

**"Peru and the World  
at the Dawn of 2010"  
Report of a Listening Post  
held in January**



**Encouraging The Reflective Citizen**

**Part 1. THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES**

In this part of the Listening Post participants were invited to identify, contribute, and explore their experience in their various social roles, be those in work, unemployed, or retired; as members of religious, political, neighbourhood or voluntary or leisure organisations, or as members of families and communities. This part was largely concerned with what might be called, 'the stuff of people's everyday lives', that relating to the 'socio' or 'external' world of participants.

**Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES**

In Part 2 the aim was to collectively identify the major themes emerging from Part 1. From several presented these have been drawn together under the following four interrelated themes:

**1. A leadership crisis and the fear of a revolution**

The political material was mainly concerned with the next presidential elections and it is coloured by disillusionment: "Why we keep bringing back politicians into power that are unethical?" "No honest successful professional dares to go into government is the arena of corruption". "We re-elect a President that stole us and run away, what is next, the daughter of Fujimori?" "We have set no example for future generations on the importance of caring of the Public Sector?"

There is an increasing concern of the establishment of a left wing unified government in connection with Chavez and Morales. "People say we are not so bad after the world financial crisis, but the worst thing that has happened to South America is the World Financial Crisis". "Food for Chavez, Morales and the Cubans." The weakness of our model doesn't help the growing movement of Peru. Nobody really pays attention of the political threatens of this growing movement in South America.

The 'concept of paralysis' is mention in several opportunities while describing the lack of citizen accountability around the next elections. And the absence of longstanding political parties. There is a fear of the unknown, absence of hope of a new political figure that could really bring a new style of leadership in the country. Members admit that even the country economical growth is significant many people is considering leaving if the elections show any danger to get an 'Umala' in the presidency. One year before the elections the scenes don't seems to be any better.

**2. Shift on ecological consciousness**

The relationship and relatedness to land also appeared brought first by comments of Avatar movie. "Avatar is not different than our tribes reality". "People need to go to

the cinema and see blue-beings to pay attention to what is going on in their faces day after day.”

There is not enough awareness of Global warming and its potential impact in the country. “We are more protected by our jungle.” “In Australia there are fires, here we are more protected”. The issue of recycling appears brought by youngest generation as result of a participant holiday in Switzerland. It is mention as a new initiative of an important supermarket that is collecting trash to recycle. The story comes after her experience of holidays in Switzerland where she learned how everything was recycle.

### **3. Fragmentation of national identity**

The fragmentation of national identity is assumed as the most important subject and it is considered a risk in the edge of the upcoming presidential elections. The polemic around the jungle killings taking place in Bagua has created a big wound in the selvatic population. Dynamics of ‘us vs. the other’ and lack trust are a general subject. “We have from not existing in their minds to be criminals. But we have been always loyal, we fought against terrorism, we fought against equator. We always defended Peru and now Peru betray us.” Only the bad things are know, but nobody really has visit our lands or tribes only when you want our trees or our oil.” The jungle is another world and the nation is losing contact with it and other political interests take advantage of this. At the end the country loses.

The feeling of invisibility is reinforcing the need for protection that is sometimes expressed as an attack. The last year was marked by a lack of clarity around the systemic accountability of the Bagua killings where a group of indigenous killed policemen thinking that their lands were being taking over. The indigenous claim to act in defense from an attack were a person with police uniform killed a local indigenous. However this policeman couldn’t be identify as part of the police force and it has claimed to be a plan action of ‘other political interests.’

### **4. Globalization, the sad face of success**

The Theme contained different experiences of Globalization. Globalization is explored from the inside out. From the state of the country and in relation to the rest of the world. Globalization seems a repetitive theme that is considered either positive or negative. A general struggle is perceive to explore the ‘both, and also’ of this dynamic. “We have to accept that this government wasn’t as bad as we thought”. “Compared to many countries we have had a great financial year”. All what is seen as example of success are materialistic corporate careers. “Now life is a horse race of work, work, work, shop, bills, bills, more bills, more shop, more work and then we see our children getting married, having there own children repeating the same mistakes, we missed really getting to know them, they don’t even think it is important”. The maids race my granddaughter.

The best professionals of the country should be encouraged to participate also in political life. “I came to work as a maid to Lima, my bosses took me with them to Holland, I went to get more money and send it to my kids, I just worked and send money back for five years, money, presents and my boss daughter taught me how to write so I wrote I send pictures. It was the best, they didn’t had father, my aunt could raise them but no money.” The concerned of an emergent cult named ‘EMO’s’ attracting young people practicing self harm, putting themselves into extreme life situations to connect with emotions is express in a strong way.

The cost of development and 'progress' is expressed in the lost a social class connection un-professional parents and their sons and daughters. This arouses conflict feelings of envy and difficulty to understand how her life efforts to give them a better life had lost her child, comparing to her healthiest early life in the coast fields from Arequipa.

### **Part 3. ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION**

In this part of the Listening Post the members were working with the information resulting from Parts 1 & 2, with a view to collectively identifying the underlying dynamics both conscious and unconscious that may be predominant at the time; and, developing hypotheses as to why they might be occurring at that moment. Here the members were working more with what might be called their 'psycho' or 'internal' world. Their collective ideas and ways of thinking that both determine how they perceive the external realities and shape their actions towards them.

#### **Analysis and Hypothesis 1**

**Hypothesis:** There is a sense of lack of trust on leadership models and a loss of hope in the next elections.

**Analysis:** This is expressed in different dimensions. At a political level is expressed as a fear of a left wing revolution in relation to the future elections; at a psychological dimension with the lost of sense of roots and the fragmentation of national identity. At the spiritual dimension the experience of grieve and despair for unsolved wounds of 'the Baguazo'.

#### **Analysis and Hypothesis 2**

**Hypothesis:** There is a sort of shift on ecological consciousness. An increase of concern on the jungle ecological sustainability with an interesting decision on the indigenes tribes and the respective cultures that are seen as obstacles for development.

**Analysis:** Ecological consciousness seems to appear as imported from European experiences. Younger generations and members originally from the jungle are insisting on increase awareness on the danger that is surrounding the jungle. There is anxiety link to the preservation of the land but mainly of the culture. "The best they can do with us is to leave us alone." "You impose your standards' of development and seduce our children to a life they cannot have because the state cant provide it. Then they look us down, we see our children dismissing their roots, a culture that has been here before you arrive." "It is okay to create NGOs to preserve the land, and the Amazon, because now that is fashionable for the big businessman, but they don't want to preserve our culture." "Our land is good, our people are mean." The shift on interest is focus in ecology while the indigenous seem to be outcaste as 'the other'.

The associate feelings are of despair, abandonment, abuse and anger.

A fear of new age movements also is mention as a potential risk to the preservation of indigenous culture.

There is a process of denial on the potential impact that Global Warming can bring to the country. This was attributed generally to the diversity of the group in terms of social classes and areas of belonging.

### **Analysis and Hypothesis 3**

**Hypothesis:** There is a constructive potential of globalization that can be promoted to fight against systemic destructivity. Art and Media can be channels of education against the temptation for greed and power.

**Analysis:** The main reflection is around what is the nature of success. The different mindsets that is imported as a result of globalization and the different resources that are available to search for a collective accountability of the social drivers that are leading citizen's behavior. There is a big reflection in terms of the shift and different relationship and relatedness that it is appearing towards the land. The exploration around the connection between land, culture and social and ecological wellbeing is tested as an important area of further exploration. The sharing of painful emotions appeared in a genuine generous way, searching for meaning in learning from experience of a search for development and success that can leave behind the most important bonds with family and culture giving space to pathological illness.

**Convener: Monica Vilarde**