

12 August 2025

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS

to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, [...]

Charter of the United Nations, 29 June 1945

In this fifth letter to the international community, the Brazilian incoming Presidency of COP30 recalls the founding spirit of the United Nations: that we are a community of peoples before we are a community of nations. In this letter, we invite the international community to remember that climate action is not merely a scientific or technical challenge - it is a profoundly human one.

This is a letter to ***People*** - to lived experiences, agency, and leadership of those on the frontlines of climate change, especially those in vulnerable situations. They ***are not passive victims*** of climate change, but ***living leaders*** of care, resilience, and regeneration. Their stewardship of land, culture, knowledge, and solidarity is not a legacy of the past, but an example of more harmonious ways of relating to Nature as a model for a common future.

To all those historically ***marginalized, displaced, or unheard***, COP30 should be the turning point in which you are recognized as both essential actors and rights-holders in the global climate response.

Please refer to the Portuguese version available at <https://cop30.br/pt-br/presidencia-da-cop30/cartas-da-presidencia/quinta-carta-da-presidencia-brasileira>

Please refer to the Spanish version available at <https://cop30.br/es/presidencia/cartas-de-la-presidencia/quinta-carta-de-la-presidencia>

A New Invitation: Let us Ensure Climate Action Begins and Ends with People

The incoming COP30 Presidency calls the international community to honor memory. We are peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of emerging risks. We know in our souls and through our institutions that we *belong* together. We take *meaning* from honoring ancestry and safeguarding our children's future. We have *purpose* in uniting our strength and combining our efforts for shared protection, fairness and prosperity.

We are people in families, cities, and countries. We are people in businesses, markets, and finance. We are people of nature, ecosystems, and planet. In a changing climate, people's experiences of both loss and community are not abstract. They are geographic, they are embodied, they are sacred. They become memories, grief and courage. Let us honor them at COP30.

For far too long, climate action has been framed as a question of technologies and timelines. But at its core, this is a story of *who we are, what we remember, how we care, and what we want to preserve and create*. We must reclaim *climate action as a human act*, as an act of profound responsibility.

As climate change emerges as a global crisis, human bonds at the local level also emerge as our most powerful resource. Now is the time we face global warming by putting human faces to our response. Now is the time we show up with humanity - individually and collectively. Now is the time we frame our climate response as the pursuit of fairness and prosperity.

Ultimately, the climate crisis is about giving urgency to people's needs and hopes. Mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, and capacity-building are first and foremost about addressing structural inequalities, ending hunger and combatting poverty whilst promoting sustainable development, human rights and equality, including on gender and race. The climate fight is about quality of life, personal integrity, health, private property, housing, freedom, water, food, work, social safety, culture and education. It is about family, parenthood, and neighborhood.

It is time we remember that climate justice begins with people. That territory is not just land, but identity, governance, and future. That ancestry is not the past, but a guiding intelligence. That ancestral knowledge is vital to humanity's survival and flourishing. That memory is infrastructure, and storytelling is a form of climate action - able to connect generations, build belonging, and restore trust. That care is a form of power to be integrated into how we design, finance, govern, and adapt.

As adverse effects of climate change are increasingly affecting individuals and communities worldwide, we know impacts are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, race, ethnicity, Indigenous or minority status, national or social origin, birth and disability.

And while the climate crisis has disproportionately impacted those least responsible, *they are showing exceptional leadership*:

Women and girls are persevering in social cohesion, holding together the fabric of community resilience and taking socioeconomics to a new paradigm of sustainability.

Youth and children remind us that time is not abstract - it is embodied, urgent, and theirs.

Indigenous Peoples protect a huge portion of the world's biodiversity - their guardianship of territory goes way beyond conservation, it is cosmology, memory, knowledge, governance, and survival.

Traditional, rural and coastal communities carry ancestral knowledge of the land, waters and seas, passed down through calloused hands and whispered songs.

Distinct groups, such as Afro-descendants, have transformed territories into beacons of collective creation, cultural affirmation and resistance.

Communities in peripheries of cities combine orality and mobilization with digital technologies, redefining urban life, leveraging cultural wealth and innovating in planning, preparedness and territorial regeneration.

The elderly, ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities and those living in poverty have built models of mutual care and radical inclusion that climate policy has yet to fully understand.

People - and **women**, in particular - who resist, confront, and overcome **overlapping inequalities** teach us how to turn injustice into powerful energy for resilience and transformation. They embody inspiring examples of climate response - of bold action in place of reaction. Similar leadership is exercised daily by **workers** among the most exposed to the health impacts of climate change, across fields like agriculture, construction, manufacturing, transportation, and public safety - particularly those laboring outdoors, in overheated indoor environments, or on the frontlines of emergency response.

More than limited and defined by their vulnerable situation, these people are also **teachers** in their vitality, wisdom and creativity. They are not merely peripheral because of their geography, they are **protagonists** in the forefront of climate mitigation, adaptation and resource sharing. They are agents of change, who bring unique perspectives and solutions.

The incoming COP30 Presidency humbly bows to all those who lead by example. We recognize you not because you need recognition, but because we need your courage - to overcome our fear of loss, of change, of lack of control. We need your courage to teach us that genuine leadership comes not with authority but with care and affection.

The incoming Presidency issues a new invitation: **let us ensure that climate action begins and ends with People.**

Bringing COP30 to the heart of the Amazon is about giving way to the vulnerable and to the peripheral as genuine leaders who take brave decisions every day, and must now come to the center of global decision-making.

Putting People at the Center of COP30

As we center our climate response on people, we invite the international community to join forces with the Brazilian presidency to bring people to the center of COP30 through concrete

action and measurable positive impact across all four fronts of action of COP30 – Global Mobilization; Action Agenda; formal UNFCCC Negotiations; and the Leaders’ Summit.

Global mobilization: the incoming Presidency has been learning so much from our Special Envoys, Presidency Youth Climate Champion, Marcele Oliveira, and the Circle of Peoples, which have been invaluable allies in connecting COP30 to peoples’ realities on the ground. Putting people at the center of climate action and recovering our sense of agency are the very spirit of the **Global Mutirão** around which we invited the international community to rally in our first and second letters.

Formal UNFCCC negotiations: people are at the core of formal negotiations we referred to in our third letter, including on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) indicators under the UAE–Belém Work Programme, the UAE Dialogue on implementing the global stocktake (GST) outcomes, and the UAE Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) - in addition to our joint work on topics such as the new Gender Action Plan, the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) and loss and damage.

Action Agenda: from fostering human and social development to building resilience in cities and unlocking enablers like finance and technology, each of the six axes of the Action Agenda we unveiled in our fourth letter offers pathways to implement the care, dignity, and leadership we honour in this fifth letter. By aligning people-centered realities with the implementation of the GST in the Action Agenda, we reinforce the legitimacy and accountability of our climate efforts - turning memory into metrics, and solidarity into systems change. Contemporary to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the Action Agenda further provides a unique opportunity for COP30 to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with climate solutions that promote climate justice, combat hunger and poverty, and address structural inequalities, including on gender, race and socioeconomic conditions.

Leaders’ Summit: at the COP30 Leaders’ Summit, which we will refer to in a future letter, we will invite leaders to unite around genuine parliamentary debate towards concrete solutions to connect the climate regime to people’s real lives.

The critical moment we live in calls us to respond with courage. As we strengthen multilateralism and accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement, **people must be the purpose** behind each nationally determined contribution (NDC), national adaptation plan (NAP) and biennial transparency report (BTR). People must be the purpose behind climate finance and trade. People must be the purpose behind the nature and global energy transition agendas.

To protect people against a background in which climate urgency interacts with compounding geopolitical and socioeconomic challenges, the incoming Presidency hopes we remain guided by three interconnected priorities it endeavors for COP30: (1) To reinforce multilateralism and the climate change regime under the UNFCCC, (2) To connect the climate regime to people’s real lives, and (3) To accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement by stimulating action and structural adjustments across all institutions that can contribute to it. The incoming Presidency is determined to do everything in its capacity to leverage unity and cooperation towards our COP30 priorities around **multilateralism, people, and accelerated implementation**.

A Renewed Invitation: Changing by Choice – Together

The incoming COP30 Presidency issues a renewed invitation to the international community: let us change by choice, together. Let us not allow the fear or the impacts of climate change define peoples' choices.

Beyond pain and suffering, the climate challenge offers us an opportunity to evolve. Overcoming climate change can be the process we transition away from a fragmenting model of extraction, domination and territorialism towards an integrating model of symbiosis, mutual belonging and stronger human bonds.

Like any transition, the climate transition entails change and loss towards a greater gain. As symbolic beings, we, humans, rely on rituals to process grief for what we must leave behind, at the same time we welcome the new.

The incoming Presidency invites the international community to make of COP30 a ritual of passage to mark and soberly celebrate our transition towards a more promising and prosperous future. Firstly, a ritual in which we allow ourselves to mourn the loss of those who were taken from us due to extreme weather events - from floods in Brazil and India, to heat waves in Spain and Japan. Alongside loss and damage, we can use COP30 to **collectively process grief for a model of development that promised prosperity in the past but no longer carries hope to the future.**

Secondly, as a ritual of passage to honor memory, COP30 can be a moment to safeguard our human essence - the essential that must be kept as we metamorphose towards the new. Our essence lies in the non-negotiable shared human values of empathy, compassion and solidarity.

Thirdly, as we remember who we essentially are and what we value, COP30 can offer the platform for us to build right away the future we want. The global mobilization, Leaders' Summit, Action Agenda and formal negotiation tracks of COP30 are all canvas for co-creation, clipboards for co-design, and arenas for collaboration.

In memory, resistance, and imagination, let COP30 be the gathering where formal authority walks alongside genuine leadership. Where we, the peoples of the Earth, can meet to ***remember what it means to belong to the planet and to each other.*** Where climate action is not about institutions alone but begins and ends with people. **Where we decisively move towards changing by choice, together.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected loops and strokes, representing the name André Aranha Correa do Lago.

André Aranha Correa do Lago
COP30 President Designate