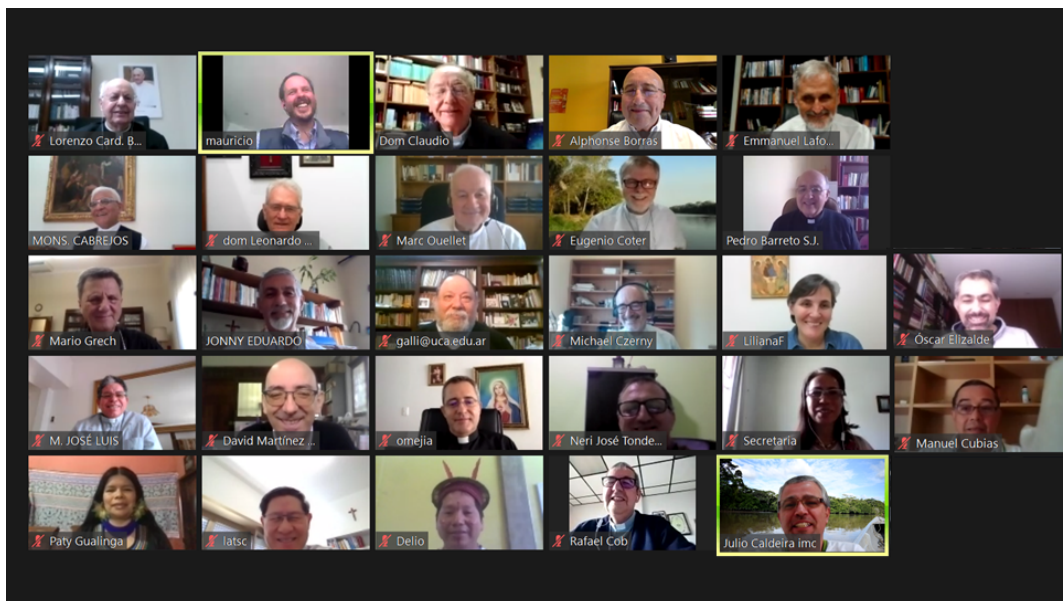


CELAM – REPAM: Official Statement about the project of constitution of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon



OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY FOR THE PROJECT OF CONSTITUTION OF THE ECCLESIAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMAZON

June 29, 2020, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

The proposal of the Synod Fathers to create “a Bishops’ organism that promotes synodality among the churches of the region, helps to express the Amazonian face of this Church and continues the task of finding new ways for the evangelizing mission” (DF, 115), and Pope Francis’ call, along with his four dreams for this region and for the entire Church, in his post-synodal exhortation *Querida Amazonía*, that “the pastors, consecrated men and women and lay faithful of the Amazon region strive to apply it”(QA, 4) has found a response in the Assembly for the project of Constitution of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon, held virtually from June 26 to 29, 2020.

This Assembly, held in an unprecedented way by digital means, has been a novelty of the Spirit and is part of the hope-inspiring *kairós* that continues the synodal way of opening new paths for the Church and for an integral ecology in the Pan-Amazon region.

It is a very special sign that the birth of this Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon occurs on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, as a gesture of their vocation to affirm the Church’s identity, and of their prophetic and missionary option, which springs forth as an unavoidable call for our present time. This celebration of our Church is also a gesture of thanks for the Holy Father’s service, and in this sense we consider the birth of this Ecclesial Conference to be a sign of hope, united with the Magisterium of Pope Francis, who has closely accompanied this entire process.

The composition of this Assembly reflects the unity in diversity of our Church and its call to ever greater synodality, a unity also expressed by the invaluable presence and constant accompaniment of important members of the Holy See who feel close and in connection with the Synod for the Pan-Amazon and with the Church’s mission in this territory, and who will undoubtedly continue to follow these new paths from their respective offices. The selection of the name ***Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon***, after deep discernment during this phase of the process, and its identity, composition and general form of operation (statutes), have been approved unanimously, in both cases, by the voting members.

With great hope and joy we also share the news of the election of Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, OFM (Brazil) as its president, and Bishop David Martínez de Aguirre, OP (Peru) as its vice president. For the Executive Committee, Bishop Eugenio Coter (Bolivia) has been elected as bishop representative of the Conferences of Bishops of the Amazonian territory, along with the presidents of the regional church bodies that will accompany this process organically: CELAM, REPAM, CLAR and CARITAS of Latin America and Caribbean; and the three designated representatives of original peoples: Ms. Patricia Gualinga of the Sarayakú Kichwa people (Ecuador), Sister Laura Vicuña Pereira of the Kariri people (Brazil), and Mr. Delio Siticonatzi of the Asháninka people (Peru).

In these difficult and exceptional times for humanity, when the coronavirus pandemic is strongly impacting the Pan-Amazon region and the realities of violence, exclusion and death affecting the biome and its inhabitants clamor for an urgent and imminent integral conversion, the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon seeks to be *good news* and a timely response to the cries of the poor and of our sister Mother Earth, as well as an effective channel for taking up, from within the territory, many of the proposals that emerged in the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region, held in October 2019, as well as a nexus for encouraging other Church and socio-environmental networks and initiatives at the continental and international levels (cf. DF, 115).

In ecclesial communion, on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul

Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos Vidarte, OFM

President of CELAM

Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, OFM

President of REPAM and of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon