

**AIPRAL CARIBBEAN YOUTH LEADER'S MEETING: "LIFE IN ABUNDANCE".
MARACAIBO, VENEZUELA, 17 TO 21 NOVEMBER 2005**

Meeting in Maracibo, Venezuela from 17th to 21st November 2005. We, Caribbean young people of the Latin American Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, have been gathered by the AIPRAL Youth Department to celebrate life in abundance and to analyze the effects of the market economy on our people. As Christian young people, we are challenges not to be part of the exclusion and death that the system offers but to oppose it by seeking the wellbeing and development of our youth.

As we read the biblical texts of Mathew 5:28-42, Luke 6:29-30 and Luke 19:11-27, we see that Jesus presents us with a model of moral resistance against the oppression we encounter in our current realities. We take up the model of Jesus and offer it to our local youth in the hope that it will aid critical and reflective thinking regarding the society of love that God wishes for us.

Therefore we **denounce**:

- 1. Consumerism** that creates a false identity not based on the satisfaction of real needs. It implies anti-values such as violence, lack of identity, and individualism.
- 2. Economic affluence** that is seen as is the most important value of society today. It stands in contrast to life in abundance filled by the fruits of the spirit (Gal 5.22-24).
- 3. Injustice** that is exercised by the powerful countries against the deprived via a model of economic and social inequality that punishes those who are not part of the capitalist system.
- 4. Conformity** to a pleasure-seeking society with no dreams nor utopias.
- 5. The interpretation of biblical texts to support the capitalist system** whilst turning religion into merchandise.

We are challenged to promote social change and ethical resistance; to train our youth so that they may focus on the common good rather than individual gain. We suggest the organization of a joint campaign (with all the representatives of the present countries: Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Venezuela) under the following slogan "Don't give up our dreams, turn our backs on consumption".

AIPRAL's youth of the Caribbean region adopts the Accra-Ghana ARM 24th General Assembly Document in reference to the Confession of Faith Regarding Economic Injustice and Environmental Destruction, and commits itself to putting the document into action in our churches, and to being an example of unity, love, humbleness in the work of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

We understand, guided by the Holy Spirit, that we are called to live a life in abundance and therefore present this document to be promoted among youth.

Translated by María Eugenia Mendizábal.