

Plenary Speech on the First Day of the Earth Charter Continental Meeting

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Mato Grosso, Brazil, December 1998

Good afternoon everyone. Professor Othon has given me such a heavy responsibility that certainly I will not be equal to the task. The subject we will be addressing this afternoon concerns the ethical implication linked to our Mother Earth Charter. This is a subject of great complexity and I would like to make a modest contribution so that the idea may continue beyond what I will be expressing here.

All ethics depend upon a viewpoint and for this reason, we must address other issues before we begin speaking of ethics. I believe that the only thing which makes sense is establish the Earth's dignity, just as a longtime ago we have established human dignity, in order to fulfill three fundamental chores. The first one is to restore the significance of the sacred. The second task is to reinstate the feminine concept present in both men and women, as already proffered by Professor Leonardo Othon. The third undertaking deals with modifying our mental attitude through a process of ecological education. Finally, it is only once this basis has been established that the debate on ethics can become meaningful and efficient, a discourse which is not only rhetorical but which illustrates our synchronization with the magnificent, complex reality and profoundly maternal nature of our Mother Earth.

Inaugurating this new alliance we wish to create towards the Earth as mentioned requires an indispensable aspect which is to bring back the dimension of the sacred. By leaving out this dimension, we will not succeed in placing limits to the greediness of our scientific and technical paradigm. And the sacred constitutes an experience whose origins lie within human beings. It is buried within the history of all cultures of the past and it is also a part of the personal fulfillment of each individual.

A consensus of opinion has been reached among the academic circle. The sacred has always been intrinsically linked to the cosmos. It is its place of birth. The universe then transforms itself into a great metaphor and into a place and a time where the energy which is manifested entirely pervades reality, giving it momentum, greatness and beauty and the opportunity for revealing mystery ties this reality together.

During the last centuries, we have been the victims of civilization patterns which systematically involved destructiveness towards the Earth. This has lead us to become deaf to the musical sounds of living beings and to turn our backs towards the "enlargement" of their stardom. This was the worst consequence of all. We can no longer experience the sacredness of the universe. We became the hostages of a vast act of profanity, predominant in the scientific and technical paradigm. This sacrilege has reduced the universe to a mechanical and mathematical inert reality and the Earth regarded as a simple repository of resources made available to the human race. The meaning of all things was lost to allow only the human voice to dominate. If we do not succeed in rebuilding the road leading to the sacred, we cannot guarantee the future of the Earth.

The entire Roman law was based on these words "res sacra homo". A human being is a sacred reality. And what about the new ecological awareness which aims to protect and maintain the conditions so that the Earth can continue to evolve as it has for millions of years. It will only make sense if we restore the Earth's dignity or bring back its dignity. The Earth as a great entity and ourselves as sons and daughters of the Earth. Without this, ecology will only represent a technique for the management of human resources instead of a new paradigm of coexistence and solidarity in synergy and everlasting peace with the Earth. The new alliance we endeavor to create will simply symbolize a truce so that the Earth can renew itself, only to be further attacked and exploited.

Let the first step be the reinstatement of the dimension of dignity and sacredness for the Earth, of renewed enchantment and reverence towards the universe. It was in those words that it was spontaneously conveyed by the first North American astronaut, Edgar Michel, when he said: "million of miles away from here, the Earth displays the incredible beauty of a splendid gem, blue and white in color, floating in the vast and dark skies. I could hold her in the palm of my hand. I can hide it behind my thumb but it is the only home where we can live".

What do we mean by sacred when we are speaking of the sacredness of the Earth? Sacredness is not a thing. To be sacred is a quality that things have. It is this quality of things and in things where not only can we see facts, but we can see values, we can appreciate the significance and we can pick up messages. Messages and significance which fascinate us and which can reach us deep within ourselves, totally overcoming us. The great scholar of the sacred at the beginning of this century was Rudolf Otto. He has coined two of the words expressed in the terminology of the sacred: "The sacred is tremendous and faxisomic." That it is tremendous means that its magnitude is what causes us to shiver, pushing our capability to bear being in its presence over the edge. A presence so dense that it forces us to retreat because of its intensity, all the while fascinating us. It is faxisomic, which is to say that it draws us like an irrepressible magnet and that we can hear it speak to us deep in our heart, filling us with enthusiasm and giving new sense to life.

The sacred is like the Sun. Its light mesmerizes us and floods us with enthusiasm while the faxisomic compels us to look away so as not to be blinded. It is tremendous. All peoples, and as did native people in particular, have had this experience of the sacred, as we, in fact, do so everyday ourselves when we make or establish contact with life, with loved ones, with children being born, when loving feelings of attraction are felt between a man and a woman, we experience a glowing, the sacredness of a relationship.

Traditions have all expressed, in many different ways, this experience of respect, consideration and reverence. The phenomenology of religion calls this "mana" a word taken from the language spoken by Melanesian populations. Our Indigenous Peoples, our Afro-Brazilian and our Latin American populations have given it the name of "axé", the Greco-Roman tradition calls it "pneumo espirito", Orientals describe it as "chi". They are referring to this reality which permeates all things, livens up everything, maintaining everything in movement and alive, giving them the breath of life. Native Peoples have

captured this reality almost instinctively. As we have heard here, for the Indigenous Peoples known as "cuna", Indigenous Peoples from the Peruvian Altiplano, the Earth is not the Earth. It is "nana", it is "pacha nana", it is Mother Earth.

We came to the same conclusion, through prolonged technical and scientific discussions of a technical and scientific nature, as did NASA teams lead by James Overlock, who, while researching the equilibrium of the Earth system became aware of the fact that: "She is a living super-organism". The dynamic equilibrium of its levels of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide and salinity of its oceans are so delicate that only the living can reveal it and call it a living super-organism not unlike in the oriental tradition of the Greek where the Earth as a living super-organism named "gaia". Thus, the most autochthonous of Indigenous Peoples and the most contemporary of sciences are converging at the same perception that the Earth is alive, that she instils a sense of deep respect and admiration in us as do all living beings.

This experience is completely overwhelming but it cannot be the product of simple rationalizations. The sacred reaches deep within human beings and provides motivation. This is when the deeply meaningful is inspired and the values which appeal to people and which are truly worthwhile can also, at the limit, justify sacrificing our own life. At the bottom line, the sacred embraces all that deserves respect, care and admiration. It enfolds the reality and the mystery of creation which includes all things and the entire universe. The most logical approach to this question is one which involves a dialogue including all beings without excluding anyone, which is able to accept the rhythm of things while allowing us to feel that we are a part and a particle of this immense reality.

We must recapture this sacredness if our goal is to gain a richer and more global conception of the Earth. In truth, we have been living in exile and now we are coming to the home we all share - the Earth. Earth, the Homeland for all human beings and for all those who, along with us, are participating to this terrestrial adventure, all other living beings and all that exists on this planet.

And slowly, as our ecological awareness is growing, we become conscious that ecology is the frame of reference to all problems and that our attitudes, our mentalities and our customary practices are in the process of becoming much more ecological and so we are beginning to treat the Earth and all the things it contains as a whole universe in the same way that we care for our own body, for each of its organs, for each of the emotions we feel in our soul and for every thought that crosses our mind.

It is only by establishing a personal relationship with the Earth that we will love the Earth. We do not insult or attack the object of our love, we hug it and we identify with it. When this happens, it will then be the beginning of a new millenium. The new millenium will not begin in a year and a half or in two years, nor when our calendar indicates the year 2000, rather it will be at the moment when we are able to abandon our old civilizing paradigm which divides us and cuts us off from the Earth and when we leave this world for another where we can feel that the Earth itself thinks, loves and functions alone, this will be the moment indeed when the new millenium will be inaugurated, possibly

accompanied by much more kindness, compassion and identification will all beings as our own brothers and sisters under the rainbow of the same sacredness that permeates everyone.

The second element which seems fundamental next to the sacred is the recovery of the feminine principle or the dimension of courage in men and women. Ever since Neolithic times, almost ten thousand years ago, we have been hostages of masculine hegemony and of the kind of control it has over people, of the dualism introduced between emotions and reason, between myself and the world, between a human being and the mystery of divinity, between men and women. We learn to use reasoning, reasoning as a weapon to dominate and to turn the conquest of our planet into an exploit. But there is very high price to pay. We are repressing another dimension, another principle which is so fundamental for human beings, for men as well as women.

We are able to feel and show consideration for others, to think of indivisibility, we can choose not to participate in "integralism", to not only think with our mind but to use our body as well, to show sensitivity to values, to keep our ears open in order to receive the messages that are being sent from everywhere around us, we can be sensitive to the spiritual dimension and open enough to perceive the mysterious. This experience is, for men and women, filled with warmth and with the capacity for expressing tender feelings, kindness and compassion. It is the feminine principle present in men and women. It is slowly coming back and it is useless to bring up the subject of the sacred if we do not bring back, if we do not extricate the dimension of our own courage, the dimension of our feminine side buried deep inside ourselves under a thick coating of dust.

We will then be sensitive enough to show solidarity, kindness and brotherhood of spirit which is another dimension of human beings. Not only will we be acting according to the laws of logic and rationality, it will make us more powerful and efficient, and we need to achieve all of these things but not at the expense of uprightness in our the heart, or the spirit or finesse, the capability to show kindness and sensibility for others who walk by our side and the perception of sacred unity that includes all that is alive. Thus this feminine dimension will compel us to be more in tune with the cosmic symphony, with the Earth as a live super-reality and the Earth as our mother.

This perception of the world's sacredness, just as the dimension of our courage, should challenge us to establish an educational process among humankind. How can we convey this collective consciousness? Proclaiming values is just not sufficient enough. We must establish the conditions so that we can live according to these values. We must not only be aware of them, we should be touched and inspired by them, experience them. We do not want to talk about the Earth as our mother, what we want is to feel that the Earth is our mother and to feel that we are her sons and daughters. To greatly modify our way of thinking and our way of seeing things is uppermost. We acquire our own perception of things through modern cosmology, that is to say the modern image of the world which we receive from the body of scientific knowledge available on Earth, from quantum physics to new information in the field of biology, astrophysics and anthropology.

All of these sciences converge at the same point, which is to understand the world not as the sum of all objects placed together in juxtaposition but as a complete universe. It is the joining of objects because there is a connection between all things in every point and at all times. We are all entangled in such a complex network of relationships and every one of us is a historical being with the longest ancestral background and in this way we continue accumulating information through this web of relationships.

The universe is therefore a correlation of beings and things all related between themselves, which is why the greatest quantum physicist in the United States, (Carlos Seiga became the successor of this great scientist), Savame has said in the preface of the famous book that he has recently published and which has now been translated in both Spanish and Portuguese under the title "Conscious Universe" that "for mathematical reasons the universe is not to be understood through the complexity of its two energetic fields without first accepting the supreme wisdom and the providing spirit".

It is necessary that we first and foremost understand that we cannot see ourselves as separate beings from the universe and the Earth and that we can no longer maintain the classic vision of the Earth perceived as an inert planet, as a mass of soil, highlands and water, rivers and oceans. We are more than that. We are the sons and daughters of the Earth. Moreover, we are the Earth itself which has developed its own consciousness. "The Earth who walks" as said the great half-bread Argentinean poet Ataiuu paiu pank: "We are the Earth who walks, the Earth who thinks, the Earth who loves, the Earth who celebrates, the Earth who sings, the Earth who worships". The Earth is not, therefore, a planet on which there is life. She is life, she is a living super-organism. And the human species, ourselves, men and women, represent gaia's capacity for reflective thinking, its ability to synthesize information through its conscience and to be subjective in its expression of love. We human beings, men and women, provide the Earth with the possibility to appreciate her sumptuous beauty, to meditate on her intricate complexity and to make the spiritual discovery of the mystery that surrounds her.

What is the relationship between human beings and the Earth and what is the connection between the Earth and the cosmos as we know it? The cosmos is a living entity. It is still at the stage of genesis, and for this reason, rather than cosmology, we should speak of cosmogenesis, of anthropogenesis rather than anthropology. This is the moment of our birth. We are not even completely born yet. We have been around for the past fifty billion years. The Universe rolled up around itself and has matured in such a way that somewhere in its path, in the Milky Way, in the Polar System, on the Planet Earth, a conscience has emerged to reflect on where it has come from and where it is going, which symbolizes the image of a great spirit.

When an eco-agronomist studies the chemical contents of a particular soil, it is the cosmos itself studying its own contents. And when an astronomer turns his telescope towards the stars, it is the universe looking at itself. The transformation of this reading should produce in attitudes and in institutions the same transformations which occurred during the Sixteenth Century, when it was discovered that the Earth was round and that the centre was the Sun and not the Earth, particularly the fact that things do not come all

set as they are, but that they are continually at the emergence of finding new ways for their own transformation and fulfillment, giving us a new perception of innovation, a renewed open-mindedness, tolerance and patience towards one another.

But we are not ready yet. We must have patience regarding our own imperfections. We are still growing towards our own plenitude. One can only be true and know what is right if one accepts to go through the slow process of waiting for a manifestation of what still has yet to reveal itself to us. Secondly, it is important to understand the globalisation of time. We have no idea of the time we were born. We have an idea of the universe because we know about those essential energetic fields, about the big red stars and the time when elements were formed which, when they exploded, created all of the stars, the galaxies of our planet, our own body. We are made of these cosmic elements. And we are the last of the great beings who became part of the history of the universe. When 99.98% of the Earth's history was complete, then came human beings.

Any anthropocentricity is therefore inappropriate. The Earth does not need human beings. The immense bio-diversity which came about before us and without us is the life support which allowed us to become a part of it. Therefore, human beings are not necessary to the Earth. We form a part of it and we are a particle of this enormous process which had its cosmic moment, its chemical moment, its biological moment, its anthropological moment and now, its planetarian moment at the time when we are all gathered in one place, that is on the planet Earth itself united as if it were a great big family. We are then a constituent of this prodigious history which began much before our time, involving us and going beyond ourselves. Together with the immense community of other living beings and other beings who come to create the physical and chemical support which allows our own existence.

In the third place: not only must we discover our relationship with the Earth, we must also find our connection with time, and our link with space. If we looked at the Earth away from the Earth, we would discover a link to an infinite chain of celestial beings. We are part of a small galaxy among one hundred billion of other galaxies with a small suburban Sun in the pulling force of Orion, at a distance of twenty seven thousand kilometers from the centre of our galaxy. A small planet, the third in our Solar System, but a planet of a highly complex nature which has allowed the emergence and the autonomy of matter to organize itself, the emergence of life, the emergence of human life.

We are a part of this time and place only because it is in adequate symphony and balance with the four fundamental interactions which sustain the entire universe - gravitational, electromagnetic, nuclear force, whether the latter is weak or strong. All of these energies maintain the stability of the universe, sustaining us as apart and a particle of this universe.

In the fourth place: it is imperative that we become aware of our own existence. From its very beginning, the universe has been creating inwardly, weaving the unbroken canvas of relationship which constitutes the reality of auto-cognition. We are born at the centre of

this reality and we are now inaugurating this dream, which the great scientist and mystic Taiar de Chardem had already foreseen during the thirties.

We are leaving behind... (end of side A tape no. 04)

...the process, each and every one of us in our own conscience, in our capability to love being linked and connected to this reality. And when we become aware of this, there is growing admiration and gratefulness towards this extensive history which has allowed us to come into the world and to be here now, together, talking about those things because, had the energies of the universe, had the elements and their equilibrium not developed a complicity between themselves, we would not be here to talk about it. A feeling of gratitude overcomes us at that point, not only towards our country and our ancestors living within ourselves but towards the entire universe which has produced us. In the fifth place: each and every human being must acknowledge the fact that they are a member of the homo sapiens and demons because not only do we have wisdom, we are also demented. We can act as the good angel who protects the Earth and helps it grow, just as we can be the Devil of the Earth who destroys, causes instability and imbalance, killing the species by our actions. Because of the destructiveness of our patterns of growth when it comes to material goods and services, and as a result of our greed and irresponsible behaviour, ten species of living beings and fifty species of plants disappear each day and with them an entire library of knowledge that the universe has painstakingly accumulated. And who knows what the solution to these various enigmas might be?

One of the important officials at the United Nations, Robert Müller, also a supporter of ecological consciousness and founder of the Peace University in Costa Rica wrote: "When we are dealing with the human cosmos, almost everything remains to be done. Our planetarian cathedral is still not inhabited by a close, respectful, grateful and fully developed family, it is filled instead with rebellious groups of immature children who contradict everything. We still have a lot of growing up to do and we must become more mature and accept the responsibility for the house we all live in".

Sixth, we must discover the uniqueness of each human individual. We do not represent a number. Each one of us is an open message to be read by others. We are cultural beings. Beings who have the freedom to mould reality, which is the reason why we were created to be "creators" and participants. We shape the world. As we have not been equipped with any specialized organ, we are compelled to intervene with nature, to extend our arms, our hands and our eyes with technical instruments and create what is today our planetarian civilization.

The biological development of our brain, which enables us to think and use our creative imagination, produces in one instant what evolution took million and million of years to accomplish. Thus, human beings, act as co-pilots alongside the forces which govern the universe. Humankind co-piloting the future of the Earth. And as we create, Carlos Seiga, this great and wise scientist whose past achievements we have already mentioned above has said: "We have created the principle of self-destruction and that is why the Earth herself cannot guarantee her own future. We human beings must open our eyes to our

capacity for self-destruction, the destruction of the biosphere, and we must learn to cultivate a sense of co-responsibility within ourselves".

The future of the planet depends on a conscious, political decision on the part of human beings so that together we can guarantee our own future, because this time, has Mr. Gorbachev wrote in his book "Perestroika" more than fifteen years ago: "This time, there will be no Noah's Ark to save a few and let the others perish. Either we all save ourselves or we will all be lost".

And finally, in the seventh place, it is of paramount importance that human beings develop an awareness of their function and role among the community of humans. What place should we take? This is where the ethical dimension comes in. In the complex of all other beings, we are the only ones to have an ethical dimension. When we say ethical dimension, the dimension which makes human beings become responsible, we means placing other beings under the care of each individual. And when we say that each human being must assume responsibility, we are saying that each person can make decisions, which can sometimes run counter to themselves but which can benefit another weakened or threatened being.

Human beings assume that they have the ability to co-pilot, to fashion their habitat and to ensure for other human beings the habitability of this society that we can build and where there is enough room for everyone, reducing the number of victims of the type of society that we so carelessly built. What we need therefore is an educational process to raise awareness in human beings regarding their responsibility. All educational processes must culminate in this awareness which confers human beings, men and women, a profound sense of the universal. Once this new understanding has been acquired, it is clear that the global and most important value is to save the planet because it is the only we home we have. Secondly, the most important value still not to have become part of humanity's collective conscience is to protect the conditions which allow human beings to exist, reproduce and ensure their evolution as well as their co-evolution since we are beings who intervene in reality. We are beings who have been created and molded and this is why we must know how to coordinate our capabilities in a collective way so that it is not damaging to the global process by being beneficial to our own species only but at the expense of the other species.

We are now going to get into the heart of the subject of the ethical dimension. As I have said, ethics only make sense if we assimilate this point of view. Where should we establish an ecological ethic? I think that the foundation should be set in our own life. Human beings themselves, the logic of life. The universe itself, the Earth gives us indications of what we should do. I believe that one of the basic definitions of a human being can be found in ancient mythology and that it has been taken on in modern times by an entire trend of contemporaneous philosophies that see human beings not so much as a rational being nor just as a caring being.

The great philosopher on the question of concern, and the majority of people may not know this, is perhaps Martin Heidegger, the most radical philosopher of the century.

Borrowing from an old Greek legend the short story of a slave named Gino who lived in the days of August, the writer reflects in his essay *Ser do Tempo*, on the history of human beings as caring people and says that essentially, and even before having the freedom and the will to think by themselves, human beings placed much importance on caring about all the things that they did, because of the fact that they were human beings. Even after becoming men of the world, among other people, always on the move, they used their freedom and creative ability in everything that they did, including care/carelessness.

Perhaps what is most lacking today has been reported by the great North American psychoanalyst Ralo May. Perhaps the domineering stigma of the entire modern culture is carelessness. Carelessness towards the planet, carelessness towards life, towards our body, towards our health, towards our imagination and perhaps the most urgent value to instill is to bring back the care because the fundamental law of life is to care. If life is abandoned to its own fate, the same as in the case of the most primitive amoeba or a newborn baby left without care, it will be at risk within a few minutes, and in a few hours will be in a threatening situation, become gradually weaker and eventually die.

Human beings therefore need to develop care in themselves. What is care? Care is the ability that humans have to include concern, solicitude, diligence, devotion and attention in the things that they do. As they include interest, libido, affection, gentleness in the things that they do, they become burdened with occupation, preoccupation, worry and responsibility with whatever thing with which they have established a bond of affection.

Human beings understand values. Things become signs and sacraments that call us and that appeal strongly to our radicalism. This is why it is necessary to include, along with care and the reverberations of care just the right measure in all things. How much intervention is necessary while at the same time preserving the biological wealth of the Earth? Gentleness towards all living things, a simple caress, basic cordiality, conviviality towards all beings who breathe and share the adventure of living, radical compassion for all those who suffer and who walk along with us.

All of these categories, are as you can see, are about courage, about the capability of human beings to feel. We have such an excess of rationality that it reaches the level of inflation. Perhaps what human beings most lack, and perhaps what their greatest crisis is not a lack of economic means or financial crisis, nor is it a crisis in the political system. It is a crisis in human sensibility. We are unable to consider others as our own brother or sister, to consider ants, birds, insects, water or plants as our brothers and sisters, as did Saint Francis, the archetype of the Eastern ecological culture.

This is why, as both Heidegger and Freud have said, as any psychoanalytic discourse will reveal and as did the most recent empirical research reported by Daniel Colegan in his book *"The Emotional Intelligence"*, the basic structure of human beings is not logos, it is not thought, it is fathos, it is sympathy, it is the ability to be moved and to feel. This is the first relation that human beings have that places them in communion with others. It overcomes distances, it places us next to things rather than above them in order to dominate them and it allows us to live with reality without setting us apart or distancing

ourselves to think it over and control ourselves. We therefore need to recover the ability to be moved, the ability to feel others and starting from this, to develop an ethic based on care.

There is an extraordinary text published by various organization of the United Nations for the Environment, the World Fund for Nature, and the International Union for Nature Conservation which provides a detailed strategy for the future of life and entitled "Caring for Planet Earth". It deals essentially with the ethic of care. It contains nine principles which I would like to translate:

1. Caring first for the planet as a whole, build a sustainable society oriented towards care;
2. Respect and care for the larger community of life;
3. Improve the quality of human life;
4. Protect the vitality and the diversity of Planet Earth;
5. Stay within the limits of the carrying capacity of Planet Earth;
6. Modify our personal attitudes and practices;
7. Allow communities to care for their own environment;
8. Establish a structure at the national level to integrate development and conservation;
9. Constitute a global alliance for the care of Planet Earth.

As it was said in the above mentioned document, the ethic on care applies as much at the international level as it does at the national and personal level. No nation is self-sufficient. All of them will benefit from global sustainability and all of them will be endangered if we do not achieve this goal. Only this ethic based on fundamental caring can save us from the worst and it is only by adopting it that we can look forward and towards a future and hope in the horizon. But in addition to caring for Planet Earth, we must care for the sons and the daughters of the Earth. This is caring, this is at the core of humankind.

We are not supporters of anthropocentricity. I consider that we are cosmoscentered because we all depend on one another, inter-retrodependently. We live through the complicity of all things. We need one another and for this reason, everyone is central, everyone is fundamental in the fantastic chain which sustains the symphony of the Earth and of the Universe. The most endangered being today, however, is the human being. Thereby the importance of caring for human being as a whole, caring for their own body, as it is part of the universe, caring for their health as a whole, caring for their psyche,

caring for their most cherished dream, for their greatest passions, for the structure of their desires, so that they are not torn to pieces inside, so that they can grow into their own uniqueness, their own personalization process which is more deeply centered and more articulate within the human community.

Care for the spiritual dimension of the human being, with dreams aimed high, with their profundity, with their capability to drink in communion with others at the source of creation of all beings, to take part in contemplation and in prayer. Human beings are spiritual beings, able to put forward meaningful questions contained in the daily journals of each biography. Where do we come from? Where are we going? What is the sense of this universe? What can we expect beyond this life? After our respiration stops, our last breath will go on to be part of the larger breathing of the great universe.

Care for human beings is to care their entirety, but fundamentally, it means to care for the sons and daughters of the Earth who suffer deprivation. 80% of humanity lives in the margin of society and in exclusion. The most endangered beings are not the whales nor the golden capuchin monkeys of Brazil, nor China's panda bears. The most endangered beings are those who are condemned to die before their time, they are the poor and the deprived sons and daughters of the Earth. We cannot write an Earth Charter when the sons and daughters of the Earth are condemned, when they are living in injustice, in the lack of solidarity, although belonging to the human family. Therefore we must recover the ability to feel first hand, the ability to embrace, as these men and these women are our brothers and sisters, they belong to the big family whose children have such a different, tragic destinies.

The Earth Charter should be structured to take into account the victims of erroneous policies that we have established against the benefit of the Earth during our infancy. We are now waking up to our adulthood and to our responsibilities. Let the integration begin, the strategy of care for those who are the main victims of our dementia and let us finally begin to care and show compassion for all other human beings who share life with us. Let us begin with the other living organisms who are the new citizens because anything that has life, all that exists, deserves to live and deserves to continue existing. They are our brothers and sisters who are much more ancestral than ourselves. They are much older than us in the evolutionary process.

What would a human city be like if it did not have green areas, if it did not have birds, if it did not have rocks, if it did not have water, if it did not have scenery? It would not be a human society. Common good, therefore, does not only represent human common good. It is socioeconomic common good. It must include our brothers and sisters who are co-citizens in the human society, in this large biocracy, this large open democracy which involves all other beings in our planetarian adventure.

I would like to conclude briefly. This ethic of care, of benevolence, compassion, gentleness, essential, will change the state of our mind and conscience. It will not engender ecological actions but an ecological attitude, that is to say, it will turn us into kind and worthy sons and daughters of the Planet Earth. Only when we decide to take this

new direction will it be time to initiate this new educational process, which should start with each one of us doing our own molecular revolution, like a molecule in interaction. It does not survive this way, where we are. Experimenting this new caring, experimenting the new masculine and feminine relation, bringing out the dimension of courage from within us, being kinder, more compassionate and more sensitive, let us embrace all things, in the certitude that we are embracing God.

When we succeed in bringing this level of awareness across each of our organizations, beginning with our schools, with our families, with our communities, when ecology is no longer somebody's movement, but the atmosphere we all breathe, then we will be inaugurating the new paradigm, the new millenium. The ecological millenium, the new humanity finally reconciled with its home and coming back from a long exile to the home we all share in common. This home will no longer be a valley of tears where many are suffering but it will be a home with brothers and sisters living together as sons and daughters of joy sharing the same adventure to which we all have the opportunity to participate with pride and joy, with profound humility and gratitude.

Thank you very much.