentiment by broaching frequently-avoided questions concerning relations between a country and its people. The focus of conflict management is almost always on territorial negotiations diplomatic agreements or customs issues, neglecting one of the fundamental issues underlying the conflict: ressentiment.

In the wake of the military dictatorships inflicted on the Southern Cone countries — Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Argentina — the peoples of these countries are now living through a singular period in their history. They are opening up to new horizons. Now that the transition to democracy has been successfully completed, the region is faced with decisive challenges in terms of strengthening their democratic processes, which remain fragile. They need to overcome the obstacles that continue stubbornly to arise on the long road to a new political system and the adoption of new institutions capable of guaranteeing peaceable development and the region’s integration into a globalized economy; furthermore, this task befalls them at a time of global crisis.

The Southern Cone peoples need to look back to their past to help them take this historical step forward and head for the future. Not with nostalgia, but as a source of strength to help them defeat the obstacles that have until now prevented any real integration. Faced with the predominance of an “official” past, now being questioned, the task of re-examining and rebuilding that past represents the best possible preparation for rethinking the present and envisaging the future.
One of the greatest of these obstacles may well be the issue of ressentiment. Every now and then, each time more insidiously, and particularly at times when there is an attempt to solve the region’s conflicts, the symptoms of ressentiment are revealed in outbursts of sarcasm, racism or xenophobia, snuffing out all efforts at establishing dialogue. Overcoming ressentiment thus seems to be a crucial element in building a responsible, plural and solidarity-based governance.

One of the reasons why our Southern Cone colleagues were able to organize the seminar with such great energy was the realization that ressentiment was not a phenomenon confined to the region. Quite the opposite. Ressentiment proliferates in many regions: between the people of Algeria and France, China and Japan, Palestine and Israel, Rwanda and the Congo, Latin America and the USA, Georgia and Russia. In the Southern Cone, ressentiment is particularly strong between Chileans, Bolivians and Peruvians. It arises not solely between countries, but also within each territory, particularly between the rich and the poor and between nationals and foreigners, especially where migrants are concerned.

Debate on the issue of ressentiment will also be productive in creating a link between the individual and the collective. Ressentiment is global, it falls in the realm of groups and peoples, but it also springs from the inner workings of each individual. The act of reflecting on and overcoming ressentiment thus provides a tool for taking steps towards a personal and collective transformation, unquestionably one of the cornerstones underpinning the ethical and political change that the new world governance demands.

We organized the Southern Cone seminar within this broader conception of the theme of ressentiment. We knew that we would be able to tackle such a complex subject with lucidity and a broad vision of the future thanks to our colleagues’ maturity, acquired through long years of discussion and struggling for liberation, and the action of the vast networks of social actors they belong to. We could well have been concerned that a legitimate protest reflex, born of the violence, injustice and exclusion so characteristic of the region, would hamper lucid analysis of ressentiment. However, initial mistrust was soon fully overcome by a pluralism that respected dialogue and the force of the arguments propounded.

At a time of major turmoil, the American continent’s Southern Cone has become a place where local deliberations reflect the global challenges of our era. We held the seminar on 5 and 6 December 2008 in Iquique. The town has a highly-charged past and is imbued with ressentiment, a consequence of the Pacific War — 130 years ago! — and the miners’ massacres that took place over 100 years ago in front of the now infamous Santa María School.

In this context, around thirty social actors, intellectuals, leaders of indigenous peoples’ groups, academics, youth group leaders, journalists, women and men from the
Southern Cone — Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Argentina — as well as from Germany and France took part in a process of deliberation on the ways and means of overcoming ressentiment and laying the foundations of a new governance in the region.

This publication is part of the series of Proposal Papers for the Forum for a new World Governance. The series proposes documents produced during events that are both symbolic and significant. Arnaud Blin wrote the initial document, Ressentiment Throughout History, designed to get the debate started. Ricardo Jiménez wrote an account of the seminar: From the South and Down Below. And Carlos Liberona provided the final document, entitled Beyond Ressentiment: Taking Steps Towards a Renewed Governance. This Paper will contribute to the deliberations and proposals of the actors working on the Southern Cone Citizens’ Assembly, with a launch planned for November 2010 in Iquique. I am convinced that it could also be useful to everyone elsewhere in the world striving to move beyond ressentiment in order to build a new world governance truly rooted in solidarity.

Gustavo Marin

Director of the Forum for a new World Governance
INTRODUCTION

Ressentiment Throughout History

Arnaud Blin*

Ressentiment\(^1\) is a self-poisoning of the mind which has quite definite causes and consequences. It is a lasting mental attitude, caused by the systematic repression of certain emotions and affects which, as such, are normal components of human nature. Their repression leads to the constant tendency to indulge in certain kinds of value delusions and corresponding value judgments. The emotions and affects primarily concerned are revenge, hatred, malice, envy, the impulse to detract, and spite.

Max Scheler, Ressentiment
(translated by Lewis B. Coser and William W. Holdheim)

Ressentiment felt by an individual or social group is inevitably caused by a wound of some sort, an abuse, an affront, a trauma. People who feel victimized are powerless to react. They brood over their revenge without ever being able to act it out, and it torments them endlessly. Until they can bear it no longer.(…) The enduring nature of the past wound is stronger than the desire to forget. The existence of ressentiment thus demonstrates the artificial nature of the separation between past and present, which exist one inside the other; the past becomes a present that is more present than the present, as history shows us time and again.

Marc Ferro, Le Ressentiment dans l’histoire

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\(^1\) Translator’s note:
I have decided to use the term “ressentiment” throughout the article rather than the more usual “resentment” in line with the author’s intentions, and based on the following references:
“A term imported by many languages for its philosophical and psychological connotations, “ressentiment” is not to be considered interchangeable with the normal English word “resentment”, or even the French “ressentiment”. While the normal words both speak to a feeling of frustration directed at a perceived source, neither speaks to the special relationship between a sense of inferiority and the creation of morality. Thus, the term ‘Ressentiment’ as used here always maintains a distinction.”
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Scheler%27s_Concept_of_Ressentiment

“As a widely recognized convention, the French spelling of this term has been retained in philosophical circles so as to preserve a broad sense of discursive meaning and application.”
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ressentiment
History offers us an infinite array of examples of major and minor conflicts born of ressentiment. Revolutions, the key periods marking a break from the past and generating major cycles of history, are often the result of a sudden explosion of old resentments. Following the great revolutions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries and the eruption of major ideologies and virulent nationalist movements which have all, in some way, instrumentalized legitimate ressentiments, the 21st century offers us the spectacle of a worldwide political map consumed by every sort of ressentiment. To paraphrase René Descartes, we could almost say that ressentiment is the most widely shared thing in the world. It is indeed difficult to observe current affairs without perceiving the resentments that are the causes or consequences of the major events that make up our daily lives. Let us take a recent example. What can we make of the current financial crisis? That it will create a mountain of ressentiments, notably in Southern hemisphere countries which could be freed from poverty with just a fraction of the hundreds of billions of euros and dollars released with disconcerting speed by rich countries to save their banks. The events of 11 September 2001 provide another example. The causes behind it? For many observers, Islamic terrorism springs from the ressentiment felt by the Muslim world towards the West. The war in Iraq? How many long-standing resentments has it created or exacerbated in the Middle East?

There is an endless supply of examples. Most current conflicts are primarily fed by ressentiment, such as the conflict in the Middle East, tensions between India and Pakistan, and inter-ethnic conflicts in Africa. The genocide in Rwanda and Burundi, the bloodiest conflict of the last fifty years, was essentially a war of ressentiment, as were the wars in the former Yugoslavia. And aside from these examples of open conflicts, how many countries and peoples are influenced by enduring animosity dating from the past, recent or distant, which the collective memory keeps alive just below the surface, ready to explode? China, for instance, has yet to forgive Japan the acts of violence it committed in the 1930s. Neither have the Armenians forgiven the Turks for the genocide of 1915, their bitterness only exacerbated by the Turks’ refusal to recognise the event. The Spanish continue to nurture bitter memories of Napoleon and, increasingly now that Civil War mass graves are being opened, Franco, as well as of the Muslim colonisation, despite several centuries having passed since it took place. The Greeks continue to hold a strong grudge against the Turks for the centuries of subjugation they inflicted upon them. The Africans and Indians have ambivalent relationships with their former colonial nations, France, England, Portugal and the Netherlands. Since the days of Monroe and, especially, Theodore Roosevelt, the US has given its southern neighbours plenty of grounds for ressentiment, and still today does nothing to overturn
the feelings of animosity. Peru and Bolivia have not yet forgiven the Chilians for having sequestered a vast territory and, for the Bolivians, access to the sea. Throughout the Americas, from Chile to Argentina and the great Canadian north, Amerindian peoples feel the consequences of European colonization in their daily lives, just like the Aborigines and Maoris, amongst others, in the Pacific region. Ressentiment gnaws at people's minds and hearts and shuts the door on forgiveness.

Collective ressentiment that establishes itself in individuals belonging to a community is often composed of several strata. We can take Togo as an example: after French colonization and the subsequent post-independence neo-colonization, this small country in West Africa fell prey to a power struggle between the Kabyés northern tribes and Ewés southern tribes, the government greatly favouring the former over the latter, and the latter fiercely defending their economic power against the former. Throughout Africa these internal conflicts nourish a ressentiment that, combined with other elements, is liable to blow up at any moment just like a dormant volcano. As demonstrated by the Ivory Coast, until recently cited as a prime example of a stable and peaceful country.

Political integration could be seen as an effective remedy for collective ressentiment, as exemplified by France and Germany, two countries that took the practice of ressentiment-driven wars to excess. Starting in the 18th century, or more precisely, since the Seven Years War (1756-63), ressentiment between the two countries provoked a series of wars, two of which engulfed the rest of the world, as we can see by examining the sequence of events. After Prussia's humiliating victory over France at Rossbach in 1757, the French were obsessed by the thought of exacting their revenge on the Prussians, leading to the battle of Jena in 1806 with Napoleon. This humiliating defeat for the Prussians, who prided themselves on having the best army in the world, gave birth to German nationalism and enabled Prussia and then the reunified German nation to construct a state and a modern army. In 1870, the Germans wiped clean the affront of 1806 by inflicting a severe punishment on France, which lost Alsace and Lorraine. Revenge was the only thing the French could think of from 1870 to 1914, one of the main causes of the First World War. The next stage came in 1919 with the Treaty of Versailles, when Germany was collectively humiliated by the victors of 1918, thus paving the way for the rise of Hitler and the Second World War. Despite these events, Europe went on to rebuild itself after the war and the two former enemies established a relationship built on real friendship, the cornerstone of the project for a united Europe.

However, European integration is not enough to drown out all existing ressentiment, far from it. Whether you turn to Northern Ireland, Poland, the Basque Country or Corsica, to name just a few, long-standing ressentiments foster communitarianism and tribalism that sometimes mutate into separatism. The situation in Belgium provides a striking example. Despite being home to the European institutions, this tiny territory contains two linguistic communities, francophone and Dutch-speaking, that are being torn apart by old ressentiments, to the extent that the country is barely governable and seems on the brink of imploding.

So how have France and Germany succeeded in putting two centuries of war behind them whilst other countries seem not just incapable of giving up their grudges, but actually exacerbate them?

An initial explanation may be found in the very nature of ressentiment. The conflicts and wars between France and Germany were extremely violent and chalked up a number of fatalities yet to be rivalled, possibly never to be rivalled. However, these were conventional wars, since they were undertaken by states based on quarrels rooted essentially in territorial and hegemonic competition — the desire to become the dominant power in continental Europe. The people were caught up in these conflicts, instigated by their leaders, but they were not the driving force behind them. Ressentiment was therefore in some way artificial, especially since everyone went home once the war was over. It is symptomatic that regions where real popular ressentiment persists today are those that were subjugated by the victor, Alsace and Lorraine being a case in point.

And then there is the institutional construction of the European Union which, it is worth pointing out, was built on the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

But ressentiment is tenacious by nature. The Belgian situation is a stark contrast. Walloons and Flemish people are not divided by war. Nevertheless, the humiliation the Flemish felt when the Walloons were dominating the country's economy produced a violent reaction when the scales tipped in their favour. Contemporary Belgium is marked by a mutual and deep-seated ressentiment. It is deep-seated because humiliation was, or still is, part of daily life. Because it does not spring from a foreign state or government and its conquering armies, but from a people, the country's own people. We can see the same type of development in Rwanda, where deep-seated ressentiment, often felt between neighbours, sometimes even between a wife and husband, is rooted in daily humiliation that was totally repressed before circumstances unleashed it with the most dramatic of consequences. In contrast to other major 20th century
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genocides, the Rwandan tragedy had its origins in the people rather than their political leaders. And the driving force behind it was ressentiment.

Collective ressentiment between peoples, both locally and globally, manifests itself on different levels, which can be economic, social or ethnic. It may be rooted in a long, or even very long, history, and may have been buried or suppressed by an autocratic government, as in the case of Tito in Yugoslavia. It may on the other hand be more recent, without being any less virulent; the conflict between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East is a case in point, where ressentiment that arose during the last century has blown up to such proportions that it has become the main obstacle to a lasting peace, however much such a peace would benefit everyone involved. Ressentiment may also undergo some sort of major shift: the War of the Pacific was a conventional conflict, but the ressentiment born of the war, particularly in Bolivia, marked the nation so significantly that it partially defines the Bolivian people’s collective conscience, in the same way that the loss of access to the Pacific had an economic and social impact on the lives of every citizen. Over a century after the Treaty of Ancón, the ressentiment born of this war continues to define relations between Chile, Peru and Bolivia.

Ressentiment rarely brings anything other than trouble. Nevertheless, political leaders are quick to use it for nationalistic propaganda ends, either to justify a conflict or legitimize their position of power. As demonstrated by the Argentine dictators during the Falklands War, with ressentiment towards Great Britain playing a key role in the conflict.

Ressentiment between peoples or ethnic groups within a country is a potential source of civil war. When it arises between states, it creates what we know as a conventional war. When it goes beyond that level — an occurrence that happily remains within the realm of theory — collective ressentiment traverses borders and affects civilisations. This equates to Samuel Huntington’s famous theory of “the clash of civilisations” which to some extent takes ressentiment to its highest possible level. It also explains radical fundamentalism as expounded by Ben Laden, its best-known advocate. It would seem that inter-civilisation ressentiment belongs to the past, even if a number of signs in different parts of the world show that these kinds of ressentiment have not completely died out.

The Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648) represented a climax in conflicts of ressentiment, then known as wars of opinion, springing mainly from intense religious rivalries between Catholics and Protestants. International relations then went on, until 1991, to become resolutely state-oriented. In other words, states were powerful and wars were mainly between countries. Nationalist ideology rooted in the concept of national interest had suppressed internal ressentiment but failed to reabsorb it. The wave of decolonisation that came in the wake of the Second World War consumed ressentiment nourished by several decades of Western domination. The West thought that independence would put an end to animosity — wrongly. Fifty years on, and the ressentiment felt by the former colonies continues to grow as their inhabitants become aware of the full scope of colonial policies, a feeling corroborated by the collective guilt that has overcome their former colonisers. Two examples are the persistently tense relations between Algerians and the French, and between Indians and the British. At the same time, the movement to defend the rights of minorities fosters a new understanding of indigenous peoples ground down by the machine of History, a phenomenon that also applies to the entire American continent and Australia.
As we have already mentioned, ressentiment is the most widely shared sentiment in the world. But that does not make it universal. Colonists do not feel it, or do not feel it in the same way. Or maybe we should say that they are not aware of, or do not want to face up to, the ressentiment felt by colonised peoples.

The geopolitical thaw that resulted from the end of the Cold War gave birth to a multitude of resentments around the world, sparking a number of civil wars throughout the planet. The arrogance exhibited by the USA, especially during George W. Bush’s presidency, only exacerbated the old resentments caused by decades of provocation and blunders committed by the “White” House in the name of American moral superiority.

All these elements and others besides combine to paint a geopolitical portrait of the planet where ressentiment could be considered as one of the fundamental factors of disruption in the modern world. In the light of the European tensions that spread throughout the rest of the world in the 19th and early 20th century and the ideological warfare between the Soviet and capitalist blocks, we could almost say that ressentiment has replaced the nationalist feelings and ideologies in all their different shades that caused the cataclysms of previous centuries. We could even go further and say that a sort of deep-seated ressentiment has replaced the instrumentalization of ressentiment that formed the basis of 20th century ideologies, beginning with nationalist dogma. Was not Nazism in some senses an ideology of ressentiment of the “other”, the Jew, the Slav, the non-Aryan? Modern-day ressentiment tends to be shorn of this kind of ideological instrumentalization, which in some way makes it purer, but just as dangerous, since its roots go deeper.

How can ressentiment be tackled? This is possibly one of the key questions we need to find an answer to in the 21st century, especially since new sources of animosity such as protecting the environment, competition for common goods such as water and energy, and equity between peoples will create another layer of ressentiment if not resolved. One thing is sure: lasting peace is impossible whilst all these resentments are not reabsorbed, or at least contained and channelled.

Every issue relating to world governance is complex, and the problem of ressentiment is no exception to
the rule. It requires an approach that is both global, seeking to understand the phenomenon as a whole, and specific, capable of examining each individual situation. Tried and tested techniques of conflict prevention and resolution are ideally suited to this area. However, they need to be implemented, which implies finding the will and means to do so. Ideally, dialogue needs to be ongoing and permanent, as ressentiment is often fuelled by misunderstanding.

On a higher level, it is also important to renew the identity of each individual and each community. Ressentiment is an aggressive act of memory — a memory often buried in the distant past — that projects beliefs rooted in a history that is misunderstood and that continues to rankle. Nationalist ideology that has been influencing state policies for several centuries has had a particularly damaging effect, since it has exacerbated ressentiment between peoples without, however, reabsorbing internal national bitterness. The erosion of national frontiers and the recent awareness of human beings' position in the world are contributing to redefine the identity of each one of us in a world which does seem less fragmented, even if new fracture lines are taking shape. These fracture lines may, if we are not careful, fuel old ressentiments and create new ones.

In other words, modern man and modern woman have a far more complex identity than their parents and grand-parents. This identity links them to various individuals and communities around the world, and not simply to their local, national, regional, religious and linguistic environments. In a world that is changing rapidly and profoundly, the present is going to look increasingly to the future, whereas previously it looked mainly to the past. This does not mean we should forget the past; quite the opposite, since the duty to remember is a vital element in any strategy that fights ressentiment. It is clear that the architects of a new world governance must address this difficult issue without flinching, because these architects will in the future be the people themselves.
Qhapaq ñan: the Path Taken by the Seminar From the South and Down Below

Ricardo Jiménez*

I. Greetings from the South!

We live on a planet that floats and spins in the cosmos. Any point on our planet could be seen as the centre. But the expansionist powers’ geographers decided otherwise. On every map — those maps we looked on with wonder at school and that are fixed firmly in our heads — the North occupies the upper position, spreading to the middle of the map. Which is why we are saying: from the South and down below.

Because this is the place where we have been invented and “discovered”, destroyed and rebuilt, at least partially. This is where we stood and watched our world being put together and divided up: humiliations and the Treaty of Tordesillas, the backyard, carrots and big sticks, the Potsdam and Yalta Conferences, the Washington Consensus. A governance established without us and in opposition to us. A governance which is completely alien to us, but which is nonetheless inflicted on us.

From the South and down below: Bolivians, Peruvians, Argentineans and Chileans, Jilatas Aymaras from Bolivia and one Peñi Mapuche from Wallmapu in southern Chile. We have gathered together here with other friends, from France and Germany, and we are here to share our version of down below with you, a “sub-version”.

We are here to lay bare our memories, our unchanged present and the destiny that awaits us. We are divided by frontiers that were abruptly imposed on us, the frontiers of passports, the frontiers that divide heads and hearts. And let us not forget the artificial privileges that still cause pain to our people, the old scar that has not yet healed, our fragmented autonomy, the fraternity between our peoples destroyed and our
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ancient harmony with Pachamama, our loving mother earth, betrayed…

Ressentiment has been born of our lost universality and the unsteady balance that has subsisted ever since. Every now and then, the anger left over from the past rises up in us. The fury and nightmares that return incessantly, with no apparent reason, or due to a reason that we have forgotten, give us no clue as to where they have come from and how we can escape from this labyrinth.

But the ressentiment of old is not the only thing to have stayed with us. It has always remained on the surface, whereas beneath and within, at the very core of our memory, despite everything, we bear within us the composite unity of diversity, the austere and perfect harmony of justice, the rhythmic and almost cosmic movement of heterogeneity, the undeniable mark of inner wealth, of human progress and the strengthening of liberties, the sap of life itself, the little flower that takes root and grows in the smallest crack in the concrete, extraordinary and outside all control.

There is also the Qhapaq ñan, a set of paths, bridges and thampus patiently intertwined by the hands and legs of the people, with the leaf of life, the sacred leaf of the coca tree, stone, water and earth, paths that stretch between the Andean peaks and the light of the stars, weaving between beings, worlds, peoples, building a necessary, desirable and possible future, a task of great importance to us.

But there is also the issue of cross-border integration, particularly the integration of our indigenous peoples, wounded in fields sown with mines, their hands in tatters from the barbed wire of still-unresolved historical crimes.

And we still have solidarity, that precious asset bequeathed us by our ancestors, carved out, fashioned and honed in the deserts by the saltpetre workers in our countries’ pampas who spread life and ideas of justice during the Iquique tragedy in 1907.

The truth is, we are amongst those peoples who are changing their way of perceiving and living democracy and culture. We are the seeds of the new universal South American, Latin American citizenship, rooted in a plural and expanding identity, since the frontiers that hem us in do not represent us and are useless.

We are the bearers of a new reality and of new expectations, overcoming the obstacles and indifference that prevent the integration of our

\[2\] Some 2,000 Chilean, Peruvian, Bolivian and Argentinean saltpetre workers and their families were massacred by the Chilean army and navy in front of the Santa María School in the town of Iquique, where they had come to demand better wages and living conditions.
peoples as well as good governance, happiness and harmony between nature and the cosmos. Everything that is human is part of us, and that which belongs to us we offer to all humanity. We know how to be comrades, friends and brothers. Brothers of our friends, and friends of our brothers, at the gatherings where we devise this shared identity that respects diversity. We are determined to take part in the vast worldwide debate on the quest for a new governance. And with good reason: our region needs to solve a contradiction that goes back several centuries, whereby the State tried to create the nation based on paradigms external and totally unsuited to our cultures, approaching the task the wrong way round; the nations that actually exist should generate a State for one and all which reflects their own reality.

Such is life. A quest and a process of construction that progresses and expands, setting off from our villages and reaching our regions and then the world, outlining a new geometry of ethics, ideas and power. This is the message we are sending from the Southern Cone to our brothers around the world, the password for a new governance that is taking shape in the South and down below. As the structures of the past start to die and fall, the winds of change are blowing, bringing with them boundless potential for regeneration. These winds rekindle our old feelings of rancour and remind us of the injustices that gave birth to them and that keep them alive, so that we can overcome them, escape the labyrinth, untangle the knot that is strangling us and liberate our forces and our hopes.

II. The Original Knot

When and how did this obsessive bitterness come into being? Where does this two-tiered heartbreak come from, this feeling of being subjected time and again to the same torment, and the permanent need to see it atoned for? Where is the link that ties us to the fury and the nightmares? Where does the labyrinth begin?

There are the things that we know, such as laws and constitutions. Then there are the things that we are aware of not knowing, in the realm of religion and myths. But the most important things are those that we do not know, but we are unaware of not knowing: those things that mark our lives from the level of the subconscious, buried deep within us. Ressentiment is of one of those things, at least as regards its psychological and emotional dimensions.

It is, in essence, the persistent feeling of suffering and the insurmountable need to return to a state of harmony. Ressentiment is, evidently, a widespread phenomenon. It is the cutting edge of the knife that wounds us and, simultaneously, the thread that provides a painful link between memory and the current state of international, national, regional and local governance. It damages and destroys the normal functioning of societies almost everywhere on the planet.

If we want to heal the rifts, sweep away the barriers and clear the anger from the hearts and minds of our peoples, we urgently need to identify ressentiment in its many forms, to express the things it does not say, to examine it closely and reflect on it.

Ressentiment is the repetition of a wrong we have endured, the impression of not being able to move on, of feeling bogged down. It is a harrowing emotion triggered by the injustices that have not yet been redressed. Ressentiment leads to hatred, mistrust and aggression, which in turn produce further misgivings and forms of aggression, forms that are manifold, reciprocal and retroactive.

This is the dynamic set in motion by the unspoken resentments that form the basis of relations between the State and the citizens, between states and their peoples, and between societies and nature; in other words, the silent foundations that underpin governance.

Ressentiment is, above all, a deep-seated and serious absence of ethics, stemming from the non-observance, the ignorance even, of a fundamental truth: we are all part of the same universe, we are interconnected, and the pain felt by some effects all, including those playing the role of aggressor.

This is the product of an asymmetry that operates on different levels, international, regional, national and local, and is marked by deep-reaching economic, political and cultural inequalities or linked to the levers of power; this asymmetry surfaces in the way
we categorize the Other (women, children, the poor, migrants, foreigners, natives, Afro-descendants, workers, etc.) as less than nothing, an enemy, marginal, dependent, to be exploited at will, easy to manipulate.

These are the asymmetries and injustices that give birth to and nourish all sorts of conflicts between social sectors, within the same people and country, as well as between peoples and countries.

The fairly complex development of actions and reactions within these conflicts and their enduring character feeds into and spreads ressentiment, making it difficult to understand and identify its origins. This means that ressentiment is instrumentalized by those in power, who encourage, manipulate and use it to serve their own interests, to the extent that it becomes a consubstantial part of nation building with the aim of dividing or even opposing others.

**Ressentiment and Revolt**

But another form of ressentiment is possible. Along with its negative, destructive and antagonistic effects, it can also provide a positive sense of identity. This is ressentiment as mastered by those who have been conquered, wronged, abused, dominated, offended, exploited, deconstructed and abandoned to exclusion, but who have resisted and fought for recognition, self-affirmation and identity. In these terms, ressentiment is the cornerstone of the essential reflex of revolt.

Ressentiment felt by the wronged arises in the face of the negation of the Other, as a rejection of this negation. It is a logical and natural response and, up to a certain point, contains within it the seeds of hope in the face of the many and various cases of injustice and violation that are unacceptable and must be resisted.

The colonial and post-colonial framework, marked by the construction of nation-states without and in opposition to existing peoples, shattered continental unity. Then came the intervention of racist and elitist orders and the ensuing constrained institution of numerous complex relations based on exclusion and domination, misunderstandings, clashes and rifts between peoples and countries, lost in the labyrinth of mistrust, prejudice, tensions and conflicts stirred up by the reigning powers, direct beneficiaries of the breakdown in harmony and unity. Powers that were imperialist, chauvinist, fascist and paramilitary.

We also need to take into account so-called development, translated as the aggressive and criminal abuse of the environment, and the greed of economic players with no link at all to the people but with great power. They have been destroying the natural habitat, plundering natural resources, seriously upsetting the natural balance and compromising the future for generations to come.

States built on genocide followed by the domination and negation of our indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants opened the door to reverse racism, a reflex
response shaped by prejudice, product of a blind hatred of the Other, of different skin colour and features.

Countries that have been subject to past aggression or have in turn inflicted aggression, with the harm not yet redressed and rancour built up over decades of mistrust, have regularly initiated further conflicts. These cycles have snuffed out our memories and our shared destiny, opening the door to the arms race and fratricidal xenophobia, banishing peace and real development for our people, and thus setting in motion another cycle of governance of ressentiment.

A small handful of privileged people, showing a scandalous disregard for the principles of solidarity, wallowing in the lap of luxury in the face of poverty that could have been avoided and breaking with the very concept of the country as community, brought about the social and cultural deterioration of the underprivileged members of society and those excluded from society. They thus set in motion processes of violence and social insecurity along with the depreciation and even, at times, the open negation of democracy.

The inevitable result is that ressentiment becomes revolt, a rejection of subjugation and a frantic quest for reparation, the only hope for building a new governance and avoiding staying imprisoned in the other ressentiment: a dead-end frame of mind informed by blind categorical hatred.

From Ressentiment to Solidarity

Practicing a governance based almost exclusively on ressentiment that is repressed, but that remains active beneath the surface, entails the risk of never being able to discover the labyrinth’s origin or the exit point, and leaving countries and peoples to wallow in a black hole filled with bitterness. For when ressentiment springs from the enduring injustice of social structures, in terms of an emotional psychological phenomenon, it can take on a life of its own and become an end in itself, transforming the need for reparation and the desire to rise above the feeling of revenge into blind hatred of the aggressor.

On the other hand, the act of laying bare ressentiment by revealing all the positive aspects it brings to creating memory in the face of negation and resisting injustice is extremely productive. Not only productive, but also essential in identifying ressentiment, dissecting and understanding it as it really is, as an effect with definite causes, as the expression of historical processes that need amending and surmounting with the creation of a new geometry of power and the establishment of new harmonious relations rooted in solidarity which eliminate the source or sources of ressentiment.

Here then are the two faces of ressentiment: a visceral and elementary reaction to the negation, exclusion and oppression that underpin it, and a memory and identity serving resistance and self-affirmation by opposing such negation.

Power is incarnated in groups with defined and identifiable structures and which manipulate this ressentiment to serve their own interests. They thus present the Other as the collective symbol of the conquered to be rejected, as a scapegoat, the designated culprit to be blamed for social problems, or as the target and victim of negative, destructive and irrevocable ressentiment.
III. Overcoming Ressentiment: an Historical Challenge

Ethics are the keystone to this process, a crucial step in any attempt to move on, to overcome and leave behind ressentiment in its expression as an unconscious, psychological, purely emotional reaction and make it a conscious thing, get to grips with it and go to work on it, treat it as a key element in the transformations needed to build a new governance based on reparation, justice, harmony and wholesale solidarity.

We cannot hide the fact that the existence of such ressentiment undermines our relations and the standards that govern our community life here in the Southern Cone. This is the reality that shows us the way forward for overcoming ressentiment. In terms of our social and historical geography, this means that we also need to reclaim the harmony and universality that have been lost to us. The societies of our ancestors may have been hierarchical, with differentiated social layers and a balance of power and relations rooted in domination, but they did not turn the devastation of nature into dogma nor poverty for the majority into an economic premise, these two principles being totally alien to us.

We need to create something new, to imagine and invent that which is appropriate, desirable, but using the materials that inform our memories and our permanent resistance.

Prevailing governance was established without the participation of our peoples and against their interests. Not only because it promoted the interests and privileges of a handful of rich people, but also because it allowed de facto control by others, remote strangers to our lands, over our sovereignty, cities over the countryside, capitals over the provinces, whites over indigenous and mixed-race peoples and Afro-descendents, men over women, profit-making over the life of our mother earth, our Pachamama, and fratricidal fighting between our countries and peoples. And to crown it all, it disconnected us, at least partially, from our ancestors’ approach to life, from memory, from our way of experiencing and considering the world.

Once our natural development had been crushed, the brutal governance imposed by the European conquistadors and, then and later, by local oligarchies and imperialists, weakened resistance and taught us to see ourselves on a profound level as colonized people: a backwards people walking the unique and linear path of development, our only option being to follow the path and behave as good disciples of the far more advanced world of the North.

This means that has become vital that we gather together our own peoples and the other sister peoples of the planet, to recreate ourselves, break free, remind ourselves of the humanity that links us all to achieve a new relationship, free of ressentiment and its origins. This is indeed an historical challenge, one that truly reflects the issues at stake, those inherent in building a new governance rooted in responsibility and solidarity that conforms to our realities and our desires, worthy of being handed down to future generations. We need to escape from the labyrinth, undo the knot, put the pieces back together again.

Can it be done?

First and foremost, it has to be done. And what is more, it is extremely urgent.

But we also need to stress that the departure point, the current crisis of governance, structural injustices and the ressentiment they have produced, are the result of a specific socio-historical process, well defined and easily identifiable. In other words, the problem lies in something that has been done, and that can therefore be undone.

These are the conditions that make change perfectly achievable.

Nevertheless, the task is far from easy: even if, as the poet says, the path “is made as you walk”, the road is strewn with pitfalls. It is an epoch-changing moment that is highly likely to occupy the 21st century and some of the 22nd. But this vital change is underway!

Since ressentiment is multi-dimensional, we need to divide it up according to its various causes so we can deal with each of them and resolve them accordingly. There are no easy solutions, but numerous initiatives, deliberations and social changes are underway. There are some certainties and some gaps, along with objectives concerning programmes and methods on different levels: global, continental, national and local. Debate is happening and arguments have already started. Although diagnoses and proposals tend to be fairly consensual, when the moment comes for specifying the extent and form of desired changes, doubts creep in and disagreements arise, along with solutions for devising and testing out innovative methods.
Demons

It is important that we defeat our demons, the temptations and pitfalls that lie in wait and threaten to overturn our efforts at liberating ourselves and moving towards a new authentic, responsible and solidarity-based governance.

This requires a real desire to tackle the problem, complex as it is, and face up to the demons, not to be done with them (the need to close the processes of life, ever open and contradictory as they are, is a demon in itself) but to stay in a process of reflection and vigilance. This desire is, naturally, first and foremost about courage, even if it is nourished by a rigorous thought process and the intelligence of the criteria relating to the conditions and material possibilities offered by reality.

The question of feasibility arises time and again. Pessimism, like ressentiment, is in vogue. But the fact remains that the plan to exterminate peoples has failed. Contrary to all expectation, the peoples are resisting. A major liberation movement is underway. There is nothing really new in all this. Our current experience is part of a long process, and this America of ours is now starting a new phase of the process.

Although this phase is highly likely to be interpreted and expressed differently in each country, the key is to arrive at exactly the right idea and proposal that will modernize our America, nourish it, give it back its strength and make it viable.

We may well be surprised when we study our history at the almost unprecedented capacity for resistance shown by our peoples. It is nothing less than the life force, like the plants that flourish in the most inhospitable and unexpected of places, finding the tiniest of cracks to take root in. The problem is that, once again, capitalism has found a way to adapt this process to suit its principles and mercantilist practices. But we should not forget that feelings of pessimism or optimism about the capacity of a new, fair, responsible and solidarity-based governance to develop or not also have two sides: the more intimate and deep-reaching of these sides draws on the congenital weaknesses of human beings and the chasms of their souls.

Good governance presupposes a human being who is fundamentally good, but this supposition has always been problematic. It is not only a philosophical problem, but also a crucial and complex phase in the determination of the degrees and forms of liberty and responsibility.

De facto powers

There is also the problem of asymmetries, inequalities, structural injustices, relations based on domination, exploitation, exclusion and negation that may counter the different declarations of intent regarding demilitarisation, peace and unity.

We should not underestimate the de facto power of hegemonic countries and other transnational actors, adversaries or enemies of the people, nature and life. In other words, we cannot ignore conflict. It appears clear to us that the real world is governed and controlled by powers that have used every means, including violence, to block possible alternatives. How can we counter these powers without abandoning the principles of demilitarisation, peace and unity in diversity?

This poses a problem, but also offers an opportunity: to find a method for transforming the inevitable conflict with de facto powers into an instrument for creation. And even if we cannot really predict very much in this area, it should be defined by the people in a process that will be recorded in history. We need to clearly set down a fundamental principle, the fruit of experience and collective deliberations: the peoples will prevail. Ideas have great strength, and we need to believe in them. Peoples armed with ideas are invincible. As Victor Hugo wrote: “An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come.”

Ownership

How can governance be linked to ownership? This question poses another crucial challenge.

Whilst ethics and power seem to be free of ownership, the concrete reality in the Southern Cone shows us a totally different picture. Ownership of water, natural resources, biodiversity, businesses that create and control jobs, housing, and so on determines the quality of life, even life itself — or death. Nonetheless, the people who demand and hope for this ownership almost never have access to it.

In Bolivian communities, for example, the relative lack of individualism is linked to community ownership. We need to consider this link carefully for governance to be viable.

Current-day crises, expectations and urgent needs combined with historical experiences, ecological awareness and the culture of human rights require us to set minimum thresholds and ceilings, limits and minimal standards, both material and spiritual. We need to think about a minimum spiritual well being. But we also need to limit consumption, wealth, materialism and so on, and define an ethical and political minimum. The issue of ownership needs to be included.

The nature of ownership will be defined by communities, helped by the development of the process, but mainly by their accumulated experience and their deliberations. Life has already taught us that the new governance needs to combine five or six different forms of ownership, including indigenous, collective, state and private.
Definitions

However, every certainty has its dark side. The desire to define everything also represents a temptation. There will of course be limits that need fixing, but the rest will, necessarily and happily, result from a collective and practical construction process. Liberation movements of the past wanted to define everything, producing a ponderous and interminable programme which led to disenchantment and then authoritarianism and totalitarianism. There is no denying that it was done with the very best of intentions, but the attempt to set everything in concrete (for example, deciding on the most appropriate and solely authorized art form) was a step too far.

Today’s trend for globalization and cultural developments require a minimum programme and requisite agreements in terms of justice and liberty. Citizens will unquestionably decide on the rest, using social construction. There is always some incertitude in collectively constructing a liberty based on dialogue — an incertitude that will always be part of consensus and an open-spirited approach. The main goal is to achieve a decent quality of life, to make our countries places that are good to live in.

The attempt to define what is good and what is bad will always be prone to error, as life teaches us every day. The way in which the world and human thinking evolve shows us that something can be both good and bad. We must therefore be cautious. Injustice is the only thing we must never accept, since it is always bad.

We are currently living in multi-cultural societies that make it impossible to introduce regulatory principles that cover anything and everything. We need rather to draw up minimal agreements that can foster plural, responsible societies rooted in solidarity.

Paradoxically, in view of the deep-reaching change
this implies, the minimum agreement we need to aim for in constructing a new political geometry and a new form of ethics is actually an apex.

It is clear that we cannot relativize in this sphere, since human beings have a monstrous side to them which may gain the upperhand at any moment. We must not confuse ethical limits. This is particularly true in the case of the Chilean dictatorship, for example: the responsibilities of the aggressors and the victims are clearly not the same. This is a situation where no dialogue is possible, due to the existence of ethical limits that we cannot overstep.

To cite another example, the same applies to the municipal budgets in Bolivia, where indigenous communities have for many many years been systematically treated unfairly. In this specific case, the heaviest responsibility for redressing this injustice lies with those who had the power to decide on the injustice.

A principle of minimum agreements needs to confront and deal with these problems, which demand a collective definition, taking into account the immanent limitations of the human consciousness so as to avoid falling into authoritarianism and totalitarianism, and to identify the de facto powers, conflict and different degrees of responsibility.

What sort of proposals could emanate from the Southern Cone for a governance rooted in a legitimate political mechanism, and for fair and sustainable social regulation that helps everyone to leave ressentiment behind?

Serving as the building blocks required to transform the programme and indicate the path to be taken, the new governance is a process that has already been set in motion; complex and multi-dimensional, it must be rooted in ethical principles, general criteria, policies, mechanisms and tangible measures that we need to devise, test and propose.

IV. Proposals for Building a New Governance

We strongly believe that if we are to overcome ressentiment and construct a new governance, we need to start by confronting the ethical problem, i.e. resolve the historical accumulation of situations of injustice and ressentiment. We need to move on to something new, fly over the labyrinth so we can see the exit, behave as though ressentiment had no past or that we are only now aware of its past, lay bare an emotional phenomenon that has until now been dispersed in nature so we are no longer at its mercy — not so that it becomes a platform for action, but to understand it as it really is and overcome it.

Ressentiment, born of injury, affects not only those who have suffered injustice, but also those who have caused it, since the violence it entails renders it blind and weakens its ethical capital. It is therefore vital to leave behind the prejudices and stereotypes which prevent us from approaching the Other, who is different from ourselves.

Transformation must be on both an internal and individual level and external and social level. The one necessarily leads to the other. Do our words or our actions reflect who we are? A new governance demands real consistency between words and actions. Many of the ills that currently overwhelm us are due to this lack of consistency on every level. The secret is to live out utopia by anticipating it every day.

This would lay the foundations and establish human-scale daily rules of interaction for a governance serving as a dialogic process, with ethical rules for society as a whole. These rules would be based, in particular, on responsibility and solidarity, operating as cross-cutting regulations covering all human activities and to be respected by all.

Policy

Policy is the framework for applying the new ethics, policy in the broadest and deepest sense, as used to regulate the polis, the social community.

New governance is a process that transforms relations between the state and its citizens by establishing new forms of democratic and participative democracy. Better still, it entails devising a new conception of the state. What new materials and new architecture will be used to build our new house? What place will our Pachamama, our loving mother earth, have in this construction process? From this standpoint, the new governance is an ecological construction as well as a political question.

We need to democratize constitutions and improve the quality of our democracies. Essentially, power must be dispersed in society. We need to create the...
conditions for an effective circulation of power, to decentralize and modernize power to make possible changes in political power and the removal of governments.

A right to veto must be established for those who are directly involved in decision taking, like the fishing communities affected by the concessions granted to large-scale fishing companies, or Mapuche communities concerned by forestry concessions or hydroelectric installations. We must not execute a project or adopt a decision without the agreement of those who are directly affected by the project or decision. This will no doubt pose problems, and conflicts of interest will arise even within communities, or between communities. However, faced with the crisis in decision-making, this is the path that leads to democratization. We should not forget that practical experience will perfect the process.

The fact is that when the older structures of a retrograde governance collapse, creative imagination, innovation, research and experimentation become key elements. We are aware of the pitfalls, but we believe that on-going, non-exclusive, democratic practice and dialogue will ensure that we can either dismiss or improve proposals, mechanisms and tools for a better governance.

One example of such a tool is *chacha warmi*: male/female unity in the Aymara language. Why not decide that offices entailing formal political responsibility (ministers, members of parliament, mayors, etc.) be held by a couple? With both members of a couple exercising political responsibilities, women and men would be on the same level. For example, we would say “Prime Minister: Mr and Mrs González”.

We could thus revive an ancestral Aymara practice which would help in the quest for an alternative system of representation, a system that would replace the current obsolete and excluding system. We would benefit from the change — or at least lose nothing in trying.

In the wake of tried and tested experiments, particularly the failure of the socialist experiment with a centralized power determining absolutely everything, the predominant idea is that the construction process should take local power as its starting point, then regional power and finally state power — although the Latin American peoples may well demand more of a state presence, more social security, more equity, more justice and liberty. But the mainspring must be the active participation of organized populations and the mindset it would create. This means that we must address the higher levels of citizen consciousness and organization.

The specific work involved in overcoming ressentiment requires three major strategic elements, each one dependent on the other: dialogue, political will and reparation of injustices. The idea is to engage in an on-going process aiming for a form of justice that restores everyone’s rights and wishes to offer full reparation to those who have suffered injury and harm and to society as a whole, both in material and symbolic terms.

We need to take action with patience and decision, irrevocable, multiple and non-exclusive action for building new political, economic and cultural structures that can establish an internal and multiform completedness, a state of harmony that is currently shattered and fragmented. We will only achieve this if we abandon current governance, the source of inequalities and exclusion, hemmed in and eroded by ressentiment. In other words, it is vital that we eradicate the injustices at the root of this state of affairs.
Political will is crucial and decisive if we want to accomplish this project. It needs to take concrete form in the shape of defined public policies with a programme and resources that guarantee their execution. A project without a budget is nothing more than demagoguery. We propose working on a “Southern Cone Citizens’ Charter” which would be an instantly operational tool, a constitution-like document, a form of new social pact that would involve every citizen and give them shared responsibility. The document could take the form of chapters, where ethical, cultural, political and economic proposals would be organized according to a joint plan.

**Dialogue**

We need to launch an on-going dialogue process without delay, since it is a key mechanism, intended primarily to recognize the Other as a natural partner in dialogue with equal dignity and rights.

Whilst ressentiment is deaf, dumb and blind, dialogue builds bridges, opens possibilities, fosters trust, incorporates and restores dignity, counters the verticality of relations rooted in domination, restores the prospect of pluralism, responsibility and solidarity. It builds knowledge of the Other and, naturally, produces a modus vivendi for intercultural understanding, doing away with the material elements that underpin an egoism that can only negate. Dialogue does not necessarily entail eliminating or forgetting differences. Rather, it involves sitting round a table and being recognized by someone who until now denied your existence. We are evidently facing a highly complex problem. In Latin America, the state is built on and survives on the power of a minority, based on wholesale violence.

This situation can only be changed by a form of solidarity rooted in new ethics based on communion with the Other. Dialogue is the ideal tool to manage this reality.

Nonetheless, in a new fair, responsible and solidarity-based governance, dialogue that is fruitful and enables us to overcome ressentiment needs to be combined with an essential ethical obligation: to be willing to listen, and know how to listen.

In our America, particularly in the Southern Cone, the people, communities and sectors of the population who have been victim to structural injustices are many and varied. They are therefore the main participants in this unrestricted dialogue: native peoples and nations, the poor, peasants and city-dwellers, social movements, women, migrants as well as students and teachers, municipal councils and local authorities, etc.; defining this very long “etc.” is also a real, complex and controversial problem.

**Thampu: territory**

By territory we mean a space where people live, in all the richness of life; not simply a land in the commercial sense, but as the thing that allows people to be, representing one of the key factors contributing to the reparation of structural injustices.

To take one example, one of the forms of existence in the Andes mountains depends on managing ecological limits. When this possibility is refused, the people and communities are deprived of any capacity to be themselves.

This goes hand in hand with reforming governance. We need to recreate the thampu, the Andean space where everything needed for life was to be found. It will set in motion a decentralization of power. We also mean thampus to cover the territories situated in urban areas, community spaces, and so on.

**La Pachamama**

Territory is also closely linked to our perception of the environment and how we treat it. In the current state of affairs, we need to rethink territory, not only in terms of its role between societies, but also in terms of the relationship that exists between societies and the environment. For if the environment is not protected on a sustainable basis, when the natural resources start to run out, we will be arguing over territory ownership.

Although it is clear that the current crisis springs from a critical breakdown in a number of regulatory mechanisms, it remains true that certain models for resistance and proposals for emancipation that have already helped us to progress are no longer effective. One of these is the idea that humankind is at the centre of the universe.

Here in the Southern Cone, a new approach to change is taking shape, a sort of broadening of the concept of Pachamama: Nuquemapu, loving mother earth, which is nature considered as a being who coexists with us as a subject with rights. As in other spheres in Latin America, this new approach represents an ancestral legacy amongst the indigenous peoples and would help to resolve a good many human problems.

This may seem utopian, but this idea is currently gaining ground. Striking examples include the new Ecuadorian constitution, which has elevated nature to a constitutional level with its own rights, and the prohibition in Venezuela of all commercial patents relating to biodiversity in indigenous territories. There is no denying that progress is happening, that a new governance is possible — and has possibly already arrived!
Assemblies

Citizens’ Assemblies are tools used in the process of building a new governance. The superficial and technocratic analysis of the crisis that is overturning social, political and economic regulations does not take into account the population’s demands. The Assemblies are one of numerous and complex initiatives that are taking shape right around the planet, including the Social Forums and People’s Summits.

This process has become imbued with extraordinary vigour in the Southern Cone, in the context of the constitutional reforms in places including Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador. But it is also in motion in other areas of the world, in Europe, the Mediterranean, Asia, Africa and Oceania, proving that this is a global movement, even if not showing the same vigour everywhere.

During the Assemblies, various social and/or citizens’ groups gather, united by geographical, socio-professional, theme-based and other criteria to discuss and share the fundamental idea that citizens can and must rebuild political regulation systems.

They are platforms for a responsible, collective and plural thought process on the new architecture of relations between people, between societies and between societies and the biosphere with the goal of answering the following question: how should the world be governed in the place where I find myself, whether it be Central Asia, China, Europe, the Middle East, Brazil or the American Southern Cone?

Regional integration

The Assemblies are concrete, collective tools on a human scale at a regional level, serving as stepping stones towards supra-national integration. We come from the Southern Cone, South America and Latin America and these are our points of reference. It is vital that we broaden our horizons.

From the Southern Cone’s perspective, the new governance aims to radically and irrevocably reform the state for the purposes of South American regional integration to begin with, and Latin American integration as quickly as possible. This is an historical and on-going task, the accomplishment of an age-old memory and of our future.

We feel it would useful at this juncture to use the image of the Qhapaq ñan, the Aymara term meaning many things, but especially the idea of the way, the
Tahuantinsuyo's network of paths, stairs and bridges, symbolizing our peoples' integration in all accepted senses of the term. We wish to reclaim the living memory of the Qhapaq ñan.

This wish involves:
- affirming the universal character of the South American Pachamama on the regional and global levels, and reclaiming the universality we have lost and which has left us fragmented, in pieces, broken, incomplete;
- liberating ourselves and dismantling the political frontiers that divide our peoples, mountains, rivers, plains, woods, jungles and deserts, and healing the rifts of distrust and resentment caused by the de facto powers, the enemies of harmony, the fanatical disciples of competition and profit;
- total disarmament on the basis of perpetual peace and the use of dialogue and agreements to resolve regional conflicts inherited from the former governance;
- gathering the hearts and minds of our peoples back together again to restore the scattered collective memory and weave together the same shared destiny in rainbow colours, presided over by the original fraternity.

This process' field of action has to extend itself, part of a broadening on-going development promoted by the existence of mechanisms that make this broadening viable and realistic. The goal? To reaffirm the universal character of the Latin American, American, global and cosmic Pachamama.

Economy

In its role as a programme for the new governance, regional integration includes the creation of a new regional economy, taking concrete form as a “Joint Integration Fund”. This would be a sort of continental minga: the sharing of all a region's seas, lands, forests, gas, financial resources and so on. The next stage would be to collectively decide what use they would be put to for the collective interest, according to a new regional perspective.

This would imply using adjustment mechanisms between countries. From this point of view, we could take the European Union as a model, where a common fund is redistributed in the form of subsidies for the least developed economies.

Faced with the major creation of wealth which requires less and less labour thanks to technological advances, we need to set up a sort of ethical and citizen minimum wage. In other words, all Pachamama citizens without work would receive, as part of their citizenship, a wage no lower than a minimum to be established, allowing them to live with dignity.

We need to democratize strategic economic decisions, those that concern investment and expenditure. This power should be removed from specialist technocrats so that decisions are adopted after consultation with the people, as part of a broad-ranging citizen debate on the consequences and following environmental and social impact studies.

Production and consumption mechanisms should change radically, since the criteria based on environmental and social sustainability, human rights, human dignity, responsibility towards future generations and the planet's survival should take precedence over profit criteria. This would be a controversial move, particular as relates to overcoming resentment, since some but not all feelings of rancour are obliterated within capitalism. The fact is that the cornerstone of capitalism is profit, humans exploiting humans, an anti-value par excellence.

The most urgent task at present is not only to denounce the activities of transnational companies that damage the environment and step up criticism within a continental and global coordination, but also to lobby for the transparent and democratic regulation of these businesses.

Culture

Evolution towards a new fair, responsible and solidarity-based governance requires changing the model, abandoning an object-based vision for an outlook where life and things are considered as a process, a succession of events that are neither crystallized nor permanent. In other words, we need to switch from a conservative mentality (which still sometimes has a radical message) to a mentality open to change.

We need to get beyond the binary model which has prevailed until now, the truth/lie, friend/enemy principle, to create a model that takes into consideration the complex entirety of historical construction, and is based not on completed and ontologically fixed elements, but on dynamic elements undergoing transformation.

Our goal is to change the structures that generate injustice and resentment, and not confine ourselves to looking for a scapegoat. We urgently need to transform society as a whole, its standards and its governance.

All humans contain the potential for monstrous acts, a potential that may surface at any moment depending on structural conditions. Aside from the need to judge and penalize personal responsibility, the structure needs to change from a strategic perspective.

This process calls for a culture and education centred on multiple, hybrid, diverse and critical learning methods. These methods need to be linked to regional and generational knowledge and the knowledge held
by other ancient peoples, Asian, European, African, American and Oceanian, remembering that all knowledge is enriching and that rejecting any area of knowledge represents a real loss. This would be included in formal education programmes based on well-defined policies and concrete teaching.

Separate processes for deconstructing history are also necessary. History as it is currently taught does not correspond to the real history of our peoples, particularly as regards reclaiming our memory and our on-going combat for continental unity and to control the antagonism created and maintained artificially.

For, in addition to forms of rancour generated by structural factors which require reparation, there also exist forms of rancour triggered and manipulated artificially wherein a chauvinist and fratricidal perspective of history plays a key role. One example is provided by current efforts to construct a new perspective on the origins of our Latin American republics.

We propose using open and democratic learning methods, like the Palaver method which consists essentially of talking until every point is understood and whereby decisions are considered collectively one after the other with everyone participating in discussions until everyone is in agreement. This does of course take time, but everyone feels involved. No one is excluded, everyone’s experiences and opinions are taken on board.

In any event, we also need to bear in mind the two aspects of the new governance: pragmatism and methodology. We must insist on the need for a truly open-minded approach, devoid of any specific structure. This open-mindedness is crucial, since it promotes methodological supervision and is more likely to produce proposals whose contents correspond more closely to reality.

The immediate task before us is to enhance and multiply our alternative means of communication — our newspapers, internet sites and radio stations — and to increase regional and global coordination. We need to create networks and communicate our thoughts, discussions and proposals within social organizations in a mutually beneficial process.
Over the last twenty years or more, the idea of a new form of government which would aim to transcend and replace the traditional notions of state and institutions has emerged within international forums dedicated to public debate. The concept has broadened and become more inclusive over the years, granting civil society a more direct and active role based on a fundamental and significant question: who really has power? Hence the term governance.

The notion of governance is currently being examined with great caution in Latin America. The notion is ascribed with a sense of good government, inherent in a generalized use of the term, and a goal in itself.

Three factors contribute to the new concept of governance:

- the first is linked to recognized changes in relations between the state and the local, national and international reality;
• the second is the need to go beyond ressentiment, expressed by social unrest, the peoples’ memory and demands for change in the exercise of administration;

• the third is the renewal of the notion of governance, which would enable an in-depth re-examination of ideas on power, integration and state affairs.

As far as relations between state and civil society are concerned, the dominant trend twenty years ago was clearly influenced by centralization and uniformity. However, the economic crisis of the early 80s reversed this historical trend by initiating a decentralization process. Civil society has gradually reclaimed an active role, using citizens’ groups to reappropriate sovereignty and power.

We cannot of course say for sure that the new trend will endure or whether it is definitive. But there is no denying that civil society is becoming stronger and that the notion of governance is acquiring decisive importance in the process of assimilation and defining. Given the now unavoidable necessity to share power, no government is capable of managing such a complex society. It is therefore vital to be able to call on local and regional powers and to better regulate international powers.

Since the increasingly evident crisis of administrative practices is resulting in a loss of representative legitimacy and highlights the number of people excluded from society, civil society’s participation in public administration is flourishing and bringing with it a new breath of life. Marginal groups and entire societies outside of the circuits of powers are exerting pressure, thus initiating new forms of participation in order to get their voices heard and become actors in their own destiny.

The inclusion of emerging social actors in local, regional and global governance systems is a democratic requirement, countering institutional representative power and its unilateral decisions. It represents the visible face of a phenomenon present in all spheres of modern societies. As the available information multiplies, so the role played by citizens increases via direct participation.

The administration of power has been made more complex by the actions of a grassroots movement, which trains a relentless light on institutional relations, questions them and demands that they incorporate groups until now kept on the margins of decision making. Thanks to this development, we are now seeing community organizations, NGOs and traditional institutions taking part in administrating society, with varying degrees of involvement.

Governance is thus the fruit of a sleeping society that is reawakening, generating new energies in terms of social autonomy and the increased demand for participation, and creating a new situation whereby the values of responsibility, environmental protection and renewal integration take their place alongside the old citizen values of liberty, equality and fraternity.

And when we refer to renewal, we are looking beyond bureaucratic change. We are demanding above all a change in relations between the state and civil society, a development that encompasses all social actors, promoting a unity-in-diversity relationship and harmonizing the relationship between legitimacy and legality, placing the notion of responsibility as the central quality of the new government. We want to put the emphasis on legal, administrative and political reasonability designed to guarantee the exercise of citizen rights.

This complex and protean process, requiring great ethical capacity and creativity as well as a major deployment of energy to meet the participation goals, is what we call new governance.

The renewal process is primarily being driven by emerging organizations and civil society as a whole. Social actors and democratic politicians sincerely dedicated to the process need to aim to broaden participation to other categories so that the full range of citizen capacity can be expressed and to promote development, ensure equity and guarantee justice.

A cultural transformation and change in the way governments are managed are being driven by indigenous peoples, women and the young. A number of countries have already initiated an experimental reform of the state, abandoning the unfortunate and lasting attempt to construct civil society from the top down, i.e. from the state, ending in the exclusion of dozens of peoples. Today it is increasingly clear that injustice, exclusion and racism produce considerable social ressentiment. This is why the political and social processes underway over the last two decades in Ecuador and Bolivia brought together millions of indigenous people so that they could participate directly in the affairs of their respective countries.

And change was not slow in coming.

At this historical turning point, governance needs to extend its theoretical content, since we need to examine the issues of peoples’ memory, the processes of identity building and institutional practices, and this will entail nothing less than a new form of citizenship, a new alliance with humanity.

Significant and previously excluded sectors of the population have reorganized and become decisive social agents. Over the last few years, civil society has found more and more ways to make its voice heard on the international scene, via the Social Forums, Citizens’ Assemblies and thousands of networks working on goals and initiatives, both individual and collective, knowing that smallscale changes trigger major changes of civilisation.

The process has thus been underway for a few decades,
even if we are only now aware of its full force and potential. Calls for pluralism and participation are hugely popular and activities that aim to strengthen democracy are flourishing every day. At the same time, we can observe a number of improvements in public services and the quality of public policies.

We wish to underline that renewal firstly requires a deep-reaching cultural change and highly efficient social and public administration. It also calls for freedom of expression to be reinforced so that ideas generated by the increasingly numerous citizen organizations and collectives can be heard and contribute to the process. It raises the issue of revising legal systems and managing natural resources.

Institutions are for the most part gradually incorporating citizen participation. This change is reflected in a political will observed in local and national governments and within the international system. The balance of power is also changing, a development most evident in our sub-continent.

In Latin America, the prospect of integration is resurfacing, since governments are bound to international agreements and have to combine their efforts. Objective proof of this development is provided by the crisis that occurred in Bolivia in summer 2008 which was overcome thanks to the intervention of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

The renewal that is underway represents a process of building power on different foundations. Four key conditions apply:

• firstly, that all public bodies be attentive to citizens’ demands and that their mechanisms be transparent;
• secondly, that all social movements participate in managing public affairs;
• thirdly, that political mechanisms consider social networks to be structural components of governance;
• lastly, that citizens genuinely participate in the entire process and in decision making.

The democratic construction process cannot happen without the social movements. Networks make it easier for all sorts of organizations, whether public, popular or institutional, to work together, whilst a new civil society needs to be built by leaving behind the current relationship between the elite and ordinary people. It is vital that civil society plays a leading role in the governance system and that it acts as an autonomous component of the state. Some will say that the legitimacy of the state’s power is rooted in the traditional notion of international law: that sovereignty resides within the nation, within the citizens of a given territory. But the concept of legitimacy is far too complex to be reduced to this traditional formula.

We are on the eve of a new era, where responsibility is a fundamental ethical principle, where financial management must be transparent, where a harmonious relationship with the environment becomes a central condition of the present and future world.

We are witnessing changes at every level, locally, nationally and globally. We are testing out new solutions to integrate millions of excluded members of society, rewriting national constitutions and reforming the Bolivian and Ecuadorian state, key examples that help us understand the new era and its main developments.

Over the last few years, decentralization has become a dominant trend, providing the springboard for other demands, such as the need for new leaders, production of new skills and, above all, the construction of better-integrated public institutions.

Governments of all the planet’s countries are under relentless pressure to introduce change. Social networks are growing and developing. They are also seeking new ethical foundations for social coexistence, resulting in the emergence of hundreds of projects to renew local power, changes at every level of government and the creation of major social movements, non-partisan but with political tendencies.

The process for building a new governance depends on the development of actors’ potential, the powerful community capital that can mobilize many different groups.

The times we are living in are ripe for the construction of a new political balance, whether locally, nationally
or internationally, and the process will continue until we find a solution for renewing and reforming the state.

The South American continent, encouraging as it does citizen participation, now has the social experience that contributes to ever greater degrees to changes to the state, the most celebrated development concerning the political world. There are less references to the poor or excluded and more to citizens and local power. In this context, the new governance’s primary ambition is the rebuilding of the state and renewal of social pacts in order to lay the foundations of a sustainable and solidarity-based future for all peoples. This is the historical challenge to be met not only by the peoples of the Southern Cone, but also by all the peoples of the world.
We represent an indigenous community in Bolivia, the Jesús de Machaca community, and are the native authorities within the cabildo or municipal council. We are happy to be here with you, and to have the opportunity to talk about who we are and where we come from.

Four years ago we set up an indigenous community that we run. The mayor, the state representative and ourselves, the indigenous authorities, manage the community's affairs together and with everyone's participation. There is no hierarchy between us.

We wanted to be officially declared an indigenous community. And we are certainly not the only ones. Many communities in Bolivia wish for the same thing, but we wanted the honour of being the first.

I will hand over to my brother so he can describe the clothes that we wear. We are mallkus and, as such, we wear this costume when we assume our functions on 1 January.

We are the first community to have formed an indigenous community (the second is Santa Cruz). The costume has practical as well as symbolic functions. The hat keeps our heads warm. The chullo protects our ears from the cold, but also prevents us from hearing disputes. We cannot take part in disputes since we represent the community as a whole.

This is the chakana, symbol of the Andean Crux constellation, and the Kollasuyo, the ancient name for Bolivia where we live. This is the wiphala, our Aymara flag. This is the staff of command and of status. We must not forget the whip of justice, sign of respect for authority. No one in the community should attack the person representing authority whilst invested with that responsibility. The whip is used to punish those who transgress this law. The poncho is black, for grief, and red, for the blood spilt during the fight against the domination and enslaving of indigenous peoples. The purse is the symbol of respect. It is not a commercial mass-produced product, but is hand woven, as is the rest of the costume.

We had two coca leaves with us, but they were confiscated at the airport. Here is the bag, bell and flask containing alcohol for the chaya, ritual salutations. They are empty because their contents were removed at the airport. We use them to transport samples of much of the earth's produce, including fruits and vegetables, and a little wine to pay tribute to Pachamama so that she helps production. We call it the "cargo of blessings". We are given produce starting on the first of December. Sometimes we empty it a little in Autumn as it becomes very heavy, and we reload it with fresh produce.

My brothers, all these elements participate fully in the life of our marka, our community. We will closely follow the debates and share our comments on them where necessary.

For the last four years we have had a mayor elected by the grassroots, we have five districts, one delegate per district and a councillor. You must serve as a mallku, a community leader, before being elected councillor. A good education does not suffice. Service to the community is the crucial condition. We are therefore a young, productive and transparent community. The post of mayor alternates. There are three territories-communities: marka (village), ayllu (lands farmed collectively) and original community.

We wish to underline the fact that we do not elect our representatives only on the day of the elections: it is an on-going task.

We realise that many of ours brothers and sisters have gathered here.

Indigenous people are finally being included in the construction of Bolivia. We want our indigenous community to put a stop to laws created from the top down. What can we do? Profit from everything we have learned here to shape new leaders: that is the task before us!
II. Methodology

Central ideas

The methodology we have used is based on work groups and plenary sessions in a large room to maintain an esprit de corps for our group of over twenty participants. The cross-cutting approach to sharing ideas enabled us to clearly express the elements that seemed confused in the first phase, and resulted in a provisional summary. It also allowed us to look beyond our diversity to find similar and shared elements, without, however, abandoning the richness of this diversity; we sought an accurate and constructive expression of our fundamental ideas.

We divided into four work groups, each group choosing a facilitator, rapporteur and name: Pachamama, Resistance, Comrade Brothers and Brother Comrades, Agitators — changed to Ex-Agitators the next day and then to Proactive.

Goals

For the first hour, before entering into the subject, we discussed whether we felt the theme “Ressentiment and World Governance” to be pertinent or not.

We then worked on establishing a conscious identification of the psychological and emotional phenomenon of ressentiment, as an expression specific to the Southern Cone as regards an inadequate, unjust and excluding governance.

Our central goal was to trigger productive and innovative ideas for a new governance which would take into account key considerations such as the economy, politics, the environment and, better yet, Pachamama, and would be more than adequate to overcome ressentiment.

The process resulted in these innovative and well-supported proposals.

Presentation of ideas per group

During the plenary session, the rapporteur for each group presented the group’s ideas, writing them down in large printed characters on big blank pages and letting other members of the group speak to clarify a point or provide further detail.

The plenary session participants asked questions to get additional clarification or take discussions further on specific points of each presentation.

Debate and collective summary of key ideas

We moved on to the debating stage, using the collective summary drawn up in the plenary session. Although nothing was considered to be definitive, we continued to work collectively, noting down key shared ideas on more large blank sheets of paper, throughout the plenary deliberation and discussion stage. This is how we collectively drew up the conceptual maps which show the resulting ideas interposed with the proposals.

The result obtained by the combination of group work, participant presentations and the open debate during the plenary session, based on key topics and fertile content and conditioned by a demand for innovation and well-argued reasoning, was a very deep-reaching reflection which achieved a remarkable level of complexity.

Our methodology, initially designed to promote a summarizing process, was a little Cartesian, a purely linear and logical exercise, but it served to trigger multiple and integrated processes whilst remaining plural, collective and participative, democratic, diverse and divergent, current and atavistic, cross-border, specific to the Southern Cone and relevant to the entire world.

The process’ retroactive effect generated much harmony, very few contradictions and countless agreements and complementarities, very likely due to the fact that current cultural, political and other transformations serve as the common foundation stone underpinning the deliberation process.

However, the extremely fruitful and complex aspects that were uncovered, the accumulated experiences and deliberations went far beyond and overturned the initial Cartesian plan, highlighting the inadequacy of binary categories. They demonstrated that the deliberation process must be incorporated in a process dictated by reality. Just like water, deliberation takes the shape of the subject doing the thinking, analyzing, contemplating. Deliberation is always an incomplete process, wherein the demand for rigour represents a guarantee that ideas will move forward and be perfected.

Below are two conceptual maps, one presenting the areas of governance developed during the seminar, the other detailing the principles of governance.
III. Conceptual Maps

Central Themes of World Governance in Relation to Resentment

**Economy, Society, Globalization**
- We need to democratize strategic economic decisions, those that concern investment and expenditure. This power should be removed from specialist technocrats so that decisions are adopted after consultation with the people, as part of a broad-ranging citizen debate on the consequences and following environmental and social impact studies.
- We need to set up a sort of ethical and citizen minimum wage. In other words, all Pachamama citizens without work would receive, as part of their citizenship, a wage no lower than a minimum to be established, allowing them to live with dignity.
- The sharing of all a region's seas, lands, forests, gas, financial resources and so on. The next stage would be to collectively decide what use they would be put to for the collective interest.
- In its role as a programme for the new governance, regional integration includes the creation of a new regional economy, taking concrete form as a "Joint Integration Fund".

**Peace Security and Conflict Management**
- If we want to heal the rifts, sweep away the barriers and clear the anger from the hearts and minds of our peoples, we urgently need to identify and n its many forms, to express the things it does not say.
- In our America, particularly in the Southern Cone, the people, communities and sectors of the population who have been victim to structural injustices are many and varied.
- When and how did this obssessive bitterness come into being in the Southern Cone?

**Ecology and Managing the Planet**
- This may seem utopian, but this idea is currently gaining ground. Striking examples include the new Ecuadorian constitution, which has elevated nature to a constitutional level with its own rights.
- The new governance is an ecological construction as well as a political question.
- To take one example, one of the forms of existence in the Andes mountains depends on managing ecological limits. When this possibility is refused, the people and communities are deprived of any capacity to be themselves.
- Unless we rethink the concept of territory, we will not be able to overcome resentment on a lasting basis.
- Territory is a space where people live, the expression of Pachamama.

**Politics and Institutions**
- The states were created without and in opposition to the existing peoples.
- The Latin American peoples demand more of a state presence, more social security, more equity, more justice and liberty.
- We need to create the conditions for an effective circulation of power, to decentralize and modernize power to make possible changes in political power and the removal of governments.
- The states emerged as a reaction to the existing creation.
- Work together to draw up a Southern Cone Citizens' Charter.

**Ethics, Education, Culture**
- It is, in essence, the persistent feeling of suffering and the insurmountable need to return to a state of harmony. Resentment is, evidently, a widespread phenomenon.
- Dialogue does not necessarily entail eliminating or forgetting differences.
- Separate processes for deconstructing history are also necessary. History as it is currently taught does not correspond to the real history of our peoples, particularly as regards reclaiming our memory and our on-going combat for continental unity.
- Ethical governance serving as a dialogic process, with ethical rules for society as a whole. These rules would be based, in particular, on responsibility and solidarity.

**The Citizens' Assemblies are building a new architecture for a plural, effective and solidarity-based governance.**
- With both members of a couple exercising political responsibilities, women and men would be on the same level.
- We need to democratize democracy, democratize institutions.
- The three cornerstones underpinning political renewal are dialogue, political will and reparation of injustices.
Resentment and World Governance

**Democracy and Citizenship**
- Improve the quality of our democracies.
- It is vital that we address the higher levels of citizen consciousness and organization.
- Today’s trend for globalization and cultural developments require a minimum programme and requisite agreements in terms of justice and liberty. Citizens will unquestionably decide on the rest, using social construction.
- Citizens’ Assemblies are key components in the process of building a New Governance.

**Legitimacy**
- Ethics are the keystone to this process, a crucial step in any attempt to move on, to overcome and leave behind resentment.
- We strongly believe that if we are to overcome resentment and construct a new governance, we need to start by confronting the ethical problem, i.e. resolve the massive historical accumulation of situations of injustice and resentment.
- In Latin America, the state is built on and survives on the power of a minority, based on wholesale violence. We also need to stress that the departure point, the current crisis of governance, structural injustices and the resentment they have produced, are the result of a specific socio-historical process, well defined and easily identifiable. In other words, the problem lies in something that has been done, and that can therefore be undone.

**PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE AND OVERCOMING RESSENTMENT**

- **Expertise and Efficiency**
  - Political will is crucial and decisive if we want to accomplish this project. It needs to take concrete form in the shape of defined public policies with a programme and resources that guarantee their execution.
  - Production and consumption mechanisms should change radically, since the criteria based on environmental and social sustainability, human rights, human dignity, responsibility towards future generations and the planet’s survival should take precedence over profit criteria.
  - During the Assemblies, various social and/or citizens’ groups gather, united by geographical, socio-professional, theme-based and other criteria to discuss and share the fundamental idea that citizens can and must rebuild political regulation systems.
  - We need to counter the false promises of electioneering by finding out the amount of the budget, as a project without a budget is nothing more than empty slogans.

- **Cooperation between Actors**
  - We are currently living in multi-cultural societies that make it impossible to introduce regulatory principles that cover anything and everything. We need rather to draw up minimal agreements that can foster plural, responsible societies rooted in solidarity.
  - We must not execute a project or adopt a decision without the agreement of those who are directly affected by the project or decision. This will no doubt pose problems, and conflicts of interest will arise even within communities, or between communities.
  - Nonetheless, in a new fair, responsible and solidarity-based governance, dialogue that is fruitful and enables us to overcome resentment needs to be combined with an essential ethical obligation: to be willing to listen, and know how to listen.
  - The idea is to engage in an on-going process aiming for a form of justice that restores everyone's rights and wishes to offer full reparation to those who have suffered injury and harm and to society as a whole, both in material and symbolic terms.
  - We feel it would be useful to use the image of the Qhapaq Ñan, the Aymara term meaning many things, but especially the idea of the way; the Tahuantinsuyo’s network of paths, stairs and bridges, symbolizing our peoples’ integration in all accepted senses of the term.

- **Linking together levels of governance**
  - We need to recreate the Andean space where everything needed for life was to be found. It will set in motion a decentralization of power.
  - A new governance is a quest and a process of construction that progresses and expands, setting off from our villages and reaching our regions and then the world, outlining a new geometry of ethics, ideas and power.
  - In the wake of tried and tested experiments, particularly the failure of the socialist experiment with a centralized power determining absolutely everything, the predominant idea is that the construction process should take local power as its starting point, then regional power.
List of Participants

Participants at the December 2008 workshop in Iquique, Chile
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History offers us an infinite array of examples of major and minor conflicts born of ressentiment. But it is no easy thing to refer to ressentiment without touching on the composite aspects the term conjures up. Broaching the question of ressentiment is complicated, since it often gives rise to misunderstandings and stirs up confused and contradictory feelings. Ressentiment proliferates in many regions: between the people of Algeria and France, China and Japan, Palestine and Israel, Rwanda and the Congo, Latin America and the USA, Georgia and Russia. In the Southern Cone, ressentiment is particularly strong between Chileans, Bolivians and Peruvians.

We felt it to be vital that we find a new departure point for deliberation. We therefore decided to tackle the issue of ressentiment, by broaching frequently-avoided questions concerning relations between a country and its people. The focus of conflict management is almost always on territorial negotiations, diplomatic agreements or customs issues, neglecting one of the fundamental issues underlying the conflict: ressentiment. It arises not solely between countries, but also within each territory, particularly between the rich and the poor and between nationals and foreigners, especially where migrants are concerned.

Debate on the issue of ressentiment will also be productive in creating a link between the individual and the collective. Ressentiment is global, it falls in the realm of groups and peoples, but it also springs from the inner workings of each individual. The act of reflecting on and overcoming ressentiment thus provides a tool for taking steps towards a personal and collective transformation, unquestionably one of the cornerstones underpinning the ethical and political change that the new world governance demands.

The American's continent's Southern Cone has become a place where local deliberations reflect the global challenges of our era. This publication is part of the series of Proposal Papers for the Forum for a new World Governance. It will contribute to the deliberations and proposals of the actors working on the Southern Cone Citizens' Assembly. It could also be useful to everyone elsewhere in the world striving to move beyond ressentiment in order to build a new world governance that is truly rooted in solidarity.