

II. Congress of the Humanist International

Message of the President of the Humanist International to the Humanist Forum in Moscow.

Dear friends,

Welcome to this first world humanist forum, and thank you for your participation and your contributions.

As Boris Koval explained, in the previous three days we held the 2nd Congress of the Humanist International.

In a few days, and thanks to the active and attentive participation of all delegates, we have been able to study in depth, aspects which we consider to have a strong priority such as education and health; the transition from formal democracy to real democracy; the relationships between labour and capital within an economic model where management and decision making are shared; and those aspirations that demand urgently to become real rights, that is human rights.

In the face of a generalised crisis, where hunger and malnutrition affect millions of human beings; where unemployment causes havoc even in the most developed countries; where ethnic and religious bloody conflicts cover new regions each day; where discrimination is on the increase affecting especially the most vulnerable people; where the ethnic and cultural minorities see their very survival threatened: the Humanist International on its general Declaration by the 2nd Congress has agreed that it is not enough to name the perils that threat humanity and to report about them in the media. The time has come to adopt urgent and concrete actions based on solidarity to protect life ensuring the safety and prosperity of our and future generations. Building a multiform world where any one nation, confession or group could not see its identity denied.

The analysis made with the contributions of so many countries makes it possible to conclude that the crisis in today's world affects not only the political spheres but all the aspects of human life.

Already, in the preparatory conference for this congress, last November, which took place in this same building, the need to bring the discussion and the proposal for a transforming action to a wider audience than the strictly political, became obvious.

The question to which we wanted an answer can be formulated in a few words: "there are in the world many organisations and individuals with humanist orientation who do not participate in politics or action fronts of any type. What can we do to develop a work of convergence, that can gain from the mutual experience, and common resources gaining thus in strength and efficacy the task of humanising the earth"?

That is how the idea of this forum was born. Together with the Academy of Science we invite you all to participate. The encouraging response to this invitation makes clear that the forum is all of you, with your different backgrounds, experiences, cultures and that it is the task of everyone present to give shape to this idea.

We believe that it is the diversity of personal backgrounds, experiences and cultures which instead of a difficulty, constitutes an asset and represents the wealth of this forum and society in general.

It is important to get to know each other, identify common interests, find out about activities, work experiences, contacts and projects amongst the participants of the forum, so that we can understand how can we develop convergence, exchange resources, and develop further our action.

The Forum aspires to be permanent, this session is just the setting in motion, therefore the participants will have to decide how to keep the contact, circulate information and develop joint actions.

I feel very confident that the next few days are going to be very rich in experiences for each one of us and that it will set the basis for future common actions. I wish you all a very successful work.

Thank you very much.