

Mexico Today

NAPOLEÓN GÓMEZ URRUTIA

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Thousands of workers gathered in Durham, England, to celebrate another year of the achievements of British miners. Napoleon Gomez Urrutia spoke to express his solidarity with their struggle. Photo La Jornada

A few weeks ago I was honoured to participate in one of the most important events in Europe which is held every year in Durham, England. I said that we were “gathered there in solidarity, crossing oceans and international borders, moving beyond differences of race or gender and especially above practices and arbitrary ideas that are used to divide and exploit not only the workforce but the most vulnerable members of society.

“What brings us together,” I said, “is that we are united around the basic principles that matter most: the dignity and respect that every worker deserves, the value of labour and fair wages, as well as the equality and cooperation that can only be created under a new model of prosperity and shared responsibility. In other words, the need to build a fairer, more balanced future for everyone around the world.”

The atmosphere of that important meeting gave a deep sense that if we really want to live in a better world, we must learn to understand, respect and serve others, and be prepared to stand up and fight whenever and wherever people are vulnerable to corporate ambition and greed, or are victims of abuse and repression and need help and protection.

Mexico today, however, is increasingly further away from democratic politics and social progress. We can see this in daily life across the country, with thousands of lives affected by violence, paramilitary groups, attackers and hired killers, as well as systematic suffering and the profound economic costs, job losses and the disappearance of communities, accompanied by the negative effects on aspects of welfare, the growing weakness of the working class and the population in general.

This is particularly true when social inequality around the world is the worst it has historically been, since the majority of wealth is in the hands of one percent of people who control our governments, as well as driving the production system to extreme exploitation and the conflict-inducing division of classes. In our case, it is clear that corporate elites influence and manage political and economic strategies in order to govern Mexico.

The corporatocracy, as it is known around the world, not only in our country, puts its interests ahead of the people. At the same time, it creates disputes between the government and workers in order to generate an increasingly difficult scenario in which every negotiation, every struggle to defend workers' rights is harder and more complicated, besides creating strong commitments to elected politicians and a serious contradiction between the people and the sectors who elected them and which they are supposed to represent and defend.

Under these conditions, Mexico is in a process of decay, bitterness, frustration and growing dissatisfaction, because the power of corporations, groups and companies, and the extent of their corrupting influence, is on the rise. Hence the marginalised population and social sectors with the lowest income, which form the majority, are constantly suffering under the claws, pressure and threats of entrepreneurs and billionaires who have too many resources and influence over the weakness of a government and a media which are totally under their control.

We must therefore urgently and necessarily change our model. Such a change requires great passion, energy and resources to sustain a constant struggle which will ensure greater economic and social welfare. It is critically important that this strategy be based on the experience of successful nations with greater economic and social development and it must count on the assistance, experience and support of organisations, trade unions and democratic and progressive governments in order to reverse this situation and truly put in place the changes our country needs, which is still

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possible because our social peace is not yet entirely broken.

Mexico today, with the very poor image it now has around the world, cannot and should not remain silent faced with the voices of cynicism, fear and corruption. Nor should our country steer itself or be driven by promises of false leaders who capitulate and are subject to corporate domination, for that way leads to popular disappointment, where opinions and objectives disseminated every day in the media are wrong and are utterly and morally indefensible.

We have to stay strong and stick together in national and international solidarity to protect our rights and achieve higher profits in the interest of the national majority. That is our obligation, responsibility and opportunity for change.