

“...a wall has arisen between humanist aspirations and the realities of today’s world. The time has come to remove that wall.”

THE HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL

Compiled by Loredana Cici, Rome, July 2000

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PROLOGUE

In a world fast becoming global and showing the symptoms of clashes between cultures, ethnic groups and religions, the need of building a universal human nation, multiethnic, multicultural multi-confessional becomes more and more urgent., in accordance to the project launched in the First Congress of the Humanist International.

In the Second Congress became clear the need to take the discussion and the proposal of a transforming action of humanist orientation to a wider ambit that the strictly political.

In the First Humanist Forum which took place in Moscow on January 7-8 1993, immediately after the celebration of the II Congress many organisations and individuals participated, as in the second in Mexico City on January 7-9, 1994 and the third in Santiago, Chile on January 7 and 8 1995. A rich exchange took place on several topic matters, organised later on in areas: 1. Health; 2. Education; 3. Human Rights; 4. Anti-discrimination; 5. Ethnic and Cultural; 6. Science and Technology; 7. Ecology; 8. Art and popular expressions; 9. Religiousness; 10. Grass Root Social Organisations; 11. Political Parties; 12. Alternative Movements; 13. Alternative Economics.

The positive and enriching experience of the humanist Forum re-enforced the project of the Humanist International in terms of widening forms of participation, as it was anticipated by the modification of the constitution, approved by the Second Congress.

The Humanist International invites to join the project of building a universal human nation, not just the humanist parties that may be formed in different countries but also other parties, organisations and individuals of humanist orientation.

To the new members is directed this book, which synthesises the experience and ideas of the Humanist International.

Rome, 30th April 1997

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REPORT OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Background and Recommendations

The work carried out for this Congress was realised by a Co-ordinating committee of the activities of the different Humanist Parties in formation. This commission assembled in 1984 in Madrid, Spain. This first meeting was held on May 1 during the culmination of the European campaign against unemployment.

At that time, the only current that spoke about Humanism in the sense of political action with an international character was the one represented by these parties. These parties were just beginning to develop and had the difficulties that are common to organisations that are just starting. These first Humanist parties were not based either on guild or student action, nor were they the offspring of other political structures, nor were they organised around leaders originating from political groups. Their beginnings were related to cultural associations concerned with the study of human development and social processes.

These initial parties defined proposals of action to spread these basic ideas and encourage the formation of new Humanist parties in different countries based on the following: considering the human being as the central value in all social organisation and rejecting, therefore, all forms of discrimination originating from different types of violence; establishing the principle of choice as the concrete expression of liberty in the political field; uplifting the principle of solidarity in the relations of work (that find expression in co-operative forms of co-management or self-management) and of adopting the methodology of non-violence as the form of political action.

In June 1985, a meeting was held in Rio de Janeiro to Co-ordinate the action of several Humanist parties that had already been formed and of others that were in formation.

In January 1987, in a meeting held in Bombay, the fulfilment of objectives was examined, and a calendar of actions to be carried out on an international scale was set up. Such was the case of the campaign against Apartheid in South Africa that was launched in October of the same year.

Without a doubt there have been numerous regional gatherings that allowed co-ordination and continuation of actions; without a doubt participation in elections in different countries began; without a doubt there was struggle against dictatorial regimes such as Stroessner in Paraguay and Pinochet in Chile.... All of this happened and forms part of the history of the Humanist Party, yet it doesn't allow a complete image of everything that has been carried out.

By January of 1988, in Rome it was necessary to implement an international organisation. There, it was agreed to form a co-ordinating committee for the realisation of the first international Humanist congress to be carried out in Florence, Italy in January, 1989.

So, here we are....

This co-ordinating board, upon completing its functions presents the following founding documents to be known by all as:

1. Declaration of Principles;
2. Theses of the Humanist Party;
3. Basis of Political Action;
4. Proposal of incorporation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and
5. Bylaws of the Humanist International.

Furthermore, this co-ordinating committee propose the following:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the character of the International will not be executive, instead, it will serve the purpose of co-ordinating activities and fostering a greater common intelligence of the member countries that comprise it.
2. That all decision-making power of the International emanates from a General Assembly which retains the power of correcting, rectifying and modifying situations that were unforeseen at their start.
3. That there should exist a function of implementing the decisions of the Assembly called the "General Council" and that the head of this Council will be collegiate and rotating.
4. That there will be internal elections at least every two years in the national Humanist parties.
5. That the International will not attempt to resolve internal situations of conflict within a Humanist party in a country, nor will the International decide a dispute between two Humanist Parties in different countries. Nevertheless, the International can assume the character of a mediator upon request of the parties.
6. That the practice of internal Democracy be adopted, reflected in multiple slates and in the effective participation of minorities beginning with a minimum of 1% of votes obtained in internal elections. The exercise of respect for minorities is based on our concept of the new surpassing the old.

Furthermore, it is based on the primacy of the future over actions that are carried out in particular situations; it is based on opening up the probabilities favouring emerging phenomena that can become the orientors of future processes. In sum, it is based on the elemental idea that all that is born, is born small. And this idea is opposed to the practices that accept as valuable what is big just because it is big and what is established because established. For these same reasons, we understand that the sizes of our different parties correspond to the different moments of process of each, what issues are in the environments where they act, and that these facts do not make substantial qualitative differences.

These brief Recommendations we have just enunciated, are accompanied by the documents mentioned above and which we formally deliver to this General Assembly of the First Humanist International.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

What system, what nation, what people, what organisation escapes the general crisis today.

Nihilism, unemployment, inflation, violence, torture, persecution and death infiltrate everywhere.

In this emergency, Humanism gives a response in order to organise social relations from the human being and for the human being. This response is a social commitment that becomes a fact in the formation of the Humanist Party.

If in other times Humanism reacted against obscurantism and authoritarian regimes, making science shine and proposing progressive forms of social organisation, today original naivety has matured acquiring identity and consciousness of its limitations and possibilities.

Humanism today starts from human existence and not from theories that propose the reality of a world that precedes human life.

Humanism today does not accept the explanation of former or previous philosophies in the sense that a metaphysics, a sociology or, lastly, a philosophy or history are necessary in order to explain human existence; on the contrary, it is only starting from human existence, which is lived and is concrete, that a scientific vision of the world can be organised.

Contemporary Humanism is not satisfied with pseudo-scientific theses lacking existential foundation, nor is it satisfied with the myth of the presumed "human nature" that determines whether people choose good or evil.

What are the principal points of Humanism in reference to social affairs?

They are the following:

- 1) The world in which we are born is a social world formed by human intentions.
- 2) Only the sociability of the world has intentions. Nature is susceptible of being intentionalised, "humanised." In fact, society is both an agent and a receiver of humanisation, of meaning.
- 3) Human existence is freedom to choose between affirming and denying the world. Human intentionality allows humans to affirm or deny conditions, therefore allowing them not to be a mere "reflection" of those conditions.
- 4) Society is historicity. Thus, the human being is personal and social history, and not human "nature." Nature affects only the human body, but not human intentionality which defines what is human.
- 5) It is from the condition of liberty that human beings choose to accept or reject the social conditions in which they are born, develop and die. No one can exist without confronting the social conditions in which he or she lives, and no one can avoid choosing among them. Not choosing among conditions is also a choice. The results of the choice neither confirm nor invalidate this fact.
- 6) The notion of historicity arises from the confrontation with social conditions and is understood as preceding and continuing beyond one's existence. Thus, social activity is a continuous appraisal of history and is a commitment towards the future beyond one's personal death.
- 7) Human existence develops amidst contradictions imposed by historical conditions at both personal and social levels. Such conditions are inescapable, but no historical necessities are derived from them.
- 8) Contradiction has its personal correlation in the register of suffering. Because of this, when faced by contradictory social conditions, individual human beings identify their suffering with the suffering of groups of humans that are subject to those same conditions.

9) Social contradiction is the result of violence. The appropriation of the social whole by a part of the whole is violence, and this violence is the root of contradiction and suffering. Violence is expressed as taking away the intentionality (and, most certainly, the liberty) of others. Or, in other words, it is an action of submerging the human being or large groups of human beings, into the world of nature.

10) The different forms of violence (physical, economic, racial and religious) are the expression of the denial of the human in others.

11) The appropriation of the social whole by a part of the whole is violence and this violence is the root of contradiction and suffering.

12) Personal and social suffering must be surpassed by modifying the means of illegal and violent appropriation which have installed contradiction in the world. This struggle to overcome suffering gives continuity to the historical process and gives meaning to human beings because it affirms the intentionality denied to them by others.

13) The results and development of the struggle for the humanisation of the world (natural and social) accumulate as progress. The different societies do not find themselves within the same framework or moment of process of development, they are rather in different paths of development. This means that the conditions for liberation are constantly available and are not within a distant future when the supposed "objective conditions" will take place.

Humanism adheres to a descriptive and interpretative methodology that has, as a point of departure in its fundamental development, the reflection of what is of immediate importance to existence. From this point of view, it aspires to a truly scientific methodology. On the other hand, in social practice, it aspires to achieve social change using the methodology of non-violence.

The appearance of the Humanist Party is not an absurd occurrence; but rather, it is the necessary response to the crisis of increasing social dehumanisation.

Organising the Party in each country will undoubtedly be a specific task for each country but always in theme with the general goal of humanising the earth.

THESIS

The objective of the following is to broaden the ideas developed in the Declaration of Principles of the Humanist Party.

Before thinking about their origin or destiny human beings find themselves in a particular vital situation—a situation they did not choose.

Thus, human beings are born within a natural and social world plagued with physical and mental aggressions that they register as pain and suffering. As a result, they move trying to overcome pain and suffering.

As opposed to other species, humans can extend the possibilities their bodies have through the production and use of instruments of "prostheses" (etymologically: pro, in front of, and thesis to place)

In their efforts to avoid pain human beings produce objects and signs that become part of society and are transmitted historically.

Production organises society, and with continual feedback, society organises production. This is not, of course, the same as the social and natural world of insects where experience is transmitted genetically. This is a social world that modifies the natural, animal state of human beings.

This is the world in which human beings are born: A world in which their bodies are part of nature and a world that is not natural but social and historical—in other words, a world of production (of objects, of signs) which is fundamentally human, a human world in which all production is charged with significance, with intention, with what for. Ultimately, this intention is to overcome pain and suffering.

Since human beings are characterised by having an expanded temporal horizon, they can defer responses, choose among situations and plan their futures. It is this freedom that allows them to deny themselves, deny aspects of the body, deny their body completely (such as in suicide), or deny others.

This freedom has allowed a few to illegitimately appropriate the social whole. In other words, to deny the freedom and intentionality of others, reducing them to prostheses, to instruments of their own intentions. Here lies the essence of discrimination: its methodology being physical, economic, racial and religious violence.

Those who have reduced the humanity of others have, through this action, necessarily provoked new pain and suffering, reinitiating the old struggle against nature in the heart of society, but this time against other human beings who have been turned into natural objects.

This struggle is not among mechanical forces. It is not a natural reflex. It is a struggle among human intentions. This is precisely what allows us to speak of oppressors and oppressed, of the just and the unjust, of heroes and cowards. Only this allows personal subjectivity to be rescued. Only this allows the practice, a meaningful practice, of social solidarity and commitment to the liberation of the discriminated, be they a majority or a minority.

At this point a definition of human beings becomes necessary. It is not enough to say "human beings are social animals," because other animals are also social. It is incomplete to define human beings as manufacturers of objects, possessors of language, etc. For Humanism, "Humans are historical beings whose mode of social action transforms their own nature."

If we accept this definition, we must also accept that human beings can transform their physical constitution. This is already happening. Human beings began this transformation with external prostheses which today are being placed inside the body. Human beings are changing their organs, intervening in their brain chemistry, fertilising in vitro, and also beginning to manipulate their genes.

By realising that all human beings find themselves in a situation, that this situation takes place in the natural world (the most immediate fact being the body) and in the social world; by realising that the conditions of oppression that a few have created by appropriating the social whole: an ethic of freedom can be inferred, that is, a willed commitment to struggle against the conditions that produce pain and suffering, not only in myself, but in others as well. The oppression of any human being is also my oppression. Their suffering is also mine, and my struggle is against suffering and that which produces suffering.

But the oppressor is not just satisfied with enchaining the body. The oppressor needs to go even further: to possess all liberty and all meaning and, consequently, possess the subjectivity. This is why ideas, thoughts and feelings must be "objectified" by the System. "Dangerous" or "suspicious" ideas must be isolated, locked up and destroyed as if they were contagious germs.

As things stand, human beings should claim the right to their subjectivity and to ask themselves about the meaning of their lives and to publicly practice and preach their ideas and religiousness or lack thereof. Any pretext that blocks the practice, research, preaching and development of subjectivity --that blocks or postpones it!--is the unequivocal sign of oppression that the enemies of humanity wield.

The following Theses, constitute the broadest foundations for the systematic body of ideas which we will call the "Humanist Doctrine".

The Theses do not stem from an "idea" or "belief" about reality. They stem from an analysis of human life as existence, in other words, concrete particularity.

This point of departure, which gives the initial direction to our theses, does not prevent us--just as in the cases of those sciences that do not stem from axioms--from arriving at an extensive system of understanding.

From a logical point of view, we affirm the method of existential analysis as opposed to any previous system of logic that, through inference, aims to arrive from the general to the particular; since, if there is no data about the particular, it is impossible to make universal propositions about it.

In this respect we restate the interpretation of categorical propositions, according to which, particular propositions have an existential character while universal propositions are only their negation.

Thesis 1. Human existence takes place in the world. It begins, develops and concludes in the world. Therefore, we can not assume a direction, a reason, or a purpose prior to existence without contradicting the aforementioned.

Thesis 1.1 Human existence begins at birth with the opening-up of intentionality towards the world as the first step of liberation from natural conditionings. From this point of view, we can not rigorously speak of "human existence" prior to birth.

Thesis 2 By "world," we understand all that is different from one's own body. However, we consider our bodies as part of the world. Body and world are given, factual, natural.

Thesis 2.1 Nature does not have its own intentions. Neither the body nor the world possess separate consciousness. Attributing an end to nature can be used as a device for understanding, but it is not derived legitimately from this proposal.

Thesis 2.2 Nevertheless, the world into which one is born is also a social world that is made up of human intentions.

Thesis 2.3 Only the sociability of the world has intentions. Nature is susceptible of being intentionalised, "humanised." In fact, society is both an agent and a receiver of humanisation, of meaning.

Thesis 2.4 Human existence is open to the world and acts on it intentionally. Existence can even deny the world radically through suicide and destruction. Existence can nihilise the world (and therefore nihilise the body, nature, and/or society), or it can humanise the world.

Thesis 2.5 Human existence, therefore, is freedom to choose between affirming and denying the world. Human intentionality allows humans to affirm or deny conditions, therefore allowing it not to be a mere "reflection" of those conditions.

Thesis 3 Society is historicity. Thus, the human being is personal and social history, and not human "nature." Nature affects only the human body, but not human intentionality. Intentionality defines that which is human.

Thesis 3.1 It is from the condition of liberty that human beings choose to accept or reject the social conditions in which they are born, develop, and die. No one can exist without confronting the social conditions in which he or she lives, and no one can avoid choosing among them. Not choosing among conditions is also a choice. The results of the choice neither confirm nor invalidate this fact.

Thesis 3.2 The notion of historicity arises from the confrontation with social conditions and is understood as preceding and continuing beyond one's existence. Thus, social activity is a continuous appraisal of history and is a commitment toward the future beyond one's personal death.

Thesis 3.3 Human existence develops amidst contradictions imposed by historical conditions at both personal and social levels.

Thesis 3.4 Contradiction has its personal correlation in the register of suffering. Because of this, when faced by contradictory social conditions, individual humans identify their suffering with the suffering of groups of humans that are subject to those same conditions.

Thesis 4 Social contradiction is the result of violence. The appropriation of the social whole by a part of the whole is violence, and this violence is the root of contradiction and suffering. Violence is expressed as taking away the intentionality (and, most certainly, the liberty) of others, or, in other words, it is an action of submerging the human being, or large groups of human beings, into the world of nature.¹

Thesis 4.1 The different forms of violence (physical, economic, racial and religious) are the expression of the denial of the human in others.

Thesis 5 In the field of interpersonal relations, the objectification of other human beings, that is, the denial (or appropriation) of all or some of the aspects of their intentionality, produces suffering. In all cases there are oppressors and oppressed, discriminators and discriminated.

Thesis 6. Personal and social suffering must be overcome by modifying the means of illegal and violent appropriation which have installed contradictions in the world. This struggle to overcome suffering gives continuity to the historical process and gives meaning to human beings because it affirms the intentionality denied to them by others.

Thesis 6.1 The results and development of the struggle for the humanisation of the world (natural and social) accumulate as progress. The different societies do not find themselves within the same framework or moment of process of development, they are rather in different paths of development. This means that the conditions for liberation are constantly available and are not within a distant future when the supposed "objective conditions" will take place.

Thesis 7 Finally, death seems to impose its nature on human intentionality, and its factualness--today unavoidable--appears to destroy all future and all liberty. The rebellion against this definitive fact and against sickness, inequality, and injustice is

what gives coherence to human life. There is no logical need, within this framework, to force human beings to accept the triumph of the absurdity of the natural over intentionality and liberty.

Foundations for Political Action

The Humanist Party expressly proclaims:

The upholding of the democratic regime as a form of transition from formal democracy to real democracy.

The struggle for the achievement of democratic regimes in places where no such regimes exist or where they have been supplanted by regimes maintained by force.

On the other hand it expressly rejects:

The violation of human rights, the use of force as a method of resolving conflicts, and the personal concentration of power.

As regards the methodology of action, it expressly confirms what was stated in its declaration of principles: Humanism is guided by non-violent action.

The Party views the suffering of people as a fact produced by economic violence. Consequently, it proclaims the need to strengthen any social organisation that counteracts this situation. From this point of view, it furthers the creation of production, service and consumer co-operatives and demands from the State the necessary support to convert all business enterprises, whose situation endangers the present and future of its workers, into co-operatives.

The Party points out that the economic and financial monopolies are factors in the dependence and confusion among the productive forces of each country.

Since property, like society itself, is an historical phenomenon, the Party warns about the danger entailed in stopping this dynamic through actions, and in the field of Law to sustain the thesis of static naturalism. Social Humanism favours tax reforms and new models of self-management and co-ownership that would modify the situation regarding property and create incentives for a progressive distribution of wealth.

Different forms of discrimination are intertwined with economic exploitation and acquire characteristics of racial, religious, generational, cultural and psychological violence. The Party emphasises the violence that is exercised pointedly against women and youth who are converted into objects as opposed to subjects with full rights in the practice of social relations.

The Party makes the principle of choice effective as the concrete political expression of liberty, in other words: multiple models of co-ownership within a general co-operative system; multiple labour unions within a confederation of workers; self-management by students exercised through student governments with multiple lists and lines; voluntary military service; and freedom of expression for the different religions and atheism. In sum, the struggle against authoritarianism and against economic, organisational and ideological monopolies is the basic attitude that the Humanist Party sets in motion.

The following are the clear priorities of the Party: the elimination of poverty, the elimination of unemployment and exploitation through a co-operative system, free education at all levels, social insurance and socialised medicine, the progressive reduction of the military budget, and the international militant solidarity with those countries struggling for their liberation.

The Party believes that all truly civilised politics must start from 2 basic premises: 1) the permanent renovation of judicial and political institutions based on the idea of the new surpassing the old, and 2) the political procedures within each country and the relations among countries should be open and transparent.

In international matters it proposes the following:

1) Adherence to a policy of non-alignment.

2) The signing of permanent peace treaties in zones of conflict, while, secondly, continuing the negotiations regarding specific points, leaving the supervision of the

zone of conflict in the hands of the United Nations, and in extreme cases submitting the decision to the international tribunal for resolution.

3) Progressive and proportional demilitarisation of countries in a zone of conflict and of the super-powers, even though they might not act directly in the zone of conflict.

4) Elimination of trade barriers and economic integration through specific treaties of complementation among the countries in the same geographic zone.

5) That together the debtor nations negotiate with the creditor banks eliminating intermediary organisations with which those countries have no debt.

6) Further international dialogue to the effect of creating a new economic order so that the trade relations that are deteriorated today can become balanced.

7) Co-operation for the international transfer of scientific and technological knowledge based on specific commitments but emphasising the idea that the development of all the regions of the world will produce more markets. On the other hand, leaving behind large areas and populations will tend to generate uncontrollable conflicts for those involved in the arms race that will increase regression and war in addition to creating a world economic collapse.

8) The formation of permanent regional and international tribunals dedicated to receiving complaints and putting to trial those who make attempts against the life and liberty of their people or against life at an international scale, remembering that the transgression of human rights refers not only to acts of direct physical violence but also to all kinds of impositions, basically economic impositions, which super-powers tend to put into motion in countries with weak economies. These tribunals should also receive complaints and pass judgement with respect to countries that do not create the necessary controls on the producers of pollution and deterioration, that endanger the current or future health of the population, of neighbouring populations or of the world system.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The Humanist Party adopts the document known as the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" which was approved on December 10, 1948, by the United Nations. In spite of the time elapsed since its proclamation, the spirit and words of the text are still valid today. This acceptance does not imply total agreement with the philosophical conception of the human being and society underlying this Declaration. The Humanist International recommends to all member parties and their affiliates, adherents and sympathisers to carry forth these articles in each country.

The text of the Declaration is the following:

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world;

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people;

Whereas it is essential that human rights should be protected by the rule of law, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression;

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations;

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom;

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realisation of this pledge; now therefore

The General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms, and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member-States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience, and they should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

(1) Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

(2) Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person

belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law, and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the Constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality or denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality, or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage, and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and of the State.

Article 17

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public services in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of Government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage, and shall be held by secret vote or by an equivalent free voting procedure.

Article 22

Everyone, being a member of society, has the right to social security and to the realisation, through national effort and international co-operation and in relationship to the organisation and resources of each State, of economic, social and cultural rights that are necessary to his dignity and to the free development of his personality.

Article 23

1) Everyone has the right to work, to the free choice of employment, to just and satisfactory conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

2) Everyone, without discrimination, has the right to equal retribution for equal work.

3) Everyone who works has the right to just and satisfactory remuneration that assures him and to his family an existence that complies with human dignity and that is completed, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

4) Everyone has the right to found trade unions and to adhere to them in order to defend his own interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to a reasonable limitation of working hours and to remunerated periods of vacation.

Article 25

1) Everyone has the right to a standard of life that is sufficient to assure health and well-being personally and to ones family, with particular regard to nutrition, clothing, habitation, and to medical assistance and to the necessary social services; he has the right to security in the case of unemployment, illness, invalidity, old age and any other case of loss of the means of subsistence through circumstances that do not depend on his will.

2) Maternity and infancy have the right to special cures and assistance. All children, born in marriage or not, will enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

1) Everyone has the right to instruction. Instruction must be free at least for elementary and basic classes. Elementary instruction must be compulsory. Technical and professional instruction must be put within the reach of all and higher instruction must be equally accessible to all based on their merit.

2) Instruction must be directed towards the full development of the human personality and towards the strengthening of the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

(1) Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts, and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary, or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realised.

Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others, and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group, or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

BYLAWS OF THE HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL

The Humanist Parties that subscribe are represented by their delegations in the Assembly held in Florence, Italy on the 7th of January, 1989. They have resolved to institute an organism of Co-ordination with the name of Humanist International that, without intervening in the international affairs of countries and parties represented, will concentrate and distribute information among the Humanist Parties.

It will also have the function of spreading humanist thought and actions in the World and promoting and developing international solidarity among the peoples in their struggle for political, economic and social liberation.

To these ends it will exercise persuasion and influence at all political, social, and cultural levels, taking definite positions on international issues which affect its interests.

I. Members

Art. 1. - Those Humanist Parties that, having requested their incorporation and been accepted as such by the organisation, will be full members.

The requesting organisations must present their Declaration of Principles, organisational chart, Foundation of Political Action, and accreditation of internal elections carried out in accordance with the founding documents of the International.

Art. 2. - Other political parties and non-partisan social, cultural, political or philanthropic organisations which subscribe to the founding documents of the International and its Bylaws will be adherent members.

Art. 3. - The full members will have voice and vote in all the organisms of the International. The adherent members will have voice in all such organisms and can benefit from their agreements, resolutions and projections, actively participating in all the departments and commissions of the International. Affiliates can attend as observers.

II. General Assembly

Art. 4. - There will be a General Assembly that will be the highest level for making resolutions, composed of the representatives of all the accredited Humanist Parties and of the adherents of the Humanist International. It will meet in ordinary sessions every three years and extraordinary sessions when 30% of the full members or a majority of the members of the General Council call a session, with at least 21 days notice, through the General Secretary or the President. A quorum for an extraordinary session will be 51% of the full members. The notice will contain a specific agenda.

Art. 5. - A quorum for the ordinary sessions will be 2/3 of the full members, and its agreements are those adopted by a majority of the members present. If on the first day of a session there is not a quorum, the session will be held the second day after with those who attend.

The invitation to the next ordinary session will be done by the General Assembly, fixing the date and place, and notifying the General Secretaries of all accredited full members within 30 days following the end of the session.

The country for the following Assembly should be on a different continent. The sessions will have a maximum duration of 4 continuous days. Art. 6. - The powers of the General Assembly will be as follows: a) To propose general political strategy, considering the information and analyses of countries, regions and continents; b) To propose organisational criteria and political projection for the member parties; c) To reach resolutions regarding the admission or suspension of members; d) To commission the interdisciplinary study of projects, research, seminars and lectures in all the areas of its interests; e) To modify the bylaws; f) To increase, decrease or

modify the powers of the General Council; g) To effect denunciations, petitions, suggestions, or recommendations to governments and organisations or cultural, educational, economic, religious, or social entities; h) To elect the General Council and fix its seat; i) To remove members of the General Council and provide their replacement for the remainder of their terms; and j) To approve, reject or object to the report of the activities of the President and the General Council.

Art. 7. - Each full member will be represented by up to three people accredited before the General Council by the party to which they belong. Any affiliate can represent his or her party before the General Assembly. The same procedure will apply to adherent members.

Each member can propose issues to be resolved in the General Assembly by presenting them in writing to the General Secretary until seven days before the opening of a session.

Art. 8. - The first day of the meeting a President and three Secretaries of the Assembly will be elected, who will submit the previous minutes and activities of the General Council for approval. The offices of the President and Secretaries of the Assembly have the same duration and will be elected by a majority of the members present.

Art. 9. - The President of the General Assembly will direct the sessions and the debate of the issues submitted for decision. The Secretaries will keep minutes, respectively, of the political, social, and economic topics covered. They will provide distribution of information and materials of the Assembly to the General Council elected and the accredited parties.

Art. 10. - The sessions can be public to elect members to the General Council and to make known the resolutions adopted.

III. General Council

Art. 11. - There will be an organism that carries out the resolutions and agreements of the General Assembly called the General Council. It will be elected in each Ordinary General Assembly, in public and direct election, for a period of three years, and will be composed of sixteen members with the following functions:

1). Presidency, composed of a President and six Vice Presidents; 2. General Secretary; 3. Secretary of International Co-operation; 4. Secretary of Press; 5. Secretary of International Relations; 6. Secretary of Women; 7. Secretary of Youth; 8. Secretary of Labour Affairs; 9. Secretary of Communications; 10. Secretary of Human Rights, and 11. Secretary of Political and Social Studies. The function of President will be exercised in rotation by one of the six members elected to the Presidency for terms of one year, following an election among them.

Any affiliate can be elected a member of this Council, upon being proposed by the accredited representative of his or her party.

Art. 12. - A quorum of the General Council will be nine members including the President and the General Secretary and will adopt its agreements by simple majority vote. In case of a tie, the vote of the President will decide.

Art. 13. - The function of the General Council will be a) To implement the agreements and the general political strategy approved by the General Assembly; b) To carry forward the specific tasks with which the General Assembly entrusts them; c) To create ad-hoc commissions or departments that depend on the different secretaries; d) To co-ordinate information between the different members of the International, and e) To admit or suspend provisionally a member of the International.

Art. 14. - The functions of the Presidency will be: a) To designate one of its members to exercise the office of President for the period of one year; b) To represent the

International before any government, nation, political, economic, social, cultural, religious, or philanthropic organisation; c) To endorse jointly with the General Secretary, all the agreements that the General Assembly or General Council entrust to them for advancing the goals of the International, and d) To open the sessions of the General Assembly and render an account of its activities and that of the General Council.

Art. 15. - The functions of the General Secretary will be: a) To Co-ordinate the work of the Secretaries; b) To maintain the roster of accredited full members and adherents; c) To notify all members of the place and date of the Assemblies, attaching the agenda and the account of the administration, one month in advance; d) To authorise documents issued by the General Council; e) to maintain document archives of the International; f) To represent, with the President, the International in the endorsement of documents with other entities, and g) To receive requests for admission or suspension of members, for resolution by the General Assembly.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE FIRST CONGRESS:

Upon assuming this function to which I have been assigned, I would like to formulate a few reflections. The first is related to the theme of Human Rights.

The International has accepted and considers as one of its founding documents the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. Since then, to this day numerous violations to the dignity of the human being are constantly taking place everywhere.

Human rights do not have the desired universal scope because they do not depend on the universal power of the human being; rather, they depend on the power that a part has over the whole. And if the most elemental demands regarding the governing of one's own body are trampled on in all latitudes, today we can only speak of aspirations that must become effective rights. Human rights do not belong to the past. They exist in the future, absorbing intentionality, feeding a struggle that comes alive with every new violation of the destiny of mankind. Due to this, every demand made in favour of human rights has meaning because it demonstrates to the powers-that-be that they are not omnipotent and that they do not control the future.

The world today is not organised as humanists want it to be organised; today's judicial system is not the judicial system that humanists proclaim. But until this changes, humanists must joint their efforts to better the conditions of the world they live in. This is how formal democracies today should acquire depth until attaining the qualitative level that corresponds to the dignity of the human being. If this action towards change is legitimate, a persistent struggle is also legitimate when conditions regress, in order to achieve what is minimally acceptable, even if it is far from being the best. What I mean to say is that wherever dictatorship exists, the humanists will be committed enemies; enemies that will fight until that "minimum" becomes acceptable...so that the transition from that dictatorship to a formal democracy becomes a fact where a new level of action and proposal can be attained.

But the world today has great urgencies, and we can appreciate the advancement in a positive direction. Then how could we not decisively support the policy of disarmament, which began with the incredible structural revolution of mentality that, since perestroika, and the practice of openness, opens the path towards the ideals of a new society?

How could we not support efforts in favour of the demilitarisation of Europe, the Caribbean, the Middle East, South-west Asia, and the South of Africa?

In fact, the progressive withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, Cambodia and Angola; the cease fire between Iran and Iraq; the weakening of the aggression in Nicaragua; and the beginning of talks between Palestinians and Israelis: These are priorities to humanists, and it is as such that we understand all of this.

We are in favour of consolidating the unity of Europe; and when we speak of this, we do not only refer to the Common Market, but to the whole of Europe--East and West. But as we face this situation, what effective efforts are being made to impede the death by annihilation of millions of human beings? Which, and how many, are the effective resources mobilised to put an end to an asphyxiating and explosive debt in Latin America? In what proportion is the technology need for development transferred to less favoured zones? What real measures are adopted so that the terms of interchange do not deteriorate day to day between the North and the South?

Any figure given in reply to these questions, have has the taste of mockery and cynicism. Today it is clear that the world is one; that there are no regions isolated from the whole, and that every catastrophe in one point has repercussions in others.

Due to this, if we try to raise the level of less favoured zones, it will not only be for reasons of solidarity, but also for the survival of human life on the planet--which we consider to be a unity. The planet, considered also as the dwelling of the human being, now finds itself increasingly deteriorating.

It is not the moment to expand on these serious problems; rather it is the moment to recall one of the first ideas of Humanism in its political praxis: A people that are in a situation of increasing their real power (and not inter-mediated by the State or by the power of minorities), are also in the utmost condition to project themselves toward the future as the vanguard of a universal human nation. Humanist Parties in each place struggle for the following ideal: converting their country to the forefront of a universal human nation. If the particular idea of national parties within a common world project is understood as such, it will not remain a mere word; rather it will be understood as the full meaning of the proclamation "To Humanise the Earth."

HOMAGE TO GALILEO IN PIAZZA SANTA CROCE IN FLORENCE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL ON JANUARY 7, 1989

"I, Galileo Galilei, professor of mathematics of the University of Florence, publicly reject my doctrine that the sun is the centre of the world and that it doesn't move, and that the earth is not the centre of the world and that it does move. With a sincere heart and true faith, I abjure, curse, and hate the above mentioned error and heresy, and also any other error, heresy or sect against the holy church."

This is the text of the retraction exacted under threat of torture from Galileo on June 22, 1633, by the tribunal of the Inquisition.

Galileo retracted his doctrine in order to avoid the fate of Giordano Bruno, condemned to the stake with a piece of wood stuck in his mouth to prevent him from talking and burned in Campo di Fiori in Rome on a winter day in 1600.

Giordano Bruno, who had proclaimed the infinity of mankind and the universe, the existence of countless worlds...

Only after the centuries the "descendants" of those who had forced on Galileo his retraction have reluctantly recognised their mistake, and Giordano Bruno still waits for justice.

But neither torture nor the stake have stopped courageous men and women from getting hold of a telescope and aiming it, not only in the direction of the stars, but also, in the direction of those who are oppressed and who suffer.

Yet they, the powerful of the earth, have quickly understood that the New Science could be used to nourish their appetite and extend their privileges and thus have educated "a lineage of inventive gnomes," as Berthold Brecht has called them, ready to sell their science to any end and for any price.

These intelligent and blind gnomes have found all the ways to join nature to the will of power of their masters and have covered the earth with death machines.

Others have used their genius to invent new means of manipulating, silencing, and putting the conscience of the people to sleep. More sophisticated and "polished" means but no less painful and inhuman than the sticks stuck in Giordano Bruno's mouth.

Undoubtedly, we know other countless men and women have used the New Science to alleviate the fatigue and the hunger, the pain and the suffering of humanity, in order to remove the gag from the mouth of the oppressed, in order to give them voice and faith.

But we also know that today, as the second millennium of the West comes to an end, the survival of the human species is in danger, and over our own common home, the earth, hovers the nightmare of ecological catastrophe.

It is for this reason that we, humanists from the four corners of the earth, here in front of the building that houses Galileo's tomb ask all scientists of the earth to finally use science for the exclusive benefit of humanity.

With the voice that was eliminated from Giordano Bruno--and likewise eliminated from millions of oppressed people--with that voice that today resounds in this square, we launch this calling: that in all universities, all research institutions, an oath be instituted, a solemn vow similar to the one created by Hippocrates for the medical profession in the dawn of the West, of using science exclusively to vanquish pain and suffering, to humanise the earth.

II CONGRESS OF THE HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL MOSCOW 4-9 OCTOBER 1993

1. DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

1.1 REPORT BY THE PRESIDENCY

On the 7th of January 1989 the 1st Congress of the International took place, milestone which concluded a process started in 1984 with the formation of the first humanist parties. At this Congress the foundation documents of the Humanist International were adopted.

The attention of the political circles and the general public was polarised by the changes that began to take place in eastern Europe and in the USSR with the works of "Perestroika" and "Glasnost".

Considering the positive advances of that truly "mental revolution", and the beginning of the end of the politics of blocks, the world had followed since the second world war; also the Humanist International concentrated its attention in the chain of events which started to unfold in the socialist countries of eastern Europe, having strong consequences in many other countries around the world.

After the conclusion of the 1st Congress, a delegation from the International travelled to several countries in Eastern Europe, including, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Russia, meeting several representatives of political parties, unions, public institutions, and cultural, social, and economic organisations. With the aim to exchange views about the process of change and its possible perspectives for a humanist direction.

Before this visit another delegation from the Humanist parties of Argentina, Chile Italy and Spain, had visited Yugoslavia in 1987. Invited by the government the humanists met in Belgrade government authorities, the Socialist Alliance, unions, university institutes and self managed enterprises. The main interest of these meetings was to study closely the works of an economic system based on a co-operative organisation, its advantages, defects and possibilities.

Similarly the first contacts with the USSR and the ideologues of Perestroika had been established from Argentina with Ivan Frolov, member of the Academy of Science, founder of the Institute of Man, and later director of Pravda. In the following months the Committee of Solidarity with the Peoples of Latin America, took contact with the Humanist Party of Chile and invited some of its members to the USSR in 1990. As a result of this visit round table discussions were agreed between delegations of the Humanist International and personalities of the USSR.

In April 1991, members of the International from (Chile, Argentina, Italy, Canada, Peru, Britain, Spain and others) participated in seminars in Moscow. The topics discussed related to theoretical and practical aspects of humanism, generated rich exchanges between the humanists and academics and scientists participating in these meetings.

As a result of these discussions, The Humanist Club of Moscow was founded in May 1991 by Dr Boris Koval and members of several Institutes of the Academy of Science.

In June 1992 a delegation of the International with representatives of Spain, Italy, Argentina, France, Canada and Chile, and Silo, founder of the Humanist Movement, participated in Moscow in an international seminar under the title "Crisis of Civilisation and the Humanist Alternative". On the occasion several meetings took place with members of the Humanist Club, the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of science, Gorbachov Foundation, The Humanitarian Academy of the Armed Forces, the Latin American magazine and others.

The acceleration of the social and political processes in the world, and the new perspectives for action, opened to humanist parties required to call the Second Congress of the International, considering Moscow the most appropriate place for the event.

In November 1992, delegations of humanist Parties from 16 countries met in this same premises to hold a preparatory conference for the congress, event host by the Humanist Club of Moscow. The works of the conference set the basis for our work today, strengthening relationships between parties and other participating organisations.

A meeting of the organising committee took place in Buenos Aires in January 1993, general Nikita Chaldimov from the Humanitarian Academy of the armed Forces of Russia, gave a conference on the theme "Humanisation of the Armed Forces".

An International conference on the same theme was organised by general Chaldimov in Moscow in May 1993 where the Humanist International was represented and a paper by Silo on "The Need for a Humanist Position by Contemporary Armed Forces".

Although an emphasis on the east, is expressed by the International during this period, we should mention other initiatives that took place during the last four years.

After the 1st Congress the International established contacts with the Workers Party in Brazil 1989. In the same year the president of the International visited Paraguay to mediate in the liberation of political prisoners. In January 1991 a delegation of the International visiting Chile met president Aylwin, exchanging on the perspectives of the Latin American Common market and the situation of human rights in the region. During a later visit to Chile in April this year the president of the International, held a press conference on the situation of political parties in Europe, followed by several interviews.

The activities of the International will intensify in the future organising itself in regional areas. As an example the Humanist Party of Argentina joined the "Foro de San Pablo" (in which political organisations from Latin American and the Caribbean participate) in its fourth meeting in Havana last July.

The years since our 1st Congress have been marked by strong changes in all aspects of social life, we saw the alternation of violent conflicts and positive actions towards disarmament, peace and co-operation among nations.

The reports of the delegations who participated yesterday in informal exchanges, coincide in reflecting a deep social and political crisis in all countries independent from geographical area, political regime, or their so called level of development.

The failure of socialism as well as the failure of triumphant capitalism, has generated ideological confusion to the crisis of the traditional political parties. These do not represent anymore the people, nor the national interest, neither a social class since all these concepts have changed since.

In this situation of confusion and instability it is possible and necessary to wake up humanist forces capable of giving clear reference with well defined positions and permanent action.

With this perspective the Humanist International can fulfil an active role with a satisfactory presence in all countries. Finding out appropriate mechanisms and to adopt the resolutions that can make that task possible, is the task of this 2nd Congress.

1.2 MESSAGE BY THE ORGANISING COMMISSION

Dear delegates to the Congress, observers and humanist friends.

In the name of the Organising commission I would like to explain briefly our view of the tasks of this Congress in the face of the present moment in the life of the International, and the aspects that in our view require preferential attention.

As mentioned in the report by the presidency, the International has entered a new stage which represents new possibilities for influence and action on a world wide scale. For this purpose organic adaptations are required and the preparation of conditions which may allow us to give an affective response on this new scale of activity. This new stage is determined by growing urgency consequence of the historical changes of the past four years, to increase our presence and to give clear reference on an international scale.

The International can fulfil an important function generating wide scope ideological material capable of filling the void in political fronts in formation, and in others which although developed due to their concrete concerns of action are not in a position to generate such materials.

A compendium of ideological materials both practical and theoretical adequately disseminated could help, even in places without organised humanist activity to set these up, and to give a humanist orientation to already existing structures.

In addition the International can fulfil a role harmonising ideological positions on a regional level. It is not new the situation where within a region, a country or even amongst different humanist fronts, contradictory positions are held regarding the same issue, reducing the effectiveness of action. In that respect the International could fix positions and present wide scope recommendations, in order to overcome such deficiencies.

We can anticipate the International generating ideological material on a periodical basis and not just on a three yearly rhythm determined by our congresses.

This can be done by means of a specialised secretariat who could collect materials produced at a national level making them homogeneous widening their scope of application, and re-distributing them for wider use. Additionally the secretariat could establish a permanent centre for Humanist Studies for the purpose of particular studies both theoretical and practical. Preliminary consultations in that respect indicate a clear interest from our Russian friends and from the academy of Science, to initiate this activity in Moscow.

It is important as well to review the materials adopted by the International during the 1st Congress in Florence, examining their validity and opportunity in the present moment. We must also consider areas of interest or themes on which it is urgent to take positions. It is clear that we will not be able to produce these during the short time of this congress, but we can well identify important areas and the fundamental issues within each of these. A document fixing our position in the face of conflicts and problems of today's world can help as a general orientation and would be beneficial to give a clear signal about this congress.

A closer and more organic relationship is required with the national political fronts helping them to strengthen their action and accelerate their development.

There are many experiences within the more developed parties which go beyond the local and that are relevant in different political or social context as well. It would be possible to differentiate between what is strictly local and what has a general validity in these experiences. To use them could thus accelerate our development in different places. Perhaps we could also consider the movement of advisers with expertise in particular fields to help in setting up political action in new countries.

It is also important to encourage the development of humanist activities in places where these are not yet established. The experience of the Humanist Club of Moscow developed around contacts with the International, and without previous experience in setting up political structures, has shown in practice that this is possible. It must be observed in the later case the important support given by the Humanist Movement to its development.

We could conceive a role for the International as a mediator in conflicts between states, or between nations within a state, if the parties in conflict acknowledge the status of the International as an independent organisation. There are contemporary precedents of effective mediations (as in the case of the Russell tribunal in the war between India and China), where an individual of an outstanding moral stature as it was the case with the philosopher Bertrand Russell, became for both parties a more credible arbiter than other international organisations.

It is possible to envisage a role for the International beyond its functions as a link among parties. In parallel with the activities of national political fronts, the International could establish at a national level, relations with other organisations and political parties which could strengthen the action of the national political fronts. Indication of these is the presence of representatives from other parties as observers in this congress.

To develop all the above the International requires a regular publication, with a theoretical and practical content, information about its activities and summaries of the work carried by national parties. This publication could work in collaboration with national party publications, complementing each other. To this end attention must be given to content, language, frequency, distribution, finance, printing and editorial.

In relation to its organic work the experience since 1989 seem to indicate that shorter lines of communication, compact functions, the possibility of fast decision making, the setting up of ad-hoc functions ceasing after achieving the required goal, are all linked to a greater effectiveness. At this stage it must be also considered the topic of financial contributions by members and the search by the International, of resources sufficient to widen its activities.

Widening the levels of participation, opening the organisation to other parties, organisations, and in cases to individuals will increase the scope for influence by the International.

On these matters among others it would be useful to have at the end of the congress sessions, concrete proposals of resolutions for the consideration of the plenary, so these can be the base for the implementation of the important changes required by the International at this stage..

DOCUMENT OF THE HUMANIST MOVEMENT

Humanists are women and men of this century, of this time. They recognise the achievements of humanism throughout history, and find inspiration in the contributions of many cultures, not only those that today occupy centre stage. They are also men and women who recognise that this century and this millennium are drawing to a close, and their project is a new world. Humanists feel that their history is very long and that their future will be even longer. As optimists who believe in freedom and social progress, they fix their gaze on the future, while striving to overcome the general crisis of today. Humanists are internationalists, aspiring to a *universal human nation*. While understanding the world they live in as a single whole, humanists act in their immediate environments. Humanists seek not a uniform world, but a world of multiplicity: diverse in ethnicity, languages and customs; diverse in local and regional autonomy; diverse in ideas and aspirations; diverse in beliefs, whether atheist or religious; diverse in occupations and in creativity.

Humanists do not want masters, they have no fondness for authority figures or bosses. Nor do they see themselves as representatives or bosses of anyone else. Humanists want neither a centralised state nor a para-state in its place. They want neither armed gangs nor a police state in their place.

But a wall has arisen between humanist aspirations and the realities of today's world. The time has come to tear down that wall. To do this, all humanists of the world must unite.

I. GLOBAL CAPITAL

This is the great universal truth: Money is everything. Money is government, money is law, money is power. Money is basically sustenance, but more than this it is art, it is philosophy, it is religion. Nothing is done without money, nothing is possible without money. There are no personal relationships without money, there is no intimacy without money. Even peaceful solitude depends on money.

But our relationship with this "universal truth" is contradictory. Most people do not like this state of affairs. And so we find ourselves subject to the tyranny of money – a tyranny that is not abstract, for it has a name, representatives, agents, and well-established procedures.

Today, we are no longer dealing with feudal economies, national industries, or even regional interests. Today, the question is how the surviving economic forms will accommodate to the new dictates of international finance capital. Nothing escapes, as capital world-wide continues to concentrate in ever fewer hands – until even the nation state depends for its survival on credit and loans. All must beg for investment and provide guarantees that give the banking system the ultimate say in decisions. The time is fast approaching when even companies themselves, when every rural area as well as every city, will all be the undisputed property of the banking system. The time of the para-state is coming, a time in which the old order will be swept away.

At the same time, the traditional bonds of solidarity that once joined people together are fast dissolving. We are witnessing the disintegration of the social fabric, and in its place find millions of isolated human beings living disconnected lives, indifferent to each other despite their common suffering. Big capital dominates not only our objectivity, through its control of the means of production, but also our subjectivity, through its control of the means of communication and information.

Under these conditions, those who control capital have the power and technology to do as they please with both our material and our human resources. They deplete irreplaceable natural resources and act with growing disregard for the human being. And just as they have drained everything from companies, industries, and whole governments, so have they deprived even science of its meaning – reducing it to technologies used to generate poverty, destruction, and unemployment.

Humanists do not overstate their case when they contend that the world is now technologically capable of swiftly resolving the problems in employment, food, health care, housing, and education that exist today across vast regions of the planet. If this possibility is not being realised, it is simply because it is prevented by the monstrous speculation of big capital.

By now big capital has exhausted the stage of market economies, and has begun to discipline society to accept the chaos it has itself produced. Yet in the presence of this growing irrationality, it is not the voices of reason that we hear raised in dialectical opposition. Rather, it is the darkest forms of racism, fundamentalism, and fanaticism that are on the rise. And if groups and whole regions are increasingly guided by this new irrationalism, then the space for constructive action by progressive forces will diminish day by day.

On the other hand, millions of working people have already come to recognise that the centralised state is as much a sham as capitalist democracy. And just as working people are standing up against corrupt union bosses, more than ever citizens are questioning their governments and political parties. But it is necessary to give a constructive orientation to these phenomena, which will otherwise stagnate and remain nothing more than spontaneous protests that lead nowhere. For something new to happen, a dialogue about the fundamental factors of our economy must begin in the heart of the community.

For humanists, labour and capital are the principal factors in economic production, while speculation and usury are extraneous. In the present economic circumstances, humanists struggle to totally transform the absurd relationship that has existed between these factors. Until now we have been told that capital receives the profits while workers receive wages, an inequity that has always been justified by the "risk" that capital assumes in investing – as though working people do not risk both their present and their future amid the uncertainties of unemployment and economic crisis.

Another factor in play is management and decision making in the operation of each company. Earnings not set aside for reinvestment in the enterprise, not used for expansion or diversification, are increasingly diverted into financial speculation, as are profits not used to create new sources of work.

The struggle of working people must therefore be to require maximum productive return from capital. But this cannot happen unless management and directorships are co-operatively shared. How else will it be possible to avoid massive layoffs, business closures, and even the loss of entire industries? For the greatest harm comes from under-investment, fraudulent bankruptcies, forced acquisition of debt, and capital flight – not from profits realised through increased productivity. And if some persist in calling for workers to take possession of the means of production following nineteenth-century teachings, they will have to seriously consider the recent failures of real socialism.

As for the argument that treating capital the same way work is treated will only speed its flight to more advantageous areas, it must be pointed out that this cannot go on much longer because the irrationality of the present economic system is leading to saturation and crisis world-wide. Moreover, this argument, apart from embracing a radical immorality, ignores the historical process in which capital is steadily being transferred to the banking system. As a result, employers and business people are being reduced to the status of employees, stripped of decision-making power in a lengthening chain of command in which they maintain only the appearance of autonomy. And as the recession continues to deepen, these same business people will begin to consider these points more seriously.

Humanists feel the need to act not only on employment issues, but also politically to prevent the State from being solely an instrument of international capital, to ensure a just relationship among the factors of production, and to restore to society its stolen autonomy.

II. REAL DEMOCRACY VERSUS FORMAL DEMOCRACY

The edifice of democracy has fallen into ruin as its foundations – the separation of powers, representative government, and respect for minorities – have fallen into ruin.

The theoretical separation of powers is nonsense. Even a cursory examination of the practices surrounding the origin and composition of the different powers reveals the intimate relationships that link them to each other. And things could hardly be otherwise, for they all form part of one same system. In nation after nation we see one branch gaining supremacy over the others, functions being usurped, corruption and irregularities surfacing – all corresponding to the changing global economic and political situation of each country.

As for representative government, since the extension of universal suffrage people have believed that only a single act is involved when they elect their representative and their representative carries out the mandate received. But as time has passed, people have come to see clearly that there are in fact two acts: a first in which the many elect the few, and a second in which those few betray the many, representing interests alien to the mandate they received. And this corruption is fed within the political parties, now reduced to little more than a handful of leaders who are totally out of touch with the needs of the people. Through the party machinery, powerful interests finance candidates and then dictate the policies they must follow. This state of affairs reveals a profound crisis in the contemporary conception and implementation of representative democracy.

Humanists struggle to transform the practice of representative government, giving the highest priority to consulting the people directly through referenda, plebiscites, and direct election of candidates. However, in many countries there are still laws that subordinate independent candidates to political parties, or rather to political manoeuvring and financial restrictions that prevent them from even reaching the ballot and the free expression of the will of the people.

Every constitution or law that prevents the full possibility of every citizen to elect and to be elected makes a mockery of real democracy, which is above all such legal restrictions. And in order for there to be true equality of opportunity, during elections the news media must be placed at the service of the people, providing all candidates with exactly the same opportunities to communicate with the people.

To address the problem that elected officials regularly fail to carry out their campaign promises, there is also a need to enact *laws of political responsibility* that will subject such officials to censure, revocation of powers, recall from office, and loss of immunity. The current alternative, under which parties or individuals who do not fulfil their campaign promises risk defeat in future elections, in practice does not hinder in the least the politicians' second act – betraying the people they represent.

As for directly consulting the people on the most urgent issues, every day the possibilities to do so increase through the use of technology. This does not mean simply giving greater importance to easily manipulated opinion polls and surveys. What it does mean is to facilitate real participation and direct voting by means of today's advanced computational and communications technologies.

In real democracy, all minorities must be provided with the protections that correspond to their right to representation, as well as all measures needed to advance in practice their full inclusion, participation, and development.

Today, minorities the world over who are the targets of xenophobia and discrimination make anguished pleas for recognition. It is the responsibility of humanists everywhere to bring this issue to the fore, leading the struggle to overcome such neo-fascism, whether overt or covert. In short, to struggle for the rights of minorities is to struggle for the rights of all human beings.

Under the coercion of centralised states – today no more than the unfeeling instruments of big capital – many countries with diverse populations subject entire provinces, regions, or autonomous groups to this same kind of discrimination. This must end through the adoption of federal forms of organisation, through which real political power will return to the hands of these historical and cultural entities.

In sum, to give highest priority to the issues of capital and labour, real democracy, and decentralisation of the apparatus of the State, is to set the political struggle on the path toward creating a new kind of society – a flexible society constantly changing in harmony with the changing needs of the people, who are now suffocated more each day by their dependence on an inhuman system.

III. THE HUMANIST POSITION

Humanist action does not draw its inspiration from imaginative theories about God, nature, society, or history. Rather, it begins with life's necessities, which consist most elementally of avoiding pain and moving toward pleasure. Yet human life entails the additional need to foresee future necessities, based on past experience and the intention to improve the present situation.

Human experience is not simply the product of natural physiological accumulation or selection, as happens in all species. It is social experience and personal experience directed toward overcoming pain in the present and avoiding it in the future. Human work, accumulated in the productions of society, is passed on and transformed from one generation to the next in a continuous struggle to improve the existing or natural conditions, even those of the human body itself. Human beings must therefore be defined as historical beings whose mode of social behaviour is capable of transforming both the world and their own nature.

Each time that individuals or human groups violently impose themselves on others, they succeed in detaching history, turning their victims into "natural" objects. Nature does not have intentions, and thus to negate the freedom and intentions of others is to convert them into natural objects without intentions, objects to be used.

Human progress in its slow ascent now needs to transform both nature and society, eliminating the violent animal appropriation of some human beings by others. When this happens, we will pass from pre-history into a fully human history. In the meantime, we can begin with no other central value than the human being, fully realised and completely free. Humanists therefore declare, "Nothing above the human being, and no human being beneath any other."

If God, the State, money, or any other entity is placed as the central value, this subordinates the human being and creates the condition for the subsequent control or sacrifice of other human beings. Humanists have this point very clear. Whether atheists or religious, humanists do not start with their atheism or their faith as the basis for their view of the world and their actions. They start with the human being and the immediate needs of human beings. And if, in their struggle for a better world, they believe they discover an intention that moves history in a progressive direction, they place this faith or this discovery at the service of the human being.

Humanists address the fundamental problem: to know if one wants to live, and to decide on the conditions in which to do so.

All forms of violence – physical, economic, racial, religious, sexual, ideological, and others – that have been used to block human progress are repugnant to humanists. For humanists, every form of discrimination, whether subtle or overt, is something to be denounced.

Humanists are not violent, but above all they are not cowards, and because their actions have meaning they are unafraid of facing violence. Humanists connect their personal lives with the life of society. They do not pose such false dichotomies as viewing their own lives as separate from the lives of those around them, and in this lies their coherence.

These issues, then, mark a clear dividing line between humanism and anti-humanism: humanism puts labour before big capital, real democracy before formal democracy, decentralisation before centralisation, anti-discrimination before discrimination, freedom before oppression, and meaning in life before resignation, complicity, and the absurd. Because humanism is based on freedom of choice,

it offers the only valid ethic of the present time. And because humanism believes in intention and freedom, it distinguishes between error and bad faith, between one who is mistaken and one who is a traitor.

IV. FROM NAIVE HUMANISM TO CONSCIOUS HUMANISM

It is at the base of society, in the places where people work and where they live that humanism must convert what are now only simple isolated protests into a conscious force oriented toward transforming the economic structures.

The struggles of spirited activists in labour unions and progressive political parties will become more coherent as they transform the leadership of these entities, giving their organisations a new orientation that, above short-range grievances, gives the highest priority to the basic proposals advocated by humanism.

Vast numbers of students and teachers, already sensitive to injustice, are becoming conscious of their will to change as the general crisis touches them. And certainly, members of the press in contact with so much daily tragedy are today in favourable positions to act in a humanist direction, as are those intellectuals whose creations are at odds with the standards promoted by this inhuman system.

In the face of so much human suffering, many positions and organisations today encourage people to unselfishly help the dispossessed and those who suffer discrimination. Associations, volunteer groups, and large numbers of individuals are on occasion moved to make positive contributions. Without doubt, one of their contributions is to generate condemnations of these wrongs. However, such groups do not focus their actions on transforming the underlying structures that give rise to the problems. Their approaches are more closely related to humanitarianism than to conscious humanism, although among these efforts are many conscientious protests and actions that can be extended and deepened.

V. THE ANTI-HUMANIST CAMP

As the people continue to be suffocated by the forces of big capital, incoherent proposals arise that gain strength by exploiting people's discontent, focusing it on various scapegoats. At the root of all such neo-fascism is a profound negation of human values. Similarly, there are certain deviant environmental currents that view nature as more important than human beings. No longer do they preach that an environmental catastrophe is a disaster because it endangers humanity – instead to them the only problem is that human beings have damaged nature.

According to certain of these theories, the human being is somehow contaminated, and thus contaminates nature. It would have been better, they contend, had medicine never succeeded in its fight against disease or in prolonging human life. "Earth first!" some cry hysterically, recalling Nazi slogans. It is but a short step from this position to begin discriminating against cultures seen to contaminate or against "impure" foreigners. These currents of thought may be considered anti-humanist because at bottom they hold the human being in contempt, and in keeping with the nihilistic and suicidal tendencies so fashionable today, their mentors reflect this self-hatred.

There is, however, a significant segment of society made up of perceptive people who consider themselves environmentalists because they understand the gravity of the abuses that environmentalism exposes and condemns. And if this environmentalism attains the humanist character that corresponds, it will direct the struggle against those who are actually generating the catastrophes – big capital and its chain of destructive industries and businesses, so closely intertwined with the military-industrial complex.

Before worrying about seals they will concern themselves with overcoming hunger, overcrowding, infant mortality, disease, and the lack of even minimal standards of housing and sanitation in many parts of the world. They will focus on the unemployment, exploitation, racism, discrimination, and intolerance in a world that is so technologically advanced, yet still generates serious environmental imbalances in the name of ever more irrational growth.

One need not look far to see how the right wing functions as a political instrument of anti-humanism. Dishonesty and bad faith reach such extremes that some exponents periodically present themselves as representatives of "humanism." Take, for example, those cunning clerics who claim to theorise on the basis of a ridiculous "theocentric humanism." These people, who invented religious wars and inquisitions, who put to death the very founders of western humanism, are now attempting to appropriate the virtues of their victims. They have recently gone so far as to "forgive the errors" of those historical humanists, and so shameless is their semantic banditry that these representatives of anti-humanism even try to cloak themselves with the term "humanist."

It would of course be impossible to list the full range of resources, tools, instruments, forms, and expressions that anti-humanism has at its disposal. But having shed light on some of their more deceptive practices should help unsuspecting humanists and those newly realising they are humanists as they re-think their ideas and the significance of their social practice.

VI. HUMANIST ACTION FRONTS

With the intention of becoming a broad-based social movement, the vital force of humanism is organising action fronts in the workplace, neighbourhoods, unions, and among social action, political, environmental, and cultural organisations. Such collective action makes it possible for varied progressive forces, groups, and individuals to have greater presence and influence, without losing their own identities or special characteristics. The objective of this movement is to promote a union of forces increasingly able to influence broad strata of the population, orienting the current social transformation.

Humanists are neither naive nor enamoured of declarations that belong to more romantic eras, and in this sense they do not view their proposals as the most advanced expression of social consciousness or think of their organisation in an unquestioning way. Nor do they claim to represent the majority. Humanists simply act according to their best judgement, focusing on the changes they believe are most suitable and possible for these times in which they happen to live.

This Humanist Document gives greater definition of certain aspects of contemporary humanism, and in the next letter we will go on to consider other matters.

With this letter I send my warmest regards,

Silo

April 5, 1993

Constitution of The Humanist International

The undersigned parties and organisations as full members of The International, represented by their delegations at the Congress in Moscow, on October 4-6th. 1993, by unanimity adopt the modifications to the Constitution of the International, whose text is as follows:

1. The Humanist International

Is an association of parties, organisations and in cases, individuals, who endeavour to establish humanism in the world.

2. Objectives of the Humanist International

To strengthen relationships between the member parties and organisations. Help the formation and development of parties and organisations with an affinity of goals and ideas where these do not exist. To develop humanist actions and ideas around the world. To develop solidarity amongst all nations and to support the peoples of the world in their struggle for political, economic and social liberation from oppressive conditions.

To these ends it will endeavour to persuade and exert influence in all political, social, and cultural instances defining positions in any matters linked to its interests.

3. Members

3.1 Full Members

Full members will be the parties and organisations who, having requested admission, are accepted. The full members will have the right to vote and will pay membership contributions.

3.2 Adherent members

Adherent members will be other parties, social, cultural, political and philanthropic non partisan organisations who, having requested admission are accepted as members. They will have the right to voice their views but not the right to vote. They will pay membership contributions.

3.3 Honorary members

Honorary members will be individuals or organisations who by reason of their well known record in favour of humanist ideals are invited to participate as such by the Humanist International. The honorary members will not have the right to vote and they will integrate as a consultative and advisory body to the General Council.

4. Organisation

4.1 Congress

It is the highest body of the Humanist International.

It defines its principles and official documents and determines its Constitution. The Congress receives a report of the activities of the International since the last Congress. It prepares its agenda. It will meet regularly every three years on the date and place to be determined by the General Council. The Executive Committee or 50% of the full members can call for an Extraordinary Congress. The Executive Committee will declare the date and place of such Congress at least a month ahead.

4.1.1 Quorum.

The quorum will be 2/3 of the full members and resolutions must be adopted by the majority of the members present. If there is no quorum on the first day of sessions the Congress will hold a new session the day after with those members who attend. Each full member carries one vote.

4.1.2 Representation

Each full member may be represented by up to three persons who are properly accredited. Any affiliated member can represent his/her organisation at the

Congress. Each full member will be allowed to file questions to be discussed by the Congress up to seven days prior to the holding of the sessions sending their suggestions to the Secretary General.

4.1.3 Representation in case of absence

Represented members are those who unable to attend the Congress, delegate another member to exercise the right of opinion and/or vote.

4.1.4 Work of the Congress

On the first day of sessions a chairperson and three secretaries of assembly will be nominated for the whole length of the Congress, they will chair the meetings and the development of the proceedings.

4.2 General Council

It is the executive body who implements the resolutions of the Congress. Is elected in a public and direct election and it remains in office for three years or until the celebration of the next Congress. The Council meets in ordinary sessions once a year.

The Council implements all decisions of the Congress, looks after the good development of the activities of the International, and for that purpose establishes its own rules of procedure. Decisions are taken by simple majority and in case of a hung vote the president will have a casting vote.

The Council will propose to the Congress, candidates for the offices of President, Vice-Presidents, and Secretary General.

The Council approves the annual budget submitted by the Finance secretary; convenes the Congress and has the right to organise conferences, seminars, regional and global meetings; establish special commissions nominating the people in charge and fixing terms and conditions for their work.

4.2.1 Composition

The General Council is composed by a Presidency, a Vice Presidency and a Secretariat.

4.2.2 Presidency

The President remains in office for three years or until the following ordinary Congress. This office represents the organisation in public. Together with the Secretary General and in consultation if necessary with one or more Vice-Presidents, will take discretionary political decisions between meeting of the General Council; attend all the meetings of the International; signs together with the Secretary General all the resolutions of the Congress and the General Council; inaugurate the opening session of the Congress and chairs the sessions of the General Council.

4.2.3 Vice Presidency

It is composed of an Executive Vice-President and six or more Vice-Presidents. The Executive Vice President constitutes the Executive Committee, together with the President and the General Secretary. The Vice-Presidents represent publicly the International, and may carry specific tasks on its behalf by appointment of the General Council and the Executive Committee.

4.2.4 Secretariat

This is made up of a General Secretary and a varying number of secretaries determined by the General Council according to specific needs.

The management and operation of the secretaries is the responsibility of the Secretary General.

Functions of the Secretary General are:

To co-ordinate the work of the secretaries; to keep the register of members; to give notice of the place and date of Congresses and other meetings to members,

distributing the agenda and administrative reports; to keep the archives of the International; to represent with the President the organisation in public events and to subscribe documents with other organisations; to receive and process the applications for membership, suspension or expulsion of members to be considered by the General Council.

4.3 Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is composed by the President, Executive Vice-President and Secretary General. It is the executive body of the General Council, implements its decisions and it is in charge of managing the activities of the International, decides about admission or expulsion of members. Has the power to appoint extraordinary representatives of the International in other countries, or regions and/or in charge of special missions.

5. Finances

The expenses of The International will be covered by:

- a) Contributions of full and adherent members;
- b) Contributions of friendly organisations;
- c) Donations.

5.1 Contributions

The contributions of members will be determined by the General Secretariat with consideration to the conditions of the country, and development of the party or organisation, and financial possibilities of the same.

5.2 Financial management

It is the joint responsibility of the Presidency and General Secretariat, who make up the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will recommend to the general Council for its approval the regulations and procedures perceived as more adequate for a sound financial management.

5.3 Auditing

Every year the account of The International will be audited by external auditors.

6. Changes to the Constitution.

Can be done only by The Congress by recommendation of the General Council and by a 2/3 majority of the voting members.

SECOND INTERNATIONAL HUMANIST CONGRESS GENERAL STATEMENT

The second Congress of the Humanist International, held in Moscow on 4-6th October 1993, in assessing today's world situation has agreed the following.

We live at a time of a general crisis which affects all aspects of human life.

The project of building a new world without consideration for the human being, and using the practice of violence as a method of action, has brought humanity to the edge of catastrophe.

The self-interest and the mediocre policies of groups with a narrow vision, together with the ignorance to which large groups of the population are subjected aggravate the proportions of the crisis, while hunger and malnutrition oppress millions of human beings.

Unemployment creates massive damage, even in the most developed countries, while often bloody conflicts of religious or ethnic character engulf new regions generalising suffering and malaise.

Discrimination is on the increase affecting mainly the weakest sectors of society; ethnic and cultural minorities are affected, often with a threat to their survival.

The advancements of science and technology make the solution to these problems possible, but for that to happen, it is necessary that the thinking the intentions and the solidarious actions of all human beings be set in motion in this direction from all corners of the world.

It is not enough to number the perils that threaten humanity and to report about them through the mass media. The time has come to undertake urgent, concrete and solidarious action with the purpose of protecting life, securing the safety and prosperity of our generation and the generations to come, building up a united and diverse world and affirming the identity of each nation, creed and human group.

It is necessary to guarantee the freedom of the person in the face of oppression and discrimination, liberating their creative capacities in the face of de-humanisation. It is necessary to widen the framework of democracy overcoming its predominantly formal character, transforming democracy into a means of expression and a guarantee of rights for all.

We must widen the practice of representation, promoting the direct election of people's representatives, plebiscites, and other forms of popular consultation.

Voters must keep the right to cancel the mandate given to their representatives, if they lose confidence in them, or if these do not fulfil their electoral commitments.

Consensus as a method of solving conflicts is the correct procedure instead of imposing by force the will of the majority, since that cannot reflect the authentic interests and will of the people. This becomes clear in ethnic and religious conflicts where the concept of the will of the majority is not fair in its application.

We aspire to create social, economic, political and cultural expressions which can guarantee the unfolding of the capacities and potential of all peoples.

It is necessary to join the efforts of labour and capital, to achieve together the highest productivity based on joint action and management.

We aspire to transform the spontaneous actions of protest into conscious programmes of action in all spheres of life. We do not expect to impose our principles and intentions, our objective is to give cohesion to all the different groups with the common denominator of a humanist orientation, joining forces and intentions in the endeavour to affirm human dignity.

We are convinced that the work developed by the Congress has contributed to the exchange of experiences in the direction of the objectives mentioned above and that this will help to achieve positive agreement and collaboration with other organisations of democratic and humanist inspiration.

Unfortunately, the work of the Congress coincides with tragic days for the people of Moscow, Russia, the former republics and the world in general. We support the reform efforts of the people of this country with confidence in that this process will lead to a positive and coherent situation for the people of Russia.

The events experienced in Moscow, reaffirm to us even more our humanist principles and the rejection of violence as a means of social transformation.

Moscow, October 6th, 1993

1st CONGRESS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN HUMANIST REGIONAL
Santiago Chile, 7th January 1999

To the first Latin American Congress

Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Chile; Government authorities, members of the diplomatic corps, municipal authorities, members of Human Rights Organisations and of social and political organisations; members of the committee of Humanist International, followers of the humanist parties of Europe, Russia and Asia; members of the humanist parties of America; friends:

Firstly I must give my thanks to Dr Salvatore Puledda for his kind words. I must also give my thanks for being given the opportunity to reflect on some points which may be of interest at this time of the constitution of the Latin American Council of humanist parties.

My exposition will deal with certain ideas which have already been expounded upon at the Foundational Congress of Humanist International in Florence, back in 1989, and some others at the Second International in Moscow and the Moscow Forum of 1993. In the intervening years our world has changed rapidly and it is worthwhile to re-examine some points which at this time present us with important grounds for concern.

To begin: in his message to the first congress of Humanist International, the President said: "The International has made its own, and therefore considers one of its fundamental documents, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on the 10th December 1948 by the United Nations. From that day to this, numerous violations to the dignity of the human being have been carried out all over the world. Human Rights do not have the desired universal applicability because they do not depend on the universal power of the Human being, but on the power of one element over all and if the most basic complaints about ones own government are disregarded everywhere, we can only speak today of hopes and aspirations which will have to become reality. Human Rights do not belong to the past, they are there in the future nurturing our purpose, fueling a battle which revives itself with every new

violation of the destiny of man. Because of this, each complaint made in the name of Human Rights has a meaning as it shows the current powers that they are not omnipotent and that they do not have control over the future...Today's world is not organised as the humanists would like it to be organised. Today's juridical system isn't the juridical system that the humanists proclaim. But while all of this is changing, humanists must pledge their forces to better the conditions of the world in which they live."

Thus he proclaimed himself to be for the full application of human rights and for a change in the world juridical system. Moreover, he strongly espoused the world peace process, with these words: "Today's world has pressing needs and we can appreciate positive advances. How can we not support disarmament wholeheartedly? How can we not fully justify the efforts on behalf of demilitarisation in Europe, the Caribbean, Middle East, Southeast Asia and South Africa? The progressive withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola; the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq; the reduction of aggression in Nicaragua; the beginning of talks between Palestinians and Israelites, are priorities and humanists understand them as such", he stated in the message of the 7th of January 1989 in Florence.

But between 1989 and today, the longed-for disarmament which at one point appeared imminent (remember the Reykjavik meeting), has once more simply not happened. The strategy of a few powers' maintaining a nuclear monopoly has not been successful. Straightforward disarmament has not been brought about and it has been decided instead that a fragile armed peace should be in force - thus not only has conventional war broken out again, as in the Gulf, but nuclear power has in fact been extended as has been shown by the disquieting tests in Pakistan and India which have as their precedent the unilateral breaking-down of the nuclear moratorium with the Chinese tests, immediately followed by those of the French in Muroroa.

And so it goes on...various other countries possess non-declared arms and continue to perfect their chemical and bacterial weapons. If this proliferation carries on, terrorist arsenals will soon contain the whole paraphernalia of mass destruction which the super powers currently have in their possession. **There is no other alternative but total disarmament and the complete supervision of the situation in all**

countries - not just a few.

Along with the concern for human rights, the necessity for a new juridical world order and the problem of disarmament, in that first congress we were alerted to the growth of misery and injustice in vast areas of our planet. Special mention was made of the global interrelation of countries, and injustice was considered to be a cause for insecurity for all of us, even those who are lulled into a false sense of their own security. We were told:

“ What real efforts can be made to avoid the death by starvation of millions of human beings in Africa and certain parts of Asia? What and how great are the real recourses that can be mobilised to get rid of a suffocating and potentially explosive debt in Latin America? In what proportion is necessary technology reaching areas which lack development? What real measures can be taken to assure that terms of trade between North and South America do not deteriorate from day to day? However we do it, answering these questions inevitably involves some elements of effrontery or mockery. But one thing that is clear today is that we are only one world, there are no areas which are cut off from the whole and that a catastrophe in one part of the world will have repercussions on others. That is why, if we try to raise the level of less favoured areas it will not merely be for reasons of solidarity but for the survival of human life”.

By the 2nd Congress of 1993 a change of tone had taken place. This was certainly not because the concerns outlined previously had gone away but, on the contrary, because new problems had been added. So, we were told in the General Declaration of that meeting: “We are living through a widespread crisis which is affecting all ambits of human life. The project of constructing a new world without taking the human being into account, and the use of violence as a method, have placed humanity on the edge of a catastrophe. Selfish interests and the mediocre politics of narrow-visioned groups, together with the ignorance in which large sectors of the populace are kept, aggravates and increases the crisis proportions, while hunger and malnutrition lays waste to millions of human beings. Unemployment plays increasing havoc even in the most developed countries while religious and ethnic conflicts affect more and more areas, spreading suffering and unrest.

Discrimination grows, affecting above all the most vulnerable sectors of society; ethnic and cultural minorities are more and more affected and their very existence threatened. It is not enough to enumerate the dangers that lie in wait for humanity and report on them via the media. The time has come to undertake urgent, definite measures of solidarity, with the ultimate aim of safeguarding life, guaranteeing the security and the prosperity of our own and future generations; constructing a multifaceted world and affirming the identity of each human race, denomination or group. It is necessary to secure the liberty of the individual in the face of oppression and discrimination; to liberate his creative capacities in the face of dehumanisation; extend the framework of democracy in order to transcend its formal character and transform it into a means of expression and a guarantee of rights for all. We have to extend the practice of representativeness, promoting direct election of peoples' representatives, and empower the common man, giving him complete access to all forms of referenda. Voters must have the right to get rid of their representatives if they lose their trust or do not fulfil their promises. Consensus as a method of resolving conflict is the most appropriate form, not the imposition of the will of the majority now that this practice cannot reflect either the interests or the real will of many human groups. This shows itself clearly in ethnic and religious conflicts where the concept of 'majority' is not, in fairness, applicable. We aspire to the creation of social, economical, political and cultural expression which can guarantee the full use of the capacities and potential of the people. It is necessary to unite the forces of work and capital to achieve, among other things, maximum productivity on the basis of action and combined management. We aim to move beyond spontaneous protest action, and carry out organised programs in all areas. Our objective is to unite different cultural, scientific, political and social groups with the common denominator of the humanist orientation, uniting our purposes for the achievement of collective work towards the affirmation of human dignity".

Later, at the Moscow Humanist Forum of 1993 it was declared:

"The Humanist Forum intends to establish the bases of future global discussion.

Most important will be to keep in mind diverse stances and to understand that in this planetary civilisation which is in creation, the diversity of attitudes, assessments and lifestyles will prevail in the future despite the violence of the uniformed forces. In this sense, we aspire to a universal human nation which can be achieved if diversity exists. No central hegemony can be maintained on the periphery, nor a lifestyle, nor a values system, nor a presupposed ideology or religiosity which is imposed at the cost of the extinction of others. Today we are seeing that centralisation generates secessionist responses because it doesn't respect the true entity of people and regions which could converge perfectly in a true federation of collectives. We cannot believe that economic control can bring about miracles. Or are there still people who believe that for development to take place we have first to reform the state, then legislation, then methods of production, followed by social habits and customs, and at some later point clothing, diet, religion and thought? This naïve absolutism is becoming less and less easy to impose and, as in the case of the secessions noted above, is helping to toughen and radicalise positions in all fields. If, in fact, through the dictatorship of money we could move to a complete society the theme would be worthy of further discussion but if to achieve a decadent society, with no feeling for the whole and for individuals, it is moreover necessary to accept the requirements of a human regression, the result will be the increase of disorder and general misfortune. The Humanist Forum cannot lose sight of the form of diversity, cannot study different cultures with the vision of a primitive zoologist who believes that the culture in which he is himself immersed represents the summit of an evolution which should be imitated by the rest. Far more important is to understand that all cultures make a contribution to the great human construction. However, the Humanist Forum must set its minimum conditions. First, that it cannot inform trends which create a favourable atmosphere for discrimination or intolerance; secondly that it cannot inform trends which favour violence as a methodology of action to impose their thoughts or their ideals, however noble these ideals may be. These would be the only necessary limits. The Humanist Forum is internationalist, but does this mean to say that with regard to its ecumenicalism the regional and the specific are disqualified? How can a person be disqualified because they love their race, their country, their customs, their kin, their traditions? Can we simply label them as 'nationalist' so as to subsequently not have to consider them? Because to love one's own roots is also to be noble with regard to work and the suffering of previous

generations. This 'nationalism' is only distorted when its affirmation is to the detriment of the recognition of other collectives, of other peoples. What right has the Forum to rule out the contributions of other tendencies which nurture the ideal of a fair and equal society? Can the Forum act to discriminate against believers or atheists with regard to their respective beliefs? Can the Forum conscientiously support the superiority of some beliefs over others, of certain customs over others? We believe that limits cannot exist apart from the two, and exclusively the two, which we noted before. In such a case, the Forum intends to work in terms of inclusion and not exclusion of human variety."

And thus at this forum began the discussion, with universalising ideology, and an inclination to the rescuing of cultural characteristics, with the realisation that the future of the world will bring a confluence of diversity. We reflect upon these ideas against a background of confrontation which today has already taken on the characteristics of an open battle between different cultures and ethnicities...

And so, what is the message for this International Humanist Congress, in which we put into action the council of Latin American Humanist parties, from those which have gone before? The message, it would seem to me, is this: the current world situation continues to deteriorate in a move towards growing dehumanisation. And along with this process appears the misnomered economic "globalisation' as an instrument of domination. It deals with an unmistakable phenomenon of anti-humanist tendency which cannot be considered as a simple, spontaneous process. It is a process directed from a central authority to points further and further outwards, with the same characteristics that have been seen in previous cultures. This directed globalisation cannot be confused with the process of world-wide expansion of cultural diversity which is sweeping through all regions. World-wide expansion must be considered as the consolidation of cultural regions and this is one of the objectives to be achieved in the short and medium terms. From this moment, the creation of a Latin American council of humanist parties is going in just this direction. In this way the process which leads towards the universal human nation will stand for the structuring of cultural regions, as is clearly seen in Europe and is gradually happening in Latin America. The council of humanist parties, today set in motion, has behind it the force and dynamics of the winds of integration which are blowing to its advantage.

That is all, thank you very much.

**The Latin American nation of the future
Pledge of the Humanist Parties of Latin America**

The most important things about Latin America are not its enormous mountains, impenetrable jungles or vast and silent deserts. The wealth of Latin America does not lie in its minerals, its plantations, or in the depth of its seas.

The real wealth of Latin America lies in its inhabitants; in the innocence of its children, the irreverence of its young and the muffled complaints of its old people; in the thirst for life of its men and women. The real wealth of Latin America is in its people, its diverse races and cultures, the multiplicity of its languages. Latin America begins in the Tierra del Fuego, encompasses all of Central and South America, basks in the heat of the Caribbean, and goes as far as Tijuana, even breaking into the Latin American immigrant districts of North America.

And yet in this vibrant Latin America our people cannot fulfil the most basic needs of life; their families are suffocated by debt and the threat of mass redundancy. State repression grows, with intolerance and despair increasing before a bleak future.

Today, the 7th January 1999, in Santiago de Chile, at this Extraordinary Congress of Humanist International, 10 years after its founding, the Humanist Parties of Latin America pledge to work to overcome the pain and suffering of our people. We aim to:

1. Begin a process of progressive and proportional disarmament throughout the region, in order to put an end to the injuries caused to our people by wars.
2. Overcome hunger, sickness and ignorance by guaranteeing education and health to all the inhabitants of the region.
3. Suspend payment of the external debt and demand that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank repay all money unfairly paid to them.
4. Decentralise the States, allowing the power of the Latin American nation to be in the control of its regions, cities, people, races and cultures.
5. Recognise the pluricultural character of our continent and support the development of organisations of native peoples and other cultures which are discriminated against.
6. Develop a Latin American tribunal which will receive complaints, and be able to judge and sentence the authorities of any country which violates human rights.
7. Promote the ownership rights of workers, thus establishing a new relationship of parity between work and capital.
8. Open our borders, our work sources, our hospitals, schools and universities to each and every Latin American citizen.
9. Construct land, air, sea and information links so that all corners of our continent are properly interconnected.
10. Guarantee future generations the right to an uncontaminated environment.

11. Build the Humanist Party in every country in the region, so as to have the necessary tools with which to give force to these promises.

The Humanist parties of Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, The Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela here present ourselves at the Latin American Council of Humanist International.

This Council is dedicated to work in conjunction with all the political and social organisations which share this humanising direction.

Fellow Humanists, we make up part of the future Latin American Nation and hope that this will be a contribution towards the Universal Human Nation.

Santiago, 7th January 1999

FOR A EUROPE OBSERVANT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

**The European Humanist Parties Political Programme for the European
Parliament elections - June 1999**

Europe is heading with difficulty towards economic integration on the basis of a monetary- financial policy detrimental for the standards of living of the majority. In every country people are going through a deep social and political crisis. As the European Union takes on new functions, the national states lose identity, democracy weakens and distress grows within the social fabric.

Day after day, the more vulnerable in society see their rights and fundamental freedoms reduced as a result of the implementation of neo-liberal policies. So called job flexibility and global competition generate massive unemployment. Even the more affluent groups cannot escape the growing problems of criminality, drug addiction, mental illness, intolerance, sexual discrimination, racism, violence and general insecurity.

This scenario correlates with a situation of social injustice generated by a system of values that favours the interests of financial capital over the interests of people. The fact that priority is given to macroeconomic values in the creation of the European Union, entails the violation, and denial of fundamental rights of the human being.

In order to face the growing social crisis the Humanist Parties advocate the construction of a Europe capable of promoting democracy and freedom for all, capable of distributing its enormous resources to ensure fair and equitable living conditions for the population. In short, a Europe that, 50 years after the first Declaration of Human Rights, will not only fully enforce these throughout its territory, but who will also promote their universal application.

ECONOMIC RIGHTS

The strict measures established by the Maastricht Treaty as pre-condition to become part of the EU have deteriorated the economic situation of the European population. There is a high level of unemployment and an increase in failures of small and medium companies. This is not the case of large corporations and speculative capital who see their profits increased by the day.

It is all too clear that the macroeconomic measures imposed at Maastricht were for the direct benefit of speculators and large corporations.

The reduction in public expenditure has damaged the quality of public services (health, education, transport, postal etc), and privatisation is advocated as the universal panacea so that big economic groups may profit from the infrastructures created by the state at the tax payers expense during many years. The intention of those who advocate privatisation is obviously not to improve services, but on the contrary to generate revenue.

To compensate this situation we propose, slowing down speculative investment and promoting a huge development of production.

Our proposals

Creation of interest-free banks in all countries of the union as the basis of a development oriented policy. Financed with state funds, these banks will grant loans

to small and medium enterprises those enterprises implementing participatory property of workers (PPW).

Speculative activities will be penalised by measures:

taxing of speculative transactions

taxing up to 75% of speculative gains (banks, stock and cash movements)

limiting the movement of speculative capital.

The role of central banks will change. Priority will be given to the development of production. Unemployment rates rather than interest rates will be taken as the basic economic parameters. Heads of central banks will be democratically elected.

Any country willing to join the EU will be able to do so. Through agreements of economic co-operation based on reciprocity the living standards will be improved for all in Europe.

Stop privatisation of public services. When productive enterprises are privatised, the system of participatory property of workers (PPW) will be applied. Previous privatised entities will be reviewed following the same criteria.

The right of strike for all workers must be guaranteed.

Law of the participatory property of workers (PPW). The PPW system will be promoted by tax incentives for companies willing to implement it. This system entails the direct participation of workers in the management and profits of the company.

Fraudulent bankruptcies, merges and privatised concerns will be investigated by a commission whose membership will be truly representative of all individuals affected. In these cases workers redundancies will not be allowed.

When higher productivity rates are achieved, working hours will be proportionally reduced.

Job contracts must be agreed directly with the company where the job is performed.

Whenever new technologies are applied to speed up the production process, workers shall not be dismissed. Instead, working hours will be reduced keeping salaries unchanged. Technology must serve all human beings, not just a few.

Protection of economic rights

Parameters used to assess a person level of poverty shall be those set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of United Nations. Articles 22 (the right to social security and to economic, social and cultural rights); 23 (the right to work, to free choice of employment, to fair and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment, the right to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for oneself and one's family an existence worthy of human dignity), 24 (the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay), 25 (the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one's family, including food, clothing,

housing, medical care and necessary social services; the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond one's own control), 26 (the right to free education).

The parameters used to assess the development rate of a country shall not be inflation, GDP, public deficit, etc, but rather life expectancy, literacy rates, social exclusion rates, etc.

Public health services, education, housing, transport, leisure and culture will become gradually free of charge. These services, as established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, should guarantee a decorous quality of life for all the inhabitants of Europe. A monthly monetary allowance will be provided for this purpose.

RIGHT TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Increase the fundamental freedoms of the people in Europe by increasing their level of education and health

The resources allocated to these areas should be considered an investment in the human being rather a social cost.

Health is a right acquired at the moment of birth and under no circumstances may it become a business. Free, good-quality health care services must be guaranteed for all in Europe.

The same level of health care should be guaranteed throughout the European territory by decentralising the services to facilitate access.

Recognition of alternative medicine, as a complement to traditional medicine within the public, free health care system, fostering the integration of different approaches for the benefit of people.

Encourage research towards a health care system whose underlying principle would be disease prevention rather drug expenditure. Increase public funding for health prevention.

Inclusion of basic notions of health prevention, and health education in schools curriculum.

We strongly oppose any form of privatisation of public health care services, be it masked or overt.

Democratic management of health structures.

Freedom of choice in all matters regarding one own body: contraceptives, pregnancy termination, artificial insemination, within a free, good quality health care system.

Education

Free and good quality education for all. At all levels and for all age groups, including university education.

Not less than 25% of public expenditure must be allocated to education.

Revision of the role of educators, motivating and facilitating their continuous training updating their knowledge and teaching methods.

No to privatisation of public education. No to government funding of private schools.

Assure ideological, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious pluralism in schools curriculum.

Education must not only provide professional training-based on the passive acquisition of data-but it must promote as well the ability to analyse and relate data, self expression, and freedom of choice.

Open access to the latest technologies.

First priority will be given to reach a 100% literacy rate across Europe.

Environment

Sensible environmental policies must be an integral part of the economic policies in all European countries. First and foremost these should be a means to implement development. The concept of sustainable and ecologically compatible development must be the leading principle underlying all the strategic choices in the various sectors (transportation, energy production, agriculture, urban development, programmes for full employment, education and training, etc.). This is the way to guarantee an economic development responsible towards society, and safeguard primary environmental resources for the benefit and health of the present and future generations.

All this is feasible if strategies are implemented to assure that citizens are informed, aware and willing to participate at the local community level

Our proposals

Full integration of environmental policies with regional economic policies according to the principle of sustainable development.

Priority will be given to those companies, whether public or private, that are prepared to evaluate the environmental impact of their activities, diagnose energy consumption levels, etc. in order to account for environmental costs in the production process.

Design and application of a programme to promote employment in environment-related activities and to facilitate the development of renewable, clean energy sources, granting financial support to socially useful initiatives.

Incentives for education and professional training in the sectors of environment re-qualification and renewable clean energy sources.

Support to agricultural practices with a low environmental impact and incentives for farm workers, introducing radical changes in the EU agricultural policy (to avoid the catastrophe of food surpluses and land desertion).

Incentives to the formation of small, and medium companies for the installation and maintenance of renewable energy sources (solar, bio-mass, wind-driven , mini-hydraulic)

Transparent information about the actual state of the environment (pollution, degradation, etc.) and its effect on public health (health hazards, accidents, morbidity and mortality rates), and about the potential alternatives and solutions (local referendums, consultations, public forums).

Introduction of the "crime against the environment", so that those who are responsible for damage to persons may be criminally prosecuted.

POLITICAL RIGHTS

Democratisation European institutions

Democratisation of European political bodies.

Broadening of the competence of the European Parliament so that it may have the power to approve or refute all decisions, directives, programmes and balances.

Broadening the competence of the Court of Strasbourg on all the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, such as economic, social and cultural rights.

Subordination of the European Central Bank and Interpol to democratically elected European bodies.

Real Democracy

Law on Political Responsibility (LPR) at European level and within member states
Immediate action: presentation of the proposals for an LPR before each and every parliament house.

European Electoral Law that shall establish the same conditions for becoming an eligible candidate in all member countries

Legislation on referendums and initiation of legislation by the public, to propose new laws, amend or change existing ones, at various administrative levels, European, national, regional, provincial, municipal, as long as they do not oppose human rights.

Legislation in support of associations and political parties by which social and political organisations will be not be supported financially but be provided with infrastructure and services such as premises, printing facilities, travelling, etc. but not money) according to the activities such organisations actually carry out at the grass root level

UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS: SOLIDARIOUS EUROPE

International organisations, defence and foreign relations

Europe must change its international role: it should no longer be a geo-political area where a minority absorbs and concentrates resources-even by exploiting other peoples- to become the vanguard of international solidarity and help.

Immediate action: cancellation of the foreign debt of the poorest countries (in Africa, Latin America, Asia and East Europe). Assignment of 1% of European GDP to international co-operation.

Application of a proportional and progressive disarmament policy in all European countries, that should be extended to other countries of the world. Application of the military industry to pacific uses.

Immediate action: dismantling of the global nuclear arsenal and reduction of military expenditure.

Dissolution of NATO.

Immediate action: dismantling American military bases in European soil

Reorientation of the function of the armed forces towards peace missions, support, reconstruction, pacification and defence of human rights.

Immediate Action: Full support of the armed forces in cases of natural disasters and emergency situations around the world.

Europe will pursue the goals of ONU proposing its democratisation and the abolition of veto.

Immigration

Immigration and emigration issues are not -and have never been- matters of public order requiring police intervention. People emigrate in an attempt to escape a situation of extreme emergency, to flee from hunger, poverty, war, persecution. Not that long ago, we Europeans, emigrated to other countries, today other people are arriving in Europe from continents whose present critical situation is the co-responsibility of several European governments and companies.

This issue must be solved by acting on two converging fronts: on the one hand, the effective observance of human rights and the creation of adequate facilities for the reception and accommodation of immigrants; on the other hand, support to economic and social development of their countries of origin. Otherwise, we are promoting a social clash, a civil war amongst the poor, a social catastrophe.

By applying and extending article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution, also when such persecution is of an economic or social nature, not just political.

Any person willing to live in a country other than his/her own has is entitled to be a resident and should therefore have the same obligations, rights and opportunities as natives do.

At the same time, it is essential to proceed towards an effective communication among peoples, becoming aware of the intrinsic value of cultural plurality and diversity. This will be fostered through all mass media by allowing the different cultures to express themselves from their own view, and by including the history, thought and artistic expression of all cultures in history books and school curriculum.

Immediate measures

Unconditional civil recognition of all the persons that do not have a stay permit but that are de facto residents.

Closing of all centres for temporary detention of immigrants.

Organisation of proper centres for reception of immigrants in all main cities, with information offices and medical care services.

Derogation of Schengen Treaty.

The competence on immigration matters should move from the Home Office to the new Ministry of Human Rights and decentralised administrative bodies, e.g. at the municipal level.

DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

On different grounds the large majority of the population of Europe are discriminated. This universe of discrimination involves women, youth, children, the elderly, immigrants, the disabled, homosexuals, the unemployed, etc.

We advocate the creation of a Ministry of Human Rights that based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (ONU 1948), will enact and enforce laws to guarantee that all the human beings resident in Europe, without exception, will enjoy the same rights and opportunities.

I CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN HUMANIST REGIONAL MADRID, 7th JULY 1999

Contribution of Giorgio Schultze

Secretary General and President of Humanist International,
Humanist Party delegates of European countries
Humanist Party followers from various continents
Authorities of the Latin American Council
Government Diplomatic Representatives
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today's Act is not just the 'formal' constitution of the European Council, but also an important moment of joining together to reinforce the materials with which we have been working intensely over the eventful past 5 months, and the launching of our proposals for the future.

As our Secretary General has already specified, following the meeting in Milan on the 13th February, we have decided to be the political interpreters of a difficult and somewhat "propagandistic" theme, that of the affirmation of human rights in the whole of Europe.

It was interesting to see how, at the very same instant as the Humanist Party in different countries began to clearly define a 'political profile', to set forth ideas and emphasise distinctions, the System began to respond.

They tried everything to hold us back: unnecessary requests for money or signatures, crippling bureaucracy and then, when we had overcome these obstacles, we were subjected to a news blackout, humiliated without the right to respond, and finally found it impossible to publicise ourselves via TV, radios, hoardings, posters, due to a complete monopolising of these forms of the media by the parties already in power.

All of this could all be interpreted as signs of the force and power of the System. In truth, we see in this conduct the ultimate outward symptoms of a profound weakness in our opponent.

The System may permit a two-party system or political fragmentation, but also creates dependency on political force, and will not brook the expression of opinion which is not officially approved and which goes beyond the bounds of its international eco-financial network.

Its greatest fear is that an element from outside of the 'great scheme' will find voice and perhaps kindle the discontent which lies dormant in more than 70% of the population.

The facts on voting abstention confirm this: election after election abstention grows, in some cases it is as high as 80%. This means that 'don't knows' and spoiled papers in fact represent the majority. The self-appointed official 'majorities' sometimes consist of the votes of as little as 15% of the population.

The permanent and constant presence of the inviolable and incorruptible HP makes these fears a reality.

Only with their governments disguised as 'left' or 'progressive' have the neo-liberal right achieved its aims: the carrying-out of decisions made by the World Bank, the international Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation, by the most unpopular means since the last world war.

Only governments with subjugated oppositions and unions could conceive and create:

- The Europe of **Maastricht** and the **Euro**. A monetary Europe with the Single market financed at the cost of health and education being privatised; privatisation of essential services (electricity, gas, water, telephone etc); theft and privatisation of pensions and social welfare, and an increase in unemployment.
- The Europe of **Schengen**. An enclosed fort where racial and ethnic conflicts are being exacerbated, where bygone forms of exploitation are making a comeback and new forms of slavery invented, to the extent of the shameful detention centres and Lager for foreigners.
- The Europe of **NATO**. Base for the development of war and death - not only in the Balkans but in the Middle East and Mediterranean. An aggressive police always seeking the war-like calls of American industry. What was called 'humanitarian war' was in fact a test field for new ways of killing.
- The Europe of **Dioxina**. This represents the greatest and clearest example of speculative interest to be introduced to this continent. The thirst for profit knows no bounds, even the risk to health and life of millions of people is not enough to stop it.

Traitors, primitives and killers.

For more than three months homes in Serbia and Kosovo have been bombarded and people killed.

For far longer than this our consciousness has also been bombarded in an attempt to kill all hope.

So-called economic experts and irresponsible politicians have not been capable of resolving one single social, economic or ethnic problem within Europe.

This *military fort, financial bank* Europe will go down in history as the Europe of bombs and the Euro. But this Europe will never be part of the history of the Universal Humanist Nation, which will be made up of a free people and a great vision of the human future.

This is not the Europe that we want.

This is not the Europe in which we want to live.

We want to live

- In a Europe which responds fully to the most basic necessities of human beings such as health, education, housing, work, food, and the quality of air and water, while also heeding their deepest desires.
- In a non-violent, non-discriminatory, anti-racist, hospitable and co-operative unified nation.
- Where it is not a fatal geographical mistake to be born Serbian, Croatian, Kosovan or Irish, nor to be Muslim, orthodox, Jew or atheist a basis for discrimination and prejudice.
- Where man learns not only to get by but to develop his capacity to conceive diversity as an indicator of progress.

For all of the above reasons the Humanist parties of Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Holland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Hungary, Russia, here convened at the **European Council of Humanist International**, on this the 7th July 1999 in Madrid:

- Denounce the governments of the European nations for the betrayal of the Declaration of Human Rights, signed in December 1948 and never respected in 50 years.
- Propose that all responsible people, individually or as part of collectives, adhere, sustain and contribute to the enrichment of the following points of the common European platform:

1. Changing the macroeconomic parameters of Maastricht determining the “quality of life in the nations” for those suggested in the indicators of the Human Rights act.

- a. The right to social security and the satisfaction of economic rights (art.22), with the introduction of a minimum social benefit.
- b. The right to work and to the free choice of one’s work (art.23). The creation of interest-free banks for the development of productive activities. The imposition of taxes on speculative earnings. The development of the Law of Worker’s Participative Ownership.
- c. The right to sufficient rest time (art. 24), with a gradual reduction in working hours, where there is work for every citizen, and equal rights, self-respect and opportunity.
- d. The right to an adequate standard of living (art. 25), principally free health and education of a high standard to everyone regardless of nationality, religion, origin, age or sex. The guarantee of a good diet and environment which is suitable for adults, youths, old people and children both now and in the future.

2. A re-examination of the issues of immigration and emigration with the emphasis on the “right to exist” and “human being” rather than the “geographical” right of birthplace, and a consequent repealing of the Schengen Treaty.

- a. Application and extension of the right to asylum of persecuted peoples (art. 14), equally for economic and social as for political reasons.
- b. The closure of detention centres.

- c. The transfer of the powers of immigration, presently run by the Ministry of the Interior, to the new Ministry of Human Rights and International Co-operation.
- 3. The establishing of real democracy in terms of political participation and responsibility and the consequent abolition of laws which exclude against minorities.**
 - a. A law of Political Responsibility which gives citizens control over elected politicians' actions and the action taken on behalf of the electors in the case of non fulfilment of pledges undertaken.
 - b. The revision of national election laws establishing equal conditions and requirements which guarantee the maximum degree of electoral competition (art.19), access to the media, and representation of the various groups according to the proportional system.
 - c. No limitation or special treatment in dealing with the parties whenever they do not heed Human Rights.
 - d. A law backing associations and political parties, assigning them services and infrastructure (premises, publications, travel, materials etc, but not money), taking as a reference the activities carried out on a social basis.
- 4. The defining of international issues in terms of peace and co-operation, and the consequent denunciation of governments which have fostered war**
 - a. The departure of NATO from all European countries and the immediate dismantling of US bases on European land
 - b. The initiation of a policy of gradual, proportional and simultaneous disarmament in all European countries.
 - c. The closure and restructuring of the military industry and the immediate investment of military spending into the rebuilding of countries bombed during the Balkans War.
 - d. 1% of the European GDP to go to international aid and co-operation
 - e. The cancellation of the external debt contracted with European banks by the countries of Latin America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.
Europe must give wealth back to these areas, including interest starting from October 1492!

In conclusion

The powers and government of today must be attentive, for amidst the clamour and confusion of their bombs they are deaf to the murmuring of the river of a new humanity which is born, grows, and advances.

Let this day, 7th July 1999, go down in history and in each of our minds as a meeting of free men and women who are uniting their exceptional forces and best intentions in an extraordinary act of solidarity and hope, opening the floodgates of this unstoppable river.

I wish to finish with the words of Silo, uttered on the 7th January in Santiago de Chile, which reinforce us in our conviction of building and extending Humanist Parties in Europe and all around the world:

“The council of humanist parties, today set in motion, has behind it the force and dynamics of the winds of integration which are blowing to its advantage.”

REPORT ON THE PARTICIPATION OF THE HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL IN DEBATE OF THE DUMA OF RUSSIA - MOSCOW, 15/11/99

The event was organised by the Humanist Club of Moscow and Alexander Arinin a humanist and a member of the Duma for the Republic of Bashkiria.

It is the first time that foreign guests and members of the academic world have participated in a debate of the Duma. The delegation of the Humanist International was made up of Loredana Cici, Antonio Carvallo and Eduardo Gozalo together with the well known academics Boris Koval and Serguei Semenov.

The debate was at a session of the Commission of Federal and Regional Relations of which Alexander Arinin is a member. Twelve deputies and four political groups participated as well as the governors of Irkursk, Tiumen and Rokietski.

The debate was broadcast by CCTV to the offices of all members of the Duma, government offices, ministries, senate and other government departments. The participants presentations are recorded in the "Parliament Gazzette", published by the Duma and widely distributed.

Official report of the Moscow Humanist Club

"The session of the Committee was chaired by the deputy Vladimir Lisenko (chair), Alexander Arinin and the academic Boris Koval, who presented reports on the principles of federalism and its implementation in the legislative and executive practice at a national and regional level and its influence on the development of civil society in Russia.

In all the reports emphasis was placed on the importance of human rights both social and political, and the priority of human freedom and responsibilities as pillars of the civil society. The humanist view point was presented in all the reports and recommendations approved by the committee and submitted for consideration by the State Duma.

Antonio Carvallo, secretary general of the International read a report underlying points of the Humanist Document and elaborated on the humanist view of the present world situation".

Members of the Humanist International delegation were invited to present contributions on humanist experiences of the organisation of civil society in several countries. Loredana Cici reported on the law project of political responsibility, drafted and presented in Italy as a law project of popular initiative supported by 50,000 citizens signatures. Eduardo Gozalo, reported on the organisation of popular media (radio and TV) in Spain. Antonio Carvallo reported on a training project for unemployed people and their reintegration into the labour market in London. All these contributions are consigned in the minutes of the session"

ADDRESS BY ANTONIO CARVALLO

Gentlemen,

Those of us who adhere to the hypotheses of the Humanist International, recognise the antecedents of historical humanism, and are inspired by contributions from many different cultures, not only those which are at this time in a central position of importance.

We humanists are aware that our history is a very long one and that our future extends even further. We are thinking of this future, and working to overcome the general crisis of the present day.

We humanists are optimists because we believe in freedom and in social progress. We are internationalists; we aspire to a universal human nation. We think of the world in which we live as an entity and we act within our immediate environment. We do not want a uniform world but a many-sided one: many-sided in its ethnicity, languages and customs, in its towns, regions and autonomies; many-sided in ideas and aspirations; in belief, atheism and religiosity; in its work, and in its creativity.

We humanists do not want to be led, nor we do we see ourselves as leaders of others. On the other hand, we do not want a centralised state, nor a parastate to replace it. We do not want policed armies, nor armed gangs to substitute them.

Allow me now to emphasize certain points of the humanist Document, which sets out our vision of the current world situation.

In the first place, our diagnosis points to what we call the **“tyranny of money”**. A tyranny which isn't abstract as it has a name, representatives, executors and definable proceedings. It refers to the speculative capital which is gathering throughout the world, dictating that even national states need credit and loans to survive. They beg for investment and give security in order that the banks will take over the final decisions. The time is coming in which these, like the countryside and cities, will become the indisputable property of the banks. The era of the Parastate is on its way, an era in which the old order will be annihilated.

Big money does not just dominate objectivity, due to its control of production means, but also subjectivity due to its control of communication and information media. In these conditions, material and social resources are squandered at will, nature is lost for ever and human beings become more and more disposable. We have the

technology to do this. And, in the same way as business and state have been rendered powerless, science too has been robbed of meaning and transformed into a technology for the creation of misery, destruction and unemployment.

It is unnecessary to argue the fact that today's world has the technological conditions to create a rapid solution to the problems of vast regions and to create full employment, food, health, living conditions and education. If these possibilities are not realised it is, simply, for the fact the monstrous speculation of big money is getting in the way.

But big capital has already exhausted the market economy phase and is beginning to prepare society to confront the chaos which it has produced.

Faced with this irrationality it is not the voice of reason which is raised, as one would hope, but instead the voices of racism, fundamentalism and fanaticism. Thus a cauldron of collective despair is stirred up and capitalised upon by retrogressive strands of society. And if it is the case that this kind of neo-irrationalism is going to be at the helm of regions and collectives, the margin for action of the progressive forces is daily reduced. Moreover, millions of workers have already become aware of the unreality of state centralism and the lies and falsehoods of the capitalist democracy; and so in many countries workers are rising up against the corrupt leadership of their trade unions as people start to question governments and political parties. But we have to give direction to these phenomena so they become more than just enthusiastic manifestations without progress. We have to discuss at the grass roots of the people the fundamental themes of production factors.

For humanists, work and capital are essential factors of production, and speculation and usury are superfluous ones. Today, humanists are working to transform the absurd relation which has existed between these factors. Until now it has been the case that profits go back to the capital and the worker receives only his salary, and this imbalance is justified by the 'risk' taken by investors - as if each worker is not himself risking present and future in the vicissitudes of unemployment and crisis. Furthermore, management and decision-making within the company are at stake. Profits not used for reinvestment in the company, or for expansion or diversification, are inclined towards financial speculation. Profit which isn't used to create new sources of work is, again, directed towards financial speculation. Consequently, the battle of the workers has to be aimed at dedicating themselves to achieving the greatest possible productive output. But this cannot be implemented unless management and directorship are shared. Otherwise, how can we avoid mass

redundancy, closure and the laying waste of the management? The greatest damage to any company is in under-investment, fraudulent bankruptcy, forced debt and the flight of capital, not in profits which may be obtained as the result of an increase in productivity. And if we follow the teachings of the 19th century and insist on the confiscation of production means by the workers, we must also bear in mind the recent fiasco of real socialism. In short, a new type of **law of workers' participatory ownership** is needed to reverse the vulnerable position of the workers, converting them into shareholders and a factor in the making of decisions within the company.

As for the objection that framing capital, as when done with work, leads to capital being drained into more profitable spheres, we have to catch on that this will not happen for much longer now that the lack of logic of the current scheme has led to saturation point and we are heading for a world-wide crisis. This objection, quite apart from its admission of a radical immorality' denies the historical process of the transference of capital towards the banks, resulting in that same company's converting itself into an employee without decision within a chain which feigns autonomy. Moreover, as the recession begins, management themselves will begin to reflect upon these points.

We humanists feel the need to act, not just in the field of work but also in the political arena, to stop the state from becoming a tool of world finance, to achieve a fair relationship between production factors and to return to society the autonomy which has been taken away from it. We must at this point reflect upon the general scheme of power and the differences between 'formal' and 'real' democracy. It is very evident today that as capital has become concentrated in the hands of a few and powers of decision taken away from the social base, the structure of Democracy is also falling into ruins and its foundations - independence among powers, representativity and respect for minorities - cracked. This theoretical independence among powers is a contradiction in terms. Merely by looking closely at the origin and composition of each of them, we can identify the intimate relationships which join them. It could not be any other way. They are all a part of the same system. So that the frequent crises of advance of one upon another, of superposition of duties, of corruption and irregularity, correspond with the overall, economic and political situation of a given country.

And so to representativity. Since the time of the granting of universal suffrage it has been thought that there was just one single step between the election and the result

of the mandate of the peoples' representatives. But with the passing of time it has been seen that there is a first step, during which many people elect a few representatives, and a second where these few betray the many, acting for interests inconsistent with the received mandate. This ill is brewing in political parties reduced to a leadership which is separated from the needs of the people. Already, in the partisan machine, candidates are financed by large interests which dictate the policies that these candidates will follow. This shows up a profound crisis in the concept and implementation of representativity. And this situation will not be reversed until there is **strict legislation controlling the financing of political parties, a clear equality in the management of public distribution of proposals which are made to citizens, and a system of non-discriminatory equal opportunities for all political forces. Moreover, the manipulation of the citizen's will by indirect electoral systems show that 'real' Democracy is being suffocated and that participation is becoming more and more scarce**, reflected in the growth of electoral abstention, particularly in the younger fringe of voters.

We humanists are working to transform the practice of representativity, giving the **main importance to referendum, the plebiscite and the direct election of candidates**. In many countries laws still exist which make independent candidates subordinate to political parties, or else place subterfuge and economic limitation before the will of society. Each Constitution or law which opposes the full capacity of the citizen to choose and be chosen mocks the roots of real Democracy which is over and above all juridical regulation. The press must be placed at the service of the people at the time during elections in which candidates put forward their proposals, conferring equal opportunities to all. Moreover, **laws of political responsibility must be imposed whereby those politicians who do not fulfil their promises risk exposure, dismissal or political judgement**. Because the other expedient, which is currently in force, whereby those individuals or parties who do not fulfil promises may suffer from fewer votes in future elections, in no way impedes the second act of betrayal of the people. Each day there is more and more possibility for the technological implementation of direct referendum on the theme of urgency. It is not a case of giving priority to surveys and polls, but instead trying to facilitate participation and direct voting through electronic means and advanced computers.

In a real democracy minorities must be given the security of representativity, and furthermore, every effort must be made to prioritise their integration and development. Today, minorities affected by xenophobia and discrimination anxiously seek recognition and it is the responsibility of humanists everywhere to raise this

topic to the level of the most important debates, heading the struggle until neo-fascism, be it open or covert, is overcome. In short, to fight for the rights of minority groups is to fight for the rights of all human beings.

However, it also happens in the make-up of a country that whole regions, provinces or autonomies suffer from the same discrimination as these minorities due to the brute force of the centralised state, which today is nothing but an insensitive tool in the hands of big capital. This will have to cease with the promotion of **a federative organisation in which real political power is returned to the hands of these historical and cultural bodies.**

We can say then, by way of a resume, that by **putting the topics of capital and work, of a real democracy, and the objectives of decentralisation of the state apparatus to the forefront, we can get on the road to the creation of a new type of society.** A flexible, constantly changing society; one which accords with the dynamic needs of the people.

The general atmosphere of insecurity in which people live transforms itself into street crime, favourite topic of opinion polls in numerous countries. But this urban violence affecting younger generations is not unconnected with a general violence emanating from political and religious seats and which in numerous cases is of an institutional nature. We must see as significant the great increase in violent and neo-fascist tendencies which are beginning to establish themselves, as has been seen in recent elections, in Austria and Switzerland and which for some time have been developing in parts of Italy, France and Germany. On the other hand, the aggression demonstrated by NATO in situations such as the Gulf War and more recently by its intervention in Yugoslavia, shows a strong tendency to rush solutions through by force, once more placing world peace in a fragile position. In turn, governments like those of India and Pakistan, at present in the hands of fundamentalists of different tendencies, contribute to the creation of a world map of conflict in which ethnic, cultural and religious struggle has not been reserved to the Middle East. In short, the topic of violence gives plenty of scope for debate but is undeniably present in all facets of national and international life. Arising from this point the phenomena of terrorism has to be seen as one of the most serious which faces any society, but to understand its development we have to try and comprehend its roots and not respond by fighting back with the state's own brand of terrorism. This subject is particularly delicate because the fire power in the hands of the common citizen has grown enormously in the past decades. We are not talking here of regular armies

equipped for destruction but of small groups and, sometimes, isolated individuals who have sufficient technology to provoke real catastrophes or affect whole populations. In the last few decades we have seen the development of deflagrant plastic and molecular explosives, and the progress from mechanic and clockwork detonators to remote control ones. The first terrorist attacks using neurotoxic gas have been carried out and it can be assumed that many groups have bacteriological devices and, perhaps, rudimentary nuclear weapons. On the other hand, an uncontrolled market of conventional weapons exists among which are notably earth-to-earth and earth-to-air missiles, capable of carrying different types of load for many kilometres.

With things as they are, **the topic of growing violence must be resolutely confronted by all those who adhere to a humanist vision, not only of politics but of a simple daily life which is being more affected every day by this phenomenon.**

Elsewhere, an unwonted violence is being pitted against nature, and the survival of the human being itself is being placed in danger. An important fringe of perceptive people advocate ecological action because they understand the gravity of the problem which is coming to light. But should this action take on its corresponding humanist character, the fight would be aimed at the promoters of the catastrophe; that is big capital and the chain of destructive companies and industries, close cousins of the military-industrial complex. This humanist ecology will attack hunger, overcrowding, mortality, sickness and weaknesses in habitation and sanitation in many parts of the world, and will emphasise the problems of unemployment, exploitation, racism, discrimination and intolerance, in a technologically advanced world – a world which is, however, sacrificing the environment upon the altar of unreasoning growth.

Finally, to give an approximate image of the concerns and action plans of the Humanist International parties, I will add that humanism organises action groups in the fields of work, housing, unions, politics and culture with the intention of assuming the character of social movement. Proceeding thus, conditions are created for different forces, groups and individuals to be involved without losing their identity or their personal characteristics. The objective of such a movement consists of promoting unions of forces which will be increasingly capable of influencing vast tracts of the population and leading by their actions to a social transformation.

Humanists are not naive, nor do they aim to tempt with rosy declarations of a romantic future. In this respect, they do not consider their propositions as the most advanced expression of social conscience, nor do they think of their organisation in terms of unquestionability. Humanists do not pretend to represent the majority. In all cases, they behave in accordance with what they consider to be the fairest option, pointing out the transformations which they believe to be the most suitable and achievable at a given moment.

I wish to take advantage of this moment to thank the patience with which you have listened to the exposition of this general scheme of the thinking and activities of Humanism. That is all.

Moscow 15/11/1999.

APENDIX:MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
TO THE HUMANIST INTERNATIONAL

Can be members of the Humanist International political parties, non-partisan political organisations, social, cultural and philanthropic organisations and individuals who sharing the goals of the Humanist International, subscribe to the ideas of New Humanism contained in the Humanist Document.

To request membership to the Humanist International the application for membership must be sent to the General Secretariat in London or the Presidency in Rome, together with relevant documentation of the organisation and in the case of individuals stating reasons for the membership application.

To: The Humanist International

Presidency
Via del Giordani, 18
00199 Roma
Italy
Tel/Fax: 396-86201360

General Secretariat
26 Hamlet Road
London SE19 2AW
Tel: (44) 208 771 8002
Fax: (44) 208 771 8190
E-mail 100422.2601@compuserve.com

Full name of the Organisation (or Individual):

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-Mail:

Sharing the objectives of the Humanist International of "Strengthen the relations between the member parties and organisations. Help the formation and development of like-minded parties and organisations where these do not exist. Disseminate humanist ideas and actions all over the world. Develop solidarity amongst nations and to support the peoples in their struggle for political, economical and social liberation" and supporting the ideas of New Humanism expressed in the Humanist Document.

Requests admission as member of the Humanist International

To this end we (I) enclose the following documents in support of our request:

Stamp, signature

Title