

WORLD WITHOUT WARS AND WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Background

World without Wars and without Violence (WwW) is an organism that is part of the Humanist Movement. The Movement first appeared on the 4th of May 1969, with a public presentation by its founder, Silo, known as "*the Healing of Suffering*", in an outpost in the Andes called Punta de Vacas, close to the border between Argentina and Chile.

The Humanist Movement is based on the current of thought known as New Humanism, or Universalist Humanism. This current can be found expressed in Silo's works and in those of the diverse authors who are inspired by it.

This current of thought, which also implies a sentiment and a way of life, takes shape in multiple fields of human endeavor, giving rise to diverse organisms and action fronts. All of them are applied to their specific fields of activity with a common aim: to Humanize the Earth, thereby contributing to increased liberty and happiness in human beings. In themselves they have in common the methodology of Active Nonviolence and the proposal for personal change as a function of social transformation.

Other organisms to emerge from the Humanist Movement are the Humanist Party, the Community for Human Development, the Convergence of Cultures and the World Center of Humanist Studies.

World without Wars and without Violence was presented for the first time in 1995 in the Open Gathering of Humanism that took place in Chile at the University of Santiago.

Objectives

World without Wars and without Violence is a social movement whose objective is the creation of a worldwide non-violent consciousness.

This new consciousness will be the necessary step towards a world free of violence, not only in its cruelest expression of wars and physical violence, but also free from economic, racial, religious, sexual, psychological and moral violence.

In particular it works for the cessation of wars and armed conflicts around the world. It fights for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons; the proportional and progressive disarmament of conventional weapons; the withdrawal of invading troops from occupied territories, the renunciation by governments of the use of war as a means to resolve conflicts through constitutional reforms which explicitly prohibit the use of war; and a redefinition of the role of today's Armed Forces, establishing as their paramount function the prevention of wars. To advance in this it is necessary to limit the use of the Armed Forces, to democratize their functioning and their relations with civil society, and to place them under public control.

The aspiration of WwW is to unite the anti-war movement, to connect the geographically dispersed branches of pacifism and nonviolence and also to give its point of view about apparently unrelated themes in order to advance in a global understanding of war and violence.

The elimination of wars will represent the definitive leaving behind of human prehistory and a gigantic step in the evolutionary path of our species. A "world without wars" is a proposal that

looks towards the future and aspires to materialize in every corner of the planet so that dialogue may substitute violence.

WwW states the obvious fact that the vast majority of human beings do not want wars or violence, but at the same time don't believe that it's possible to eliminate them. It therefore understands that, besides carrying out social actions, it has to work to revise beliefs that surround this supposedly unchangeable reality.

Basic ideas

Regarding War.

Human history has witnessed more than 2500 wars in which millions of human beings have perished. Wars are conducted *to redistribute social goods by means of armed violence, seizing them from some human beings and delivering them to others.*¹

These interests today are hidden behind motives that are religious, geopolitical, in "defense" of human rights, etc. At the same time, technological progress is leading to the production of increasingly devastating weapons that target the civil population more and more, justifying it as "collateral damage".

In contemporary society *there are powerful social forces interested in wars*, including the military-industrial complex, racist groups, radical nationalists and fundamentalists, organized crime, etc. The arms trade continues to be one of the most lucrative export businesses for many countries, principally the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Despite attempts by various international organisms (the UN among them), war and violence continue to be justified as part of a supposed "human nature". WwW has a humanist vision of the human being as an historical being whose mode of social action changes their own nature².

It is not only wars and violence that have accompanied humanity in its historical development; we have seen in almost every era and in many geographical points the appearance of an attitude of ethics, solidarity and compassion that is revolutionary and humanizing.

Violence and active nonviolence

Human existence is open to the world and operates in it intentionally. It can nihilize the world (and, therefore the body, nature and/or society) or humanize it. It is from this freedom where human beings choose to accept or deny the social conditions in which they are born, develop and die.

All forms of violence manifest themselves as the denial of the intentionality of other human beings (and of course, their liberty), as an action to submerge another human being, or human groups, into the world of nature. It is this objectification which allows some to deprive others of their right to liberty, happiness and, ultimately, life. It is also this freedom which allows a minority to appropriate the social whole in a violent concentration of wealth and resources.

¹ Silo, *The Dictionary of New Humanism, Collected Works, Vol. II*

² Silo, *4th letter to my friends, Collected Works, Vol. I*

So, a socio-economic system, international relations and existential rules have been organized that are characterized by violence, and which are considered to be normal for the most part, although personal and social pain and suffering betray the need to transform this system.

Nonviolence can be seen in very early times in nearly all cultures and religions in their most humanist moments, with different expressions such as the Golden Rule, which is expressed in the Principle of Valid Action: “*When you treat others as you would like to be treated, you liberate yourself*”³.

Emerging from such experiences, nonviolence has developed as a methodology of action. From the anti-slavery and decolonization movements, to the civil rights movements of racial minorities, workers and women, through to the opposition to totalitarian regimes, the arms trade, and, above all, nuclear weapons, active nonviolence presents itself as the only methodology of action which is coherent with its objectives. New Humanism has applied it since its inception, not to one conflict in particular but rather to the creation of a global system, a comprehensive change of direction for the world in which we live.

Until the human being is able to fully materialize in a human society, that is, a society in which power is in the social whole and not only one part of it (subjugating and objectifying the whole), violence will characterize all social activity. Therefore, one cannot speak of violence without also speaking about the established world, and if this world is opposed by a non-violent struggle, it must first be underlined that a non-violent attitude is such because it doesn't tolerate violence. It is not the case of justifying a certain type of struggle but rather of defining the conditions of violence that this inhuman system imposes.

Official Materials

- *Document of the Humanist Movement*
- *Manual of Personal Development for members of the Humanist Movement. Center of Studies, Punta de Vacas Park, 2009*
- *Collected Works, Silo, Volume 1 and 2*
- *Disarmament and Reconciliation for a world without wars, Rafael de la Rubia.*
- *Self-liberation, Luis A. Ammann.*

³ Silo. *Humanize the Earth, Collected Works, Vol. I*

Organizational guidelines

1. Framework

The guidelines that we are giving have the objective of defining an organizational model that channels the impulse of millions of people who reject wars and violence in all areas of human endeavor.

This therefore implies a worldwide organization; one that is humanist, open and participative; where all its members take a full and active role in the overcoming of violence, the end of wars and military invasions and the elimination of weapons, be they nuclear or conventional.

It is an organization where every participant is responsible for what they do and build, but mainly where all the members collaborate and drive the construction of a better reality for the whole of humanity.

From this point of view it is an organization, working from the base, that organizes itself at different levels, with the intention that these levels be a point of coordination for common actions. The basic structure of World without Wars is the “base teams” that develop their activities in neighborhoods, schools, universities, workplaces, the internet, etc.

2. Members and participation

Participation is open to everybody without discrimination. Any person who coincides with the basic objectives of World without Wars will be able to integrate into the organization, joining as a full member or a supporter, and collaborate with planned activities, participate in training sessions, and promote new actions.

Full members: participate in meetings and take responsibility for their own growth, building their own capacities through the personal work that WwW promotes. Full members have the right to vote in the different levels and are invited to do so.

They also initiate the development and formation of new Base Teams without geographical limitations. Full members are those who economically sustain WwW.

Supporting members: receive information, participate in activities and collaborate with the development.

Any action front, group, organization or collective can ask to be included as a “supporter” of WwW.

3. Basic organization

When a group of people agrees to set in motion WwW activities, meet periodically and go deeper into the practice and study of nonviolence in the personal and social fields then we are in the presence of a primary base organization that we call a “**WwW Promotion Group**” (PG).

This group not only instigates its own activities, but also promotes relationships and behavior among its members based on the Golden Rule: “Treat others as you would like to be treated”.

These promotion groups are coordinated in the first moment by the persons who set these groups in motion and develop them following the proposed objectives in the official documents and materials of World without Wars.

When these promotion groups reach a minimal development (approximately 10 full members), achieve permanence in their meetings, and choose one of their members to fulfill the team's coordination functions through direct election, they become constituted as a **WwW base team**.

The WwW base teams can generate links to other groups and organizations in their environments (interchange, joint actions and collaboration), but without establishing any organizational relationship with them.

From their beginning, WwW teams or base groups set in motion three basic mechanisms or functions:

- **Growth:** they orientate their actions towards individuals, towards other networks and organizations with the objective of making their proposals and tools known.
- **Communication:** they maintain fluid communication and interchange with other base teams and with other organizations with affinity to their objectives.
- **Training:** they attend to the progressive capacity-building of their members; offering them tools for overcoming internal and external violence. These studies and practices are to be found in detail in the main materials.

4. Coordination in different levels (national, worldwide)

Worldwide coordination is the responsibility of the "**WwW World Coordination Team**" (**WCT**), which is made up of 12 members and chosen through direct vote of the full members of World without Wars around the world every two years.

The composition of the WCT bears in mind the representation of ethnic, cultural and regional minorities.

The WCT has responsibilities of general worldwide coordination and can propose joint actions of various amplitudes and scope.

The tasks of the World Coordination Team are:

- Coordination of joint actions
- World information to the Base Groups (international bulletin)
- Official website (international web page in different languages in which the official materials and all the necessary worldwide information can be found)
- Official international releases
- Relations with other organizations at a worldwide level
- Admission of organizations or fronts that act at a regional or worldwide level who wish to incorporate themselves as "supporters" of WwW.

Any proposal or action that includes the modification of the official materials or important organizational aspects of WwW must be subject to a direct vote by all the full members.

National coordination is the responsibility of the “**WwW National Coordination Team**” (NCT), made up of 12 members, chosen through a direct vote by the full members of World without Wars in each country, every two years. It carries out the functions of the WCT at a national level.

Summarizing, the NCT and the WCT are permanent bodies of coordination which are elected through a direct vote by the full members.

Other levels of coordination are transitory and respond to circumstantial needs. They will be formed when needs arise (joint actions, forums, campaigns, etc), but will not have a permanent character, unlike the NCT and WCT.

5. Joint functions

The WwW Base Teams, as well as the National and Worldwide Coordination Teams will be able to, if they consider it necessary, define functions that facilitate joint action, such as:

- Spokesperson: responsible for representing World without Wars in institutional activities, in front of the press and in all activities or situations where it is necessary to present the points of view of World without Wars.
- Relationships with other organizations
- Legal and juridical functions
- Press and dissemination functions
- Other ad-hoc functions

These functions are elected through a direct vote by the full members of the respective teams (base teams, national or worldwide coordination) and have a duration of one year in the case of base teams, and 2 years in the case of national and worldwide coordination teams.

These functions are at the service of the whole according to the orientation with precise guidelines that the coordination team gives. Those elected can seek re-election.

6. Finances

World without Wars sustains itself through the voluntary contribution of its members. An annual membership fee is paid to sustain the joint activities with the participation of all full members around the world.

The amount to be collected is defined by the “national coordination teams” taking as a basis a percentage of the average salary of the country in question.

The money is distributed in a proportional manner between the base teams, national coordination teams and the worldwide coordination team according to the proportion defined by the World Promotion Team.

In addition, other monies may be occasionally collected based on needs that may arise, in which full members and supporters may participate in a voluntary manner.

The amount of money in those occasions may never exceed the annual membership fee.

In coherence with an organization with a human base, the funds to sustain it come from the contributions of its members.

7. Institutional aspects

World without Wars is constituted at an international level as a non-profit making Federation.

In accordance with the degree of development and growth of WwW in each country and with the aim of facilitating the development of the objectives in its relationships with the environment, teams tend to legalize themselves as “non-profit making association” (*or however the name may be in each country*).

The statutes or articles of association of these organizations will reflect an organizational model and principles identical to those proposed in the official organizational materials at a worldwide level.

8. Recommendations for the new stage

It is recommended that to start this new stage, worldwide coordination becomes the responsibility of a “*World Promotion Team*”⁴ of approximately 10 members. They may come from the Commission that prepared this document and others may join whom the Commission considers convenient. It will cease its functions when the coordination teams form after the elections.

⁴ The definition of the implementation details remains the responsibility of this team, such as calendars with dates for economic campaigns and elections, parameters to define the amount of the annual membership fee, distribution by coordination level of these funds, specific functions of the Worldwide Coordination Team, definition of the official logo, etc.

HUMANIST PARTY INTERNATIONAL

Background

The Humanist Party is an organism that is part of the Humanist Movement. The Movement first appeared on the 4th of May 1969, with a public presentation by its founder, Silo, known as “the Harangue of the Healing of Suffering”, given in an outpost in the Andes called Punta de Vacas, close to the border between Argentina and Chile.

The Humanist Movement is based on the current of thought known as New Humanism, or Universalist Humanism. This current can be found expressed in Silo’s works and in those of the diverse authors who are inspired by it.

This current of thought, which also implies a sentiment and a way of life, takes shape in multiple fields of human endeavor, giving rise to diverse organisms and action fronts. All of them are applied to their specific fields of activity with a common aim: to Humanize the Earth, thereby contributing to increased liberty and happiness in human beings. In themselves they have in common the methodology of Active Nonviolence and the proposal for personal change as a function of social transformation.

Other organisms to emerge from the Humanist Movement are the Community for Human Development, the Convergence of Cultures, World without Wars and without Violence, and the World Center of Humanist Studies.

The Humanist Party was created in mid 1984 by the Secretariat of Social Affairs of the Community for Human Development and its first International Congress was held in Florence in 1989.

Basic ideas

The proposals of the Humanist Party⁵ start from the need for liberty that we experience as human beings and aim towards social transformation and overcoming of violence that, in its different forms, generates suffering and contradiction in individuals and peoples.

Human beings have the capacity to transform the world and themselves, thanks to the intentionality of their consciousness, advancing and accumulating historical achievements.

We are born into a social and historical environment that imposes conditions within which we develop our existence and among which, we must, necessarily choose. In turn, this generates new conditions that are experienced with coherence or contradiction.

Contradiction has its personal correlate in the register of suffering.

⁵ Extracts of the Thesis (broadening of the Principles), approved by the 1st Congress (Florence, 1989)

Social contradiction is the product of violence. This violence manifests itself in the action of divesting a human being or human groups of their intention (and certainly of their liberty). The appropriation of the social whole by one part is violence.

Personal and social suffering must be overcome by modifying the situations of illegitimate and violent appropriation that have produced contradiction in the world.

In the process of growing humanization, human beings direct their intentionality towards nature and society in order to transform the conditions that bring pain and suffering to themselves and others with whom they can identify. This struggle gives continuity to the historical process and meaning to life, as they affirm their intentionality in front of non-meaning and oppression.

This intention, which rebels against sickness, inequality and injustice, considers rebellion against death as the height of disobedience before an apparently natural destiny, giving coherence to human life and allowing the projection of its own liberty beyond all limits.

Proposals for political action

The Humanist Party advocates the upholding (or the achievement, where necessary) of a democratic regime as a means of transition from formal democracy to real democracy, in which a real separation of powers, respect for minorities and direct democracy can be guaranteed.

It rejects the violation of human rights, the use of violence as a means to resolve conflicts and the concentration of power.

Regarding its methodology of action, Humanism is governed by nonviolent action.

At the same time, it denounces all forms of violence: physical, economic, racial, religious, sexual, psychological and moral.

We aspire to a Universal Human Nation, in which the enormous human diversity of; ethnicities, languages and customs, localities, regions and autonomous territories, ideas and aspirations, beliefs, atheism and religiosity, will all converge.

In coherence with this aspiration, the Party can count on a worldwide federation which allows it to articulate positions and campaigns of international scope, maintaining autonomy and creativity in different levels of action down to the social base where it has its roots.

Within our proposals at a worldwide level we highlight, due to the urgency: the task of nuclear disarmament, by alerting the whole of humanity of the need for it and by generating a consciousness that demands it; the immediate withdrawal of invading troops from occupied territories; the progressive and proportional reduction of conventional weapons; the signing of non-aggression treaties between countries; and the renunciation by governments of the use of war as a means to resolve conflicts.

The Humanist Party denounces the ecological catastrophe and its promoters, namely big capital and the chain of destructive industries and businesses which are the offspring of the military-industrial complex.

It highlights economic violence as the cause of suffering in people, especially that which is due to the concentration of speculative financial capital. In this sense it advocates for tax reforms that give incentives to the progressive distribution of wealth and new cooperative models of self-management and co-management that give coherence to the relationship between capital and labor, increasing productivity and avoiding the diversion of resources to speculation. Likewise, it advocates the creation of an interest-free public bank which will help to acquire these objectives by avoiding the illegitimate concentration of resources and power currently in the hands of present day banks.

Different forms of discrimination are intertwined with economic exploitation and acquire a violent character. The Party highlights the violence that is specifically exercised against women and young people; who have historically been discriminated against, together with the discrimination exercised against other human groups which are excluded for economic, racial, cultural or religious reasons.

The Party advocates the decentralization of political power down to the base of society, extending guarantees of respect for minorities and making effective the principle of equal rights and opportunities for all.

Universal access to free, high quality Education and Healthcare at all levels is the priority for the Party.

The Party upholds the principle of choice as the concrete political expression of liberty and, thus, it struggles against all forms of authoritarianism and economic, organizational and ideological monopolies.

We consider that all coherent policies must have two basic conditions:

1. Permanent renovation of juridical and political institutions, based on the idea of the new replacing the old, and
2. Transparency in the political procedures employed.

Reference materials

Official materials

1. *Declaration of Principles*, approved in the First Congress of the Humanist International (HI) (Florence, 1989)
2. *Thesis* (amplification of the Principles), approved by the First Congress of the HI (Florence, 1989).
3. *Basis for Political Action*, approved by the First Congress of the HI and updated with the proposals for political action in this document.

4. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, approved in 1948 by the United Nations, and adopted by the Humanist Party in the First Congress of the HI (Florence, 1989).
5. *The Humanist Document*, adopted by the Humanist Party in the Second congress of the HI (Moscow, 1993)
6. *Recommendations by the coordination table* of the First Congress of the HI (Florence, 1989).
7. *Manual of Personal Development for members of the Humanist Movement. Center of Studies, Punta de Vacas Park, 2009.* Available from www.silo.net

Recommended materials:

1. *The Book of the Humanist International* (Compilation of documents, 2000).
2. *Letters to my friends*, Silo, Collected Works, Vol. I.
3. Orange Books (analysis and proposals for action by national parties).
4. *"Beyond Capitalism, Mixed Economics"*, Guillermo Sullings, 2000.
5. *The End of Prehistory*, Tomas Hirsch.

Organizational guidelines

1. General ideas

Our party is defined as the **Humanist Party International**, because the process goes fundamentally towards planetarization, beyond the intermediate stage of regionalization. This international party must have a worldwide strategy, shaped in objectives, plans, campaigns and positions of international scale. **In this sense the national parties, within the broad degree of autonomy to develop in each country, will be part of an International Federation of Humanist Parties, participating in joint planning and actions.**

The participation of all members of the party in decision-making will be assured through the **practice of direct democracy at all levels.**

The action fronts, orientated towards social conflicts that work within the organizational structure of the party, will contribute to its growth. In this sense, it will be fundamental to count on a dynamic, open, participative and motivating organization that facilitates the inclusion of many people, above all young people, women, technical experts and social leaders, in the framework of a high-level political project.

Joint activities must be economically sustained by the contribution of party members.

The basic organizational nucleus of the organism will be **Base Teams that operate in a specific neighborhood, district, educational center or workplace.** It is from this base that the party must be organized and developed.

The Humanist Party will be organized at all levels in accordance with this criteria, with their corresponding adaptation to the legalities of each country.

2. Participation: Full members and supporters

A full member is someone who is genuinely interested to work in the party, someone who knows about and is in agreement with the thesis and basis for political action, someone who participates in an activity or function, and who disseminates the proposals and ideas of the party. A full member is someone who is concerned with the development of the party and contributes to its financing by paying the annual membership fee which is established in each country.

A supporter makes no commitment; they participate occasionally and receive information.

Only full members have the right to participate in internal elections, to vote and to be elected, and to participate in the consultations that the Party may carry out in order to take relevant decisions.

3. Base teams

These form the basic structure of the party. Their members apply themselves to an action front, operating on a particular conflict at a local or city level, in universities, workplaces, etc., and through this work they are in contact with people, gathering supporters, mobilizing, clarifying, debating, making demands of authorities and promoting concrete actions. They also work in functions that are necessary for the whole and are concerned with achieving and maintaining the level of supporters and members necessary to fulfill the legal requirements in the district they work in. In times of elections they prepare local proposals, present candidates and make propaganda for the party.

These teams can be formed through the initiative of one or more persons. The initial reference of a team is the person who formed it, but on achieving a certain level of development the choice of contact person between this team and other instances of the party must be subject to a vote.

If someone sets up many teams, or from an initial team new ones multiply, there could possibly exist a certain reference in the person who helped to set these new teams in motion, however no person will have an organizational relationship with more than one group.

Every team will be formed of a certain number of full members; those party members who pay their annual membership fee, and thereby have the right to choose not only the contact person for the team, but also the various functions at a national and international level through a direct vote, and to decide about relevant party issues also through a vote.

Every team could have a large number of supporters as a consequence of their permanent action in the environment, but only full members will be able to participate in the decisions of the party and in the functions that are deemed to be necessary.

4. National coordination team

Its responsibility will be the planning and promotion of national policy strategies, as well as coordinating the implementation of international activities in each country. It will be responsible for giving a common strategic framework for all the party's action fronts, generating spaces for interchange and coordination in order to strengthen their growth and multiplication.

It will cover all the functions of national scope (General Secretary, Organization, Relations, Press, Capacity Building, Dissemination, Legal, etc), with people who have been elected in a direct vote by full members. In order to have a more dynamic functioning it is recommended that among all the functions there is a triad of coordination that will be able to resolve certain issues, without bureaucratic deliberations. It will prepare the analysis of the national situation and prepare positions at this level.

It will administer the funds that correspond to the national level, in accordance with the agreed priorities and criteria within the framework of a general plan for a two-year term of office. It will inform people widely about the destination of these funds.

It will make relationships with other parties at a national level, and possible relationships with government or other organizations. It will be in permanent contact with the organization of the International Party, in order to implement worldwide strategies.

5. Intermediary instances within a country

In principle other organizational instances will not be created, as everything will be planned and implemented through the base teams, in coordination with the planning of the national team.

If due to legal requirements and administrative divisions within a country it is necessary to have intermediary organizational levels (city levels, county, provinces, regions, State, etc.) these intermediary levels will be, from the internal point of view, ad-hoc functions which respond to certain circumstances, but they will not be de-facto decision-making levels.

In each country they will evaluate if, due to a great quantitative and geographical growth of the party, intermediate decision-making levels become necessary.

6. International organization

The Humanist Party International will be constituted as a Federation of Humanist Parties. It will be coordinated by an International Coordination Team, elected through a direct vote by the full members of all member countries, assuring the participation of minorities.

From this international organization, information at a worldwide level will circulate, campaigns about worldwide themes will be promoted, the development of the party in regions or countries where it does not exist will be planned, and the support given to a particular country under specific circumstances will be defined. It will also make an analysis of the worldwide situation and will prepare positions at an international level that in many cases will also be useful at national level.

Independently of the requirements in each country for legalization, national parties can be included when they count on certain minimal conditions of organization, to be established by the Promotion Committee.

Besides the national humanist parties that make up the membership of the federation, special importance will be given to the ambit of the Humanist International as a non-organizational space of convergence with other parties, organizations and individuals who adhere to humanist proposals. This space of convergence, promoted by the Humanist Party International but open to wide participation, will be able to organize international forums, gatherings and all types of interchanges.

7. Link between the three levels

In the international scheme of a Federation of Humanist Parties, every national party will be autonomous in their national planning, but coinciding within a worldwide strategy. And in turn the national scheme will be composed of base teams with autonomy to implement their activities, but coordinated within a national ambit and plan.

The direct election by the full members of functions in the three levels will ensure that the general direction will be that which the majority of members support.

Each national party will coordinate with the international organization through their contact in the International Coordination Team. The base teams will coordinate with the National Team through their contact in each Base Team.

8. Finances

The sustaining of party activities at all its levels must be through the contributions of all the full members. Therefore annual membership fees will be collected in which every member will have to contribute an amount relative to the average salary in the country in which they live, leaving the National Promotion Team of each country to determine this amount. The funds gathered will be distributed among the base, national and international levels, in a proportion to be established by the International Coordination Team.

In order to raise funds for other eventualities, informal campaigns may be carried out in which supporters may also participate. In these cases and in those places the amount of the campaign will be established (never surpassing the amount of the annual membership fee) and the funds will be applied locally.

The payment of the annual membership fee will be the requirement for the member to have the right to vote and participate in the party's decisions.

In those countries in which the party receives State funding, those funds will not be destined to the internal functioning of the party in order to avoid dependence on the State. In every country they may evaluate, in accordance with the legislation to which they are subject, if such external resources can be targeted to dissemination of electoral campaigns.

The Promotion Teams will elaborate the appropriate procedures to ensure the correct use of funds based on prior budgeting and the circulation of information about what the funds were used for, and the submitting of annual accounts.

9. Electoral fronts and alliances

It will be important for the development and positioning of the Humanist Parties that they strengthen their identity. Nevertheless, if in some cases the possibility to make an electoral alliance is considered, the decision must be subject to the support of the majority of full members, in other words it must be the subject of a referendum in a direct vote.

In any case, any electoral alliance must always be framed within certain ideological parameters and principles in affinity with Universalist Humanism. Any exception to this which could affect the whole may be challenged by a higher level. For example, a city, provincial or county alliance with an entity that is opposed to our principles may be revised and challenged by the National Team. And the same could occur with an alliance at a national level that may be evaluated and challenged by the International Team.

10. Election candidates

With the party's planning, electoral campaigns take on vital importance as it is through them that greater positioning can be gained.

Prior to humanist candidates being elected, there should be an agreed plan about how to work together regarding the steps that these elected candidates will take. And the activity of elected candidates, as much as the activity of the teams that work with them, should be carried out in accordance with this plan, with the necessary operational autonomy that is required in daily activity.

The Promotion Teams can evaluate if any requirement in terms of length of party membership be included in order to present oneself as a candidate at particular levels.

The prime interest of these elected candidates must be to produce demonstration effects and show exemplary behavior, as opposed to the mediocrity and opportunism that reign in traditional politics.

11. Recommendations for the new stage

It is recommended that to start this new stage, worldwide coordination becomes the responsibility of a "*World Promotion Team*"⁶ of approximately 10 members. They may come from the Commission that prepared this document and others will be able to join whom the Commission considers convenient. It will cease its functions when the coordination teams form after the elections.

12. Procedures

Mechanisms of direct democracy will be used in the cases of electing different functions in the party, as well as for taking relevant decisions that affect the whole. These mechanisms may also employ information technology in the cases where the viability of the participation of all the members can be assured.

All posts will be elected and renewable. The Promotion Teams can evaluate possible limitations to the re-election of posts. In the International and National levels, posts will be renewed every two years, and in the Base Teams, every year.

All posts will be elected through direct vote by the full members. A contact person of the Base Team will be elected by the full members of this team. The posts on the National Team will be elected by all the full members in that country. The ad-hoc functions, necessary to fulfill legal or electoral requirements in geographic divisions within a country, will be elected by the full

⁶ The definition of the implementation details remains the responsibility of this team, such as calendars with dates for economic campaigns and elections, parameters to define the amount of the annual membership fee, distribution by coordination level of these funds, specific functions of the Worldwide Coordination Team, definition of the official logo, etc.

members in the corresponding division. Posts on the International Team will be elected by the full members of all countries. And all spokespersons and candidates for elections must be similarly chosen.

The Promotion Team will prepare the details of the election procedures to ensure their transparency, effective participation of the full members and the inclusion of minorities in the distribution of posts.

The building of the comprehensive party structure will be from the base to the top and not the inverse. First base promotion teams will be formed and then the national promotion teams. Once this is done, internal elections will be held in which all posts in all levels will be elected.

CONVERGENCE OF CULTURES

Background

Convergence of Cultures⁷ is an organism that is part of the Humanist Movement. The Movement first appeared on the 4th of May 1969, with a public presentation by its founder, Silo, known as “the Healing of Suffering”, in an outpost in the Andes called Punta de Vacas, close to the border between Argentina and Chile.

The Humanist Movement is based on the current of thought known as New Humanism, or Universalist Humanism. This current can be found expressed in Silo’s works and in those of the diverse authors who are inspired by it.

This current of thought, which also implies a sentiment and a way of life, takes shape in multiple fields of human endeavor, giving rise to diverse organisms and action fronts. All of them are applied to their specific fields of activity with a common aim: to Humanize the Earth, thereby contributing to increased liberty and happiness in human beings. In themselves they have in common the methodology of Active Nonviolence and the proposal for personal change as a function of social transformation.

Other organisms to emerge from the Humanist Movement are the Humanist Party, the Community for Human Development, World without Wars and without Violence and the World Center of Humanist Studies.

Universalist Humanism

“Universal Humanism also called New Humanism and is characterized by an emphasis on the humanist attitude. The humanist attitude is not a philosophy but a point of view, a sensibility and a way of living in relationship with other human beings. Universalist Humanism maintains that in all cultures, in their most creative moments, the humanist attitude pervades the social environment. In such periods, discrimination, wars and violence in general are repudiated. Freedom of ideas and beliefs is fomented, which in turn provides incentives for research and creativity in science, art and other social expressions. Universalist Humanism proposes a dialogue between cultures that is neither abstract nor institutional, but rather an agreement on fundamental points and a

⁷ Previously known as the “Center of Cultures” (1995 to 2009) and created by the Humanist Movement in 1995.

mutual and concrete collaboration between representatives of different cultures based on their respective and symmetrical humanist moments.”

In present day society coexistence between different cultures is a daily fact. But the extraordinary thing in this historical moment is that it is a moment of planetarization in which all cultures mutually approach and influence each other, as never before.

It is important to distinguish between this process of growing planetarization and globalization. Widely spoken of globalization is nothing more than the traditional behavior launched by imperial centers as has occurred repeatedly in history. These empires are established, and they develop making other peoples revolve around their imposed languages, their customs, clothing, food and their codes. Finally, these imperialist structures end up generating violence and chaos as a product of their naive abuse and cultural confrontation.

Today, what is needed is the creation of ambits that can rescue every culture's ideas, beliefs and humanist attitudes, which beyond their differences, is found in the heart of different peoples and individuals.

Objectives

In general terms Convergence of Cultures proposes to facilitate and stimulate dialogue between cultures, to fight against discrimination and violence and to bring its proposals to all latitudes.

In particular:

a) To promote relationships between different cultures.

By means of organizing gatherings and ambits for interchange among people from different cultures. The intention of the interchange is not only to make their own cultures, concerns and aspirations known, but to allow a true dialogue oriented towards the search for common elements that are present in the hearts of different peoples and individuals.

b) To denounce and struggle against all kinds of overt or covert discrimination

Through different types of campaigns which allow the full expression of human rights; for the free circulation of human beings throughout the planet and for the possibility of everyone to choose the place and conditions in which they want to live; to improve the present and build a common future.

c) To disseminate its ideas and activities

Making contact with all the cultures in different countries, with the intention to disseminate and bring together people and organizations around the studies and activities of Convergence of Cultures.

Organizational guidelines

1. General aspects

These guidelines aim to define a new organizational model in accordance with the stage that is beginning and to drive the growth of the organism, Convergence of Cultures, in matters of participants, action in the environment and geographical and cultural scope.

Convergence of Cultures is an organization with an international character; in this sense its members, independently of the place in which they act, feel part of a single humanizing worldwide action which is expressed in diverse yet convergent ways. Therefore the homogeneity of ideological content is fundamental in all its manifestations.

Its forms of participation are open and flexible. This is an organization with a human base in which every person becomes responsible for that which they promote and construct.

The basic structures of Convergence of Cultures are “*base teams*” that develop their activities in neighborhoods, schools, universities, workplaces, through the internet, etc.

2. Base coordination and national coordination

These initial teams of **C.C.** are coordinated in the first instance by the person who instigated their creation and who developed them following the proposed objectives in the official documents and materials of Convergence of Cultures. These “initial or promoting teams” are constituted as “Convergence of Cultures teams” when they achieve a minimum development (around 10 participants) and permanence (periodic meetings). Every year an election is carried out in which all full members of the team participate, in order to confirm or replace the initial coordinator.

According to how these “CC base teams” develop, so the need for coordination with other CC teams who act in the same country arises. When there are 10 base teams, the coordinators of these teams will form a “promotion team” which calls elections to choose the first national team. The functions that this national team is composed of will be elected through direct vote by the full members of the organism in the country, every two years.

This national team has the function of coordinating joint actions (campaigns, forums, gatherings, responses to conflict situations, etc), to deal with administrative and legal matters, to coordinate relations with the press and other organizations, to call elections for biannual renewal of its functions and other functions that may be useful.

These functions are exclusively at the service of the whole; they respond to a mandate with precise guidelines and may be re-elected.

As the convergence of cultures is the central theme of the organism there will be a quota of functions in the national team to be filled by full members of different cultures, independently of the election results.

3. Worldwide coordination

Worldwide coordination is the responsibility of a World Team elected through a direct vote by the full members of the organism around the world, every two years.

The World Team is responsible for the coordination of CC at an international level. It may propose coordinated actions of various magnitudes and scope.

As the convergence of cultures is the central theme of the organism there will be a quota of functions in the World Team to be filled by full members of different cultures, independently of the election results.

In the case of important decisions that affect the position and development of the whole, a general consultation will take place that guarantees the participation of all members of the Organism. If necessary, a worldwide and direct vote about an issue may be appealed.

4. The “Convergence of Cultures Teams” (base groups)

These teams meet periodically around Convergence of Cultures’ materials with the aim of clarifying themselves about the ideological aspects and about the objectives of the organism, to promote relations between different cultures, to denounce and fight against all forms of manifest or covert discrimination and to disseminate the ideas and activities of CC. The gatherings and retreats of study and practice of the Humanist Movement are also available for those who so wish to do them.

There also exist CC Teams that develop their activities in a virtual way, taking advantage of the use of new technologies.

From their inception, CC Teams encourage the development of three basic mechanisms or functions:

- **growth:** orientating action towards other people, towards other networks and organizations with the aim of making their proposals and tools known.
- **communication:** maintaining fluid communication and interchange with other CC teams and with other organizations with objectives with affinity with CC.
- **formation:** attending to the progressive formation of their members, making available tools for personal, cultural and social development. These studies and practices may be found in the official materials.

These Convergence of Cultures teams generate links with other groups and organizations in the environment, but on no account may they establish an organizational relationship with any of them.

5. Joint functions

Base teams may, if they consider it necessary, define functions that facilitate joint action, such as:

- Spokesperson: responsible to represent Convergence of Cultures in institutional activities, in front of the press and in all activities or situations where the points of view of the organism need to be presented.
- Relations with other organizations
- Legal and juridical
- Press and dissemination
- Other ad-hoc functions

These functions will be elected by a vote and have a term of one year. These functions are exclusively at the service of the whole; they respond to a mandate with precise guidelines and may be re-elected.

6. Participation

Participation is open to any person, without discrimination. Any person who coincides with the basic objectives of Convergence of Cultures may be integrated into the organization, joining as a full member or supporter collaborating with planned activities, participating in meetings of formation and capacity-building, and promoting new actions.

Full members: participate in meetings, take responsibility for growth, qualify themselves based on the proposed materials and contribute to sustaining the organism with an annual membership fee. They are responsible for choosing through a direct election, the coordinator of their base team and the functions of the national and worldwide teams. They instigate the development and qualification of new teams without geographical limitations.

Supporters: receive information, participate in activities and collaborate with development.

Without losing their own identity, any **group, organization or collective** may solicit inclusion as a “supporter” in CC by expressing their endorsement of the principles on which CC is inspired and maintaining a relationship of mutual collaboration with it.

7. Reference materials

Convergence of Cultures counts on official and recommended materials.

Official materials:

- The Notebook of CC
- *Manual of Personal Development for members of the Humanist Movement. Center of Studies, Punta de Vacas Park, 2009.*

Recommended materials:

- *The Humanist Document*, adopted by the Humanist Party in the 2nd Congress of the HI (Moscow, 1993).
- *Self-liberation*, Luis A. Ammann. (Ed. 1980, updated in 2004.)
- *Completed Works*, Silo, Vol. I and II.
- *Psychology notes*, Silo.

There are also numerous contributions that members of Convergence of Cultures have made in the development of points of view and in their application to specific fields which amplify this recommended bibliography.

8. Finances

CC is sustained by the annual membership fee of its full members.

This fee will be fixed by the National Coordination Team based on the national average salary and will be collected once a year on the same date from all full members.

The money collected will be distributed proportionally between the base teams, the national coordination teams and the world coordination team according to the proportion defined by the World Promotion Team.

Occasional funds may be collected based on needs that may arise in which supporters of the organism can voluntarily participate. The amounts of these collections will never exceed the amount of the annual membership fee.

Coherent with an organization with a human base, the funds to sustain it come from the members.

9. Institutional aspects

According to the degree of development and growth of CC in each country and with the aim of facilitating the development of the objectives in their relationships with the environment, teams will tend to be legalized as “non-profit-making civil associations” (*or however this may be called in each country*).

The statutes or articles of association of these “non-profit associations” will in practice reflect an organization and principles that are identical to those proposed in the official organizational materials at a world level.

At the worldwide level, Convergence of Cultures will be organized as a “World Federation” that brings together the world’s CC teams.

10. Recommendations for the new stage

It is recommended that to start this new stage, worldwide coordination becomes the responsibility of a “*World Promotion Team*”⁸ of approximately 10 members. They may come from the Commission that prepared this document and others will be able to join whom the Commission considers convenient. It will cease its functions when coordination teams form after the first elections.

“Convergence of Cultures”
World Federation of CC Teams

– Non-profit association –

⁸ The definition of the implementation details remains the responsibility of this team, such as calendars with dates for economic campaigns and elections, parameters to define the amount of the annual membership fee, distribution by coordination level of these funds, specific functions of the Worldwide Coordination Team, definition of the official logo, etc.

THE COMMUNITY (for human development)

Background

The Community (for human development) is an organism that is part of the Humanist Movement. The Movement first appeared on the 4th of May 1969, with a public presentation by its founder, Silo, known as “the Healing of Suffering”, in an outpost in the Andes called Punta de Vacas, close to the border between Argentina and Chile.

The Humanist Movement is based on the current of thought known as New Humanism, or Universalist Humanism. This current can be found expressed in Silo’s works and in those of the diverse authors who are inspired by it.

This current of thought, which also implies a sentiment and a way of life, takes shape in multiple fields of human endeavor, giving rise to diverse organisms and action fronts. All of them are applied to their specific fields of activity with a common aim: to Humanize the Earth, thereby contributing to increased liberty and happiness in human beings. In themselves they have in common the methodology of Active Nonviolence and the proposal for personal change as a function of social transformation.

Other organisms to emerge from the Humanist Movement are the Convergence of Cultures, the Humanist Party, World without Wars and without Violence and the World Center of Humanist Studies.

The Community (for human development) was created in mid 1980 as the social and cultural organism of the Humanist Movement.

Objectives

The objectives of *The Community (for human development)* are the study, development, dissemination and installation of a **new culture** based on the fundamental ideas of Universalist Humanism.

This new culture will be the correlate of a configuration of an advanced consciousness in which all forms of violence provoke repugnance. The installation of such a structuring of a non-violent consciousness in societies would be a profound cultural conquest. This would go beyond ideas or emotions that are weakly manifested in present day societies, and start to form part of the psychosomatic and psychosocial framework of the human being.

The **humanist attitude**, an essential aspect of this new culture, beyond all theoretical proposal, may be understood as a “sensibility”, like a stance in front of the human world in which the

intention and liberty of others is recognized, and in which a commitment to a non-violent struggle against discrimination and violence is made.

The Community promotes projects for the real application of this new culture in different ambits of personal and social life.

This new culture is based on a new conception of the human being from which **a scale of values, a methodology of action and a personal and social project** are derived.

A scale of values whose 6 fundamental points are:

- In first place, the location of the human being as the central value and concern, in such a way that nothing is above the human being and no human being is above any other.
- In second place, it affirms the equality of all individuals and thus works for the overcoming of the simple formality of equal rights before the law to advance towards a world of equal opportunities for all.
- In third place, it recognizes personal and cultural diversity and so affirms the characteristics proper to each people, condemning all discrimination that is done on the basis of economic, racial, ethnic and cultural differences.
- In fourth place, it encourages all tendencies that develop knowledge beyond the limitations imposed on thought by prejudices that are accepted as absolute or immutable truths.
- In fifth place, it affirms the freedom of ideas and beliefs and, finally;
- It repudiates all forms of violence, understanding not only physical violence as the sole factor, but also economic violence, racial violence, religious violence, moral violence and psychological violence as daily cases and rooted in all regions of the planet.

A methodology of action, both personal and social, based on “**active nonviolence**”.

This methodology promotes a social and personal attitude in front of life which has joint action and social and personal behavior as its principle tools:

- The rejection of, and a void towards, different forms of discrimination and violence.
- Non-collaboration with violent practices.
- Denunciation of all acts of violence and discrimination.
- Civil disobedience in front of institutionalized violence.
- Social and voluntary organization and mobilization in solidarity.
- Decisive support to everything which favors active nonviolence.
- The overcoming of the roots of violence in oneself, development of personal virtues and the best and most profound human aspirations.

In accordance with this methodology, action for social transformation is not opposed to the action of personal transformation. On the contrary, *The Community* understands them as intimately linked and as a consequence proposes simultaneous action to overcome social (external) violence as well as personal (internal) violence.

A personal and social project that attempts to surpass the present crisis of violence, disorientation and lack of meaning which human beings suffer. This project is synthesized in the ideal of **Humanizing the Earth**.

Organizational guidelines

1. General aspects

These guidelines aim to define an organizational model in accordance with the new stage that is starting, driving the growth of The Community in matters of participating members, action in the environment, and geographical and cultural scope.

The Community (for human development) is an organization that has a universal character, in this sense its members, independently of the place where they act, feel part of the same humanizing worldwide action that is expressed in a diverse yet convergent manner.

Its forms of participation are open and flexible. It is an organization with a human base in which each person takes responsibility for what they initiate and construct.

The basic structures and foundations of The Community are those “Community Base Teams” that develop their activities at the level of the neighborhood, groups of friends, schools, universities, city level, in a virtual way, through the internet, etc.

The initial groups of TC (“*TC promoting groups*”) are coordinated, in the first instance, by the person who created them and who developed them according to the proposed objectives in the official documents and materials of The Community. These “promoting groups” are constituted as “Community Base Teams” when they achieve a minimal development (approximately 10 full members), permanence (periodic meetings) and when they elect one of their members through a direct vote to fulfill the functions of team coordination and contact with the “Coordination Team” of The Community in their country or internationally if the former doesn’t exist.

2. Local and international coordination

As “TC base teams” start to develop so do the needs for coordination with other TC groups who act within the same country. When this happens, this coordination is taken on by a “National Coordination Team”.

The function of a National Coordination Team is to coordinate joint actions (campaigns, forums, responses to situations in the environment, etc), to coordinate the response to specific situations, to deal with administrative and legal matters (where necessary), to choose a spokesperson and to coordinate relations with the press and other organizations.

The National Coordination Teams are composed of a maximum of 12 people and a minimum of 4, elected through a direct vote by full members.

International coordination is the responsibility of the “World Coordination Team of The Community”, composed of 12 members, elected through a direct vote by full members of The Community around the world, every two years.

The composition of the World Coordination Team takes into consideration the representation of ethnic, cultural and regional minorities.

The World Coordination Team is responsible for general worldwide coordination and can propose joint actions of different magnitudes and scope.

The tasks of the World Coordination Team are:

- Coordination of joint actions
- Coordination of responses to specific situations
- International information to the Base Groups (international bulletin)
- To attend to the representation and participation of minorities.
- Official website (international web page in different languages where the official materials can be found, and all necessary international information.)
- Official international communiqués.
- Relations with other organizations at an international level.
- Admittance of organizations and/or fronts that act at a regional or worldwide level and wish to be incorporated as “supporters” of TC.

Any proposal for action that includes the modification of the official materials or important organizational aspects of the organism will be subject to a direct vote by all members.

Other levels of coordination, for example city or regions, will be temporarily formed when so needed (joint actions, forums, campaigns, etc), but they will not have a permanent character, unlike National Coordination Teams and the World Coordination Team.

Synthesizing this point, the National Coordination Teams and the World Coordination Team are the permanent coordination bodies which are elected through direct vote by full members of “TC Base Teams”, while other coordination levels (by city or region) are temporary and respond to situational needs. In the formation of National and World Coordination Teams, there will be no possibility of re-election in consecutive periods.

3. The Community “Base Teams”

When a group of people meet periodically around The Community’s materials with the aim of organizing training activities and the practice of nonviolence, creating a void to violence, denouncing and not collaborating with it, when it sets in motion non-violent exemplary actions, and when also the participants of that group are concerned with overcoming their own internal violence, then we are in the presence of a primary base organization that we call a “TC promotion group”. The personal relations and behavior of the group are based on the Golden Rule: “Treat others as you would like to be treated”.

There are also TC groups that develop their activities in a virtual way by making use of new technologies through the web and internet.

From their formation, base teams or groups of TC advance in setting up three basic mechanisms or functions for their development:

- **growth:** orientating their action towards other people, towards other networks and organizations with the aim of making their proposals and tools known and implementing them in practice.
- **communication:** maintaining fluid communication and interchange with other base teams and with other organizations with objectives in affinity with TC.

- **formation:** attending to the progressive formation of their members, offering tools for overcoming internal and external violence. These studies and practices are developed in the primary materials.

When these “*TC promotion groups*” reach a minimum development (approximately 10 full members), achieve permanence in their meetings and choose one of their members, through a direct vote, to fulfill the functions of team coordination and contact person with the “National or World Coordination Team”, a “**TC Base Team**” is constituted. (*E.g. TC Base Team “Flowers neighborhood”, TCBT “Active Nonviolence – Mumbai”, etc).*

These teams of TC may generate links with other groups and organizations in their environment (interchange, joint actions and collaboration), but on no account will they establish an organizational relationship with any of them.

4. Joint functions

TC Base Teams, like National and World Coordination Teams may, when they consider it necessary, define functions that facilitate joint action, such as:

- Spokesperson: responsible for presenting The Community in institutional activities, in the press and in all activities or situations where it is necessary to present The Community’s point of view.
- Relations with other organizations
- Participation of minorities
- Legal and juridical
- Press and dissemination
- Other ad-hoc functions

These functions are elected through a direct vote by members of the respective teams (base, national and international coordination) and they have a 1 year term of office in the case of base teams and two years in the cases of national and world coordination. These functions are exclusively for relating to the environment and are at the service of the whole. They are not for orientation and respond to a mandate with precise guidelines and may be re-elected.

5. Participation

Participation is open to anyone, without discrimination. Any person who coincides with the basic objectives of The Community can be integrated into the organization, joining as a full member or as a supporter and thus collaborate with planned activities, participate in meetings of formation and capacity-building, and initiate new actions.

Full members: participate in meetings, contribute an annual membership fee, take responsibility for growth and are trained on the basis of the personal works that The Community promote. They are responsible for choosing, through a direct vote, the

delegates of their team for the Coordination Teams, and the members of the National and World Coordination Teams. They also instigate the development and formation of new Base Teams without geographical limitations.

Supporting members: receive information, participate in activities and collaborate with development.

Without losing their own identity, any action front, group, organization or collective may solicit inclusion as a “supporter” in The Community by expressing their endorsement of the principles on which The Community is inspired and maintaining a relationship of mutual collaboration with it.

Ultimately, and in the case of full members or base teams who encourage proposals, actions or procedures that are clearly opposed to the objectives of the organism, The Community may remove recognition as members of TC from those members or base teams.

6. Reference materials

Official materials:

- *The Book of the Community* (Ed. 2009, updated).
- *Manual of Personal Development for members of the Humanist Movement. Center of Studies, Punta de Vacas Park, 2009.*
- *The Humanist Document, Silo (1992).*

Recommended materials:

- *Self-liberation*, Luis A. Ammann. (Ed. 1980, updated in 2004.)
- *Completed Works, Silo, Vol. I and II.*

There are also numerous contributions that members of The Community have made in the development of points of view and in application to specific fields; these contributions amplify the recommended bibliography.

7. Finance

The Community sustains itself financially through the voluntary contributions of its members. Membership fees are gathered annually from all full members around the world to sustain joint activities. The amount of the fee is defined by the “National Coordination Teams” and related to a percentage of the average national salary of their particular country.

The money collected is proportionally distributed between the base teams, the national coordination teams and the world coordination team according to the proportion defined by the World Promotion Team.

Occasionally funds may be gathered based on needs that may arise in which full members and supporters of the organism may participate in a voluntary manner. The amounts of these occasional campaigns may never exceed the amount of the annual membership fee.

In coherence with an organization with a human base, the funds to sustain it come from its members.

8. Institutional aspects

According to the degree of development and growth of TC in every country, and with the aim of facilitating the development of the objectives in relationship with its environment, TC teams tend to be legalized as “non-profit-making civil associations” (*or however this may be called in different countries*).

The statutes and articles of association of these “non-profit-making civil associations” will reflect in practice an organization, objectives and principles identical to those proposed in the official organizational materials of The Community at a worldwide level.

Internationally, The Community is organized as an “International Federation” which gathers together all TC teams around the world.

9. Recommendations for the new stage

It is recommended that to start this new stage, worldwide coordination becomes the responsibility of a “*World Promotion Team*”⁹ of approximately 10 members. They may come from the Commission that prepared this document and others will be able to join whom the Commission considers convenient. It will cease its functions when the coordination teams form after the elections.

“The Community for Human Development”

World Federation of Teams of The Community (for human development)

⁹ The definition of the implementation details remains the responsibility of this team, such as calendars with dates for economic campaigns and elections, parameters to define the amount of the annual membership fee, distribution by coordination level of these funds, specific functions of the Worldwide Coordination Team, definition of the official logo, etc.

- Non-profit association -

World Center for Humanist Studies (WCHS)

Background and Conceptual Foundation

Background

The World Center for Humanist Studies is an organism that is part of the Humanist Movement. The Movement first appeared on the 4th of May 1969, with a public presentation by its founder, Silo, known as “*the Healing of Suffering*”, in an outpost in the Andes called Punta de Vacas, close to the border between Argentina and Chile.

The Humanist Movement is based on the current of thought known as New Humanism or Universalist Humanism. This current can be found expressed in Silo’s works and in those of the diverse authors who are inspired by it.

This current of thought, which also implies a sentiment and a way of life, takes shape in multiple fields of human endeavor, giving rise to diverse organisms and action fronts. All of them are applied to their specific fields of activity with a common aim: to Humanize the Earth, thereby contributing to increased liberty and happiness in human beings. In themselves they have in common the methodology of Active Nonviolence and the proposal for personal change as a function of social transformation.

Other organisms to emerge from the Humanist Movement are the Humanist Party, the Community for Human Development, the Convergence of Cultures and World without Wars and without Violence.

The World Center for Humanist Studies was founded in the First World Humanist Forum in Moscow in October 1993.

1. Definition

The World Center for Humanist Studies (WCHS) is an organization dedicated to the study, investigation and diffusion of the thought and vision of Universalist Humanism and its application to current social and scientific problems. It supports all tendencies that go towards the development of knowledge over the limitations placed by prejudices that are accepted as absolute and immutable truths. It also promotes structural, dynamic, relational and critical thinking.

At a world level, the WCHS develops within a diversity of countries, continents and cultural zones. It proposes the elaboration of productions (writings, audiovisual, etc), programs of work, trainings and the diffusion of the Universalist Humanist doctrine: all of which is oriented towards personal and social transformation and guided by a commitment to apply this knowledge only for the wellbeing and development of the human being. It also proposes the creation and

development of new Centers for Humanist Studies (CHS), especially in those cultures where it is not sufficiently represented.

To carry this forward the WCHS forms commissions, action fronts and other types of bodies necessary for the fulfillment of its goals. It organizes courses, seminars, debates, conferences, congresses, symposia and other events that are appropriate for the diffusion and presentation of its productions. It edits, emits and publishes its positions for the public opinion as well as to be considered in the decisions taken by relevant authorities. In the development of these activities agreements will sometimes be made of mutual collaboration and interchange with other persons, associations or organizations (public, private or mixed) but without establishing any organizational dependence with them.

At a local level, participation in the CHE is open to everyone who has a genuine interest in realizing the investigations and works directed toward these goals, stimulating the interchange and joint work among its members.

2. Background

The WCHS, an initiative of Silo, was created in the 1st World Humanist Forum in Moscow in October 1993. Its activities were framed within the orientation of Universalist Humanism.

In its first stage, which lasted until the beginning of 1998, the WCHS carried out seminars and studies dedicated to the investigation of humanist traditions and innovations in different cultures, and in the economy and social sciences in general. These seminars were developed together with the Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, cultural centers in Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, Mexico and Madrid and other university and scientific institutions. In 1994 the WCHS participated in the 2nd Humanist Forum in Mexico and in the following year in the Open Meeting of Humanism in Santiago de Chile.

The results of these investigations were published in the "World Center for Humanist Studies Annual" in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997. Also the "Dictionary of New Humanism" by Silo was published, which is today incorporated in his Completed Works, Vol. II.

Beginning in April 2006 the continuation of the WCHS was set in motion by the CHS in Buenos Aires. In this same year new Centers of Humanist Studies (CHS) were formed in Barcelona, Santiago de Chile, Madrid, Moscow, Paris and Rome.

What began then was a sustained activity by both autonomous and simultaneous action in different cities and countries. Meanwhile, beginning with seminars given in different cities in the Americas and in Europe, the study and investigative methodology of the WCHS was developed.

In November, 2008, the 1st International Symposium of the WCHS, "Ethics in Knowledge", was held in the Parks of Study and Reflection Punta de Vacas. The symposium in Punta de Vacas was preceded by presentations in the Universidad de Cuyo, Argentina and the Universidad de Santiago, Chile. In this event the World Federation of Humanist Studies Centers was

constituted, shaped by the CEH's earlier mentioned and others in formation, and formalized by the assistants taking the "Oath of Ethics".

In April 2009 the CHS in Europe organized the "Internacional Symposium about Non-violence" in the Parks of Study and Reflexion in Attigliano.

3. Conceptual Foundation

While Universalist Humanism is an extensive and rich doctrine we can highlight the following points as a conceptual base over which a new vision of the human being, society and history has been constructed.

- The Human Being

Universalist Humanism defines the human being as an historical being whose form of social action transforms his own nature, a being open to the world with a social-historical dimension. A being whose consciousness is active and whose activity is the transformation of the world in accordance with his intention, an intention directed to the overcoming of pain and suffering that leads to the humanization of nature, society, one's own body and oneself.

- Humanist Moments

Universalist Humanism emphasizes the existence of humanist moments in the history of different cultures where the following characteristics can be found:

- location of the human as the central value and concern
- affirmation of the equality of all human beings
- recognition of personal and cultural diversity
- development of knowledge beyond that accepted as absolute truth
- freedom of ideas and beliefs
- rejection of all forms of violence

- Beginning with experience

Universalist Humanism develops its doctrine beginning with *human experience*. It doesn't begin from ideas, theories or abstractions but instead from the observation of one's own experience. This leads its development to include the observer in structure with the phenomena being observed, not from an assumed objectivity that does not consider how the observer affects that which is being observed. This posture of the observer leads one to employ a rigorous phenomenological description before a theoretical description. This is a method that leads not only to an explanation but above all to the understanding of what is being studied.

In this sense and in essence, Humanist Psychology begins from the experience of the existent as *the structure consciousness-world*.

Moreover, the consciousness is experienced as open to the world and in constant dynamic. *It is in this dynamic structure where the base of human experience is found and where the doctrine of Universalist Humanism begins.*

It is from this foundation that a methodology of thought and an ethic of action based.

- Methodology of thinking

We can observe a double capacity in the consciousness. On one hand, it has the ability to perceive phenomena from both the external and internal world; on the other hand, it attempts to order and give meaning to what is being experienced through thinking. It is from the registers of thinking and the observation of its mechanisms that a methodology of knowledge based on the “*experience of thinking*” can be founded. The most general developments of thought permit the elaboration of principals and universal laws.

For its studies and investigation the WCHS proposes a method based on the observation of the experience of thinking. This method, together with universal principals and laws, forms a coherent structure that facilitates the understanding of the problems being addressed.¹⁰

The Method is presented as an assembly of analytical-synthetic procedures that enables an ordering of the phenomena being studied and facilitates their understanding. The use of the Method tends to re-educate the way one approaches learning and one’s way of understanding and in so becomes a tool that transforms both the one who investigates and the surrounding world.

- Ethics of Action

Having experience as the initial consideration, the validity of behavioral acts cannot be pondered without the register that one has of them.

It is because of this, rather than an external moral value, that Universalist Humanism proposes “Principals of Life” that relate with internal registers and orient behavior towards carrying out “*valid actions*”.

The indicators that enable the identification of these “*valid actions*”, that is those that produce meaning, coherence and internal growth are:

- the register of deep relaxation when they are carried out
- the desire to repeat them
- the sensation of internal growth

On the contrary, actions that produce contradiction between what one does and what one thinks and feels weaken the internal development of people.

¹⁰ Principals, laws and the method are developed in the book “*Método Estructural Dinámico*”, Jorge Pompei, CMEH 2008.

In social terms, having relationships with others must consider not harming others with one's own actions; for this to be coherent with the aforementioned we should consider the Golden Rule which states "Treat others as you want to be treated".

This constitutes a scale of values whose highest value is coherence, a new morality that is not indifferent to whatever type of action, and a new aspiration to be consistent in the effort to give direction to human endeavor.

Genuinely solidarious actions, those that look out for the wellbeing of others over one's own interests, go in this direction and are those that help the growth of human society.

The search for knowledge and its application should necessarily also have an ethical framework that demands that the investigation and the use of knowledge will only be in favor of the growth of human life, never generating or justifying harm or destruction.

It is for these reasons that the WCHS proposes that scientific research should be accompanied by an "Oath of Ethics" that explicitly commits scholars and researchers to apply their knowledge only in favor of human life. This "Oath of Ethics" gives a basis to all research and guides the mental direction of the investigator, deepening a process of self transformation while he develops his study.

Only this, and nothing else, can be the final interest of knowledge, which is the patrimony of the human process and can then be considered "good knowledge".

The social and ethical construction of nonviolence.

Universalist Humanism aspires to the building of a Universal Human Nation as the goal of the human social process. In order to work towards this objective it is necessary to have a methodology of action that is coherent with its ethic. This methodology is nonviolence.

Nonviolence can be understood as a system of determined moral concepts that rejects violence, as well as an operating strategy of the systematic and consistent denouncement of the forms of violence that the system applies.

Nonviolence is recognizable in the actions carried forth by Mahatma Gandhi, Martin L. King, Kwame Nkrumah and others.

While pacifism is the denouncement against the arms race, nonviolence is a method of action and a way of living.

This method of action is formed by the internal coherence of thinking, feeling and acting in the same direction and the social coherence of treating others as you want to be treated.

In moving towards liberty the human being fights to overcome conditions of pain and suffering. In doing so the methodology of nonviolence is a tool for transforming the social-historical environment and for building a Universal Human Nation that is coherent with his own register of his internal unity.

4. Personal formation of the WCHS members

Coresponding to the proposal of Universalist Humanism for simultaneous social and personal change, the members of the WCHS periodically carry out works of personal formation. These works are found in the Manual of Personal Development for Members of the Humanist Movement. The manual includes themes for study, seminars and retreats that are generally held in the Centers of Work in the Parks of Study and Reflection in different cities and countries on 5 continents.

The study themes are organized in 4 parts:

- Themes of Universalist Humanism
- Themes of overcoming suffering
- Themes of nonviolence
- Themes of Humanist Psychology

The seminars and retreats of personal work are based on the books *Self Liberation* by L. Ammann and *Guided Experiences* by Silo (Completed Works, Vol. I). Among the diverse works we note the seminars on the practices of attention, psychophysics and relaxation, and the retreats of self knowledge, guided experiences and the space of representation.

Both the seminars and retreats should be considered as independent units, meaning that each work group can choose to work with any of them following their own interests and needs.

5. Reference Materials

a. Official materials

- *Humanist Document*
- *Oath of Ethics*
- *Completed Works*, Silo, Vol. I & II.
- *Psychology Notes*, Silo.
- *Método Estructural Dinámico. Teoría y práctica*, Jorge Pompei. CMEH, 2008.
- *Personal Development Manual for Members of the Humanist Movement. Center of Studies*. Parque Punta de Vacas. 2009.

b. Publications of the WCHS

- *El humanismo en las diferentes culturas*. Anuario 1994 del CMEH. Virtual ediciones, 2008.
- *Aportes a la cultura humanista*. Anuario 1995 del CMEH. Virtual ediciones, 1996.
- *Perspectivas humanistas*. Anuario 1996 del CMEH. Virtual ediciones, 1997.

- *Introducción a la economía del nuevo humanismo*. Anuario 1997 del CMEH. Virtual ediciones, 1997.
- *Violencia y tolerancia: historia, actualidad y perspectivas*. Anuario 2006 del CEH Moscú. CEH Moscú y URAP, 2007.
- *Bases humanistas para la convergencia entre culturas*. Anuario 2007 del CEH Moscú. CEH Moscú y URAP, 2008.
- *Ética en el conocimiento*. 8 DVD con el desarrollo del simposio. CMEH, 2009.
- *Ética en el conocimiento*. Ponencias del simposio. Anuario 2008 del CMEH.
- Video *Bizancio, la raíz común*. CEH Moscú, Fundación Pangea y UNED, 2009.

c. Recommended Materials

- *Memorias del futuro*, Javier Tolcachier. Virtual ediciones, 2008.
- *Humanism in India. Notes for a Study of History*, Fernando Garcia. 2008.
- *La necesidad de una ética sabrosa*, Néstor Tato. Ediciones el Escriba, 2008.
- *La no-violencia a través de sus guías*, Néstor Tato y Clara Serfaty. Virtual ediciones, 2008.
- *Interpretaciones del humanismo*, Salvatore Puledda. Virtual ediciones.
- *El fin de la prehistoria*, Tomás Hirsch. Tabla Rasa ediciones, 2007.
- Video *Federico II, un puente entre Oriente y Occidente*. Fundación Pangea y UNED, España, 2007.

Organizational guidelines

1. General

The World Center for Humanist Studies is the sum of Centers of Study organized in different cities, countries and continents, in a worldwide federation and in continuous development and expansion.

The coordination of the WCHS is carried out in a World Coordination Team (WCT) of approximately 12 members who distribute among themselves the functions of communication, dissemination and administration that are necessary for each stage. Example of functions could be: information (website, e-mail lists), translations, publications, press and dissemination, global events, finance, legal, etc. The work of the WCHS functions is collegiate and with parity among members, who are renewed every 2 years through direct elections by all active members around the world.

The fundamental body of the WCHS are the Centers of Study (CHS) which instigate their actions in a local geographical ambit: city, neighbourhood, university, etc, with possibly more than one CHS in the same space.

Anyone who shares the objectives of the WCHS, subscribes to the Humanist Document and the Oath of Ethics, contributes an annual personal membership fee and is willing to participate in a process of formation in Universalist Humanism, related with its conceptual foundations, methodology of investigation and ethics, can be a full member of a CHS.

Anyone who, without taking on the above commitments, would like to support the activities or contribute financially for specific ends can be a supporting member of a CHS. Supporting members do not participate in decisions or votes, but they do receive periodic information regarding the activities and projects of their respective CHS and the World Center.

2. Formation of a CHS

A CHS starts with an initial group or instigator who sets activities in motion starting from the basic materials of the WCHS. This initial group elaborates a plan of work (research, study groups with other centers, actions towards the environment) and starts periodic meetings to implement the plan and the personal formation of its members; they start a website and e-mail list.

When the initial group has acquired a minimum development (around 10 active members) and permanence in their activities, it can be constituted as a Center of Studies; electing the functions of local coordination and contact person with the WCT and other centers through a direct vote.

According to the degree of development of the CHS in their point of application and with the aim of facilitating the fulfilment of the objectives in the relationship with the environment, CHS's tend to legalise themselves as "non-profit-making associations" (or however this may be called in every place).

3. Finance

Every CHS finances their activities with the personal contributions of their active members, for which an annual membership fee is established, amount determined through agreements between the CHS's of a country. From the amount collected in each CHS, part is deferred to its own activities at the base and part goes to the World Center. The proportions are defined by the World Promotion Team. The World Coordination Team will account annually for the money received.

All the functions, as much in the CHS as in the World Coordination Team, are *ad honorem*.

4. Direct Elections

Periodic renewal of functions (maximally every two years in the base and every two years at the world level) as well as the fundamental decisions for the functioning of the CHS and the WCHS will be carried out through direct elections with the participation of active members. Re-election will be limited.

5. Recommendations for the new stage

It is recommended that in order to start this new stage, worldwide coordination becomes the responsibility of a “*World Promotion Team*”¹¹ of approximately 10 members. They may come from the Commission that prepared this document and others may join whom the Commission considers convenient. It will cease its functions when the coordination teams form after the elections.

¹¹ The definition of the implementation details remains the responsibility of this team, such as calendars with dates for economic campaigns and elections, parameters to define the amount of the annual membership fee, distribution by coordination level of these funds, specific functions of the Worldwide Coordination Team, definition of the official logo, etc.