
Davos. Bruni (economist): "We shall not be saved by the powerful of the Earth"



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Professor, this year world leaders in Davos put also climate change on their agenda. Did this decision surprise you? Is it a good sign?

It's an obvious choice, given that climate change is a topical issue and they couldn't fail to address it. The problem is that these people cannot be converted. You invite the powerful of the Earth. They accept the invitation, take the ritual photos, attend the meetings. But it all remains at that. These top managers are not moved because they see a penguin die or a glacier melt or Australia go up in flames. They have quarterly budgets to comply with and if they don't, they get fired. It's a world with its own laws. We cannot be so naive as to think that they will be emotionally moved and change their lives. The only significant and meaningful hope I see for the planet is the role that can be played by the people.

Which role?

A role of protest aimed at penalizing products that don't respond to strong and radical choices. National legislations and the laws of international bodies such as the European Union, which could decide to impose greater restrictions, are also important. But it's wishful thinking to imagine that the powerful of the Earth will gather in a five-star hotel to talk about the fate of the poor. Indeed, in the history of mankind, the rich have never saved the poor.

Davos begins on the wake of Oxfam's Time to Care Report on global inequality. Will the "cries

of the poor” be heard?

In the history of humanity, it was never the rich man who helped Lazarus. We must not delude ourselves into thinking that these people can help the poor with the crumbs of their wealth.

World poverty must be addressed with other criteria. It is no coincidence that the meeting "The Economy of Francis" will take us to Assisi, a city that epitomizes a message on poverty and wealth. The economy of Davos is the economy of Bernardone - the father of St. Francis -, the economy of merchants.

In what does the meeting in Assisi differ?



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Inequalities are on the rise and our planet Earth is on fire. This is also the result of unsustainable market and consumer systems. Has our world economy understood that there are only a few more years left?

Some realities in the world believe that capitalism is the best possible system also because it allows 7 billion people to survive compared to an estimated 4 billion 30 years ago. And this is also thanks to China and India. However, it should also be said that we have entered the world's critical phase and we have little time left. And the powerful will not save us. We will be saved by the children, by the people, by all the voices rising from the bottom-up. The people will react and force companies and economic systems to change. Businesses' job is to sell, and if the demand changes, they must

[necessarily adapt the offer to the change in consumer behaviour and choices.](#)

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