



THE HUMANIST MANIFESTO

Humanist Manifesto 2000

A Call for a New Planetary Humanism

**Drafted by Professor Paul Kurtz,
International Academy of Humanism, USA**

1. Preamble

Humanism is an ethical, scientific, and philosophical outlook that has changed the world. Its heritage traces back to the philosophers and poets of ancient Greece and Rome, Confucian China, and the Charvaka movement in classical India. Humanist artists, writers, scientists, and thinkers have been shaping the modern era for over half a millennium. Indeed, humanism and modernism have often seemed synonymous for humanist ideas and values express a renewed confidence in the power of human beings to solve their own problems and conquer uncharted frontiers.

II. Prospects for a Better Future

For the first time in human history we possess the means provided by science and technology to ameliorate the human condition, advance happiness and freedom, and enhance human life for all people on this planet.

III. Scientific Naturalism

The unique message of humanism on the current world scene is its commitment to scientific naturalism. Most world views accepted today are spiritual, mystical, or theological in character. They have their origins in ancient pre-urban, nomadic, and agricultural societies of the past, not in the modern industrial or postindustrial global information culture that is emerging. Scientific naturalism enables human beings to construct a coherent world view disentangled from metaphysics or theology and based on the sciences.

IV. The Benefits of Technology

Humanists have consistently defended the beneficent values of scientific technology for human welfare. Philosophers from Francis Bacon to John Dewey have emphasized the increased power over nature that scientific knowledge affords and how it can contribute immeasurably to human advancement and happiness.

V. Ethics and Reason

The realization of the highest ethical values is essential to the humanist outlook. We believe that growth of scientific knowledge will enable humans to make wiser choices. In this way there is no impenetrable wall between fact and value, is and ought. Using reason and cognition will better enable us to appraise our values in the light of evidence and by their consequences.

VI. A Universal Commitment to Humanity as a Whole

The overriding need of the world community today is to develop a new Planetary Humanism—one that seeks to preserve human rights and enhance human freedom and dignity, but also emphasizes our commitment to humanity as a whole. The underlying ethical principle of Planetary Humanism is the need to respect the dignity and worth of all persons in the world community.

VII. A Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

To fulfill our commitment to Planetary Humanism, we offer a Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, which embodies our planetary commitment to the well-being of humanity as a whole. It incorporates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but goes beyond it by offering some new provisions. Many independent countries have sought to implement these provisions within their own national borders. But there is a growing need for an explicit Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities that applies to all members of the human species.

VIII. A New Global Agenda

Many of the high ideals that emerged following the Second World War, and that found expression in such instruments as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have waned through the world. If we are to influence the future of humankind, we will need to work increasingly with and through the new centers of power and influence to improve equity and stability, alleviate poverty, reduce conflict, and safeguard the environment.

IX. The Need for New Planetary Institutions

The urgent question in the twenty-first century is whether humankind can develop global institutions to address these problems. Many of the best remedies are those adopted on the local, national, and regional level by voluntary, private, and public efforts. One strategy is to seek solutions through free-market initiatives; another is to use international voluntary foundations and organizations for educational and social development. We believe, however, that there remains a need to develop new global institutions that will deal with the problems directly and will focus on the needs of humanity as a whole. These include the call for a bicameral legislature in the United Nations, with a World Parliament elected by the people, an income tax to help the underdeveloped countries, the end of the veto in the Security Council, an environmental agency, and a world court with powers of enforcement.

X. Optimism about the Human Prospect

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, as members of the human community on this planet we need to nurture a sense of optimism about the human prospect. Although many problems may seem intractable, we have good reasons to believe that we can marshal our talent to solve them, and that by goodwill and dedication a better life will be attainable by more and more members of the human community. Planetary humanism holds forth great promises for humankind. We wish to cultivate a sense of wonder and excitement about the potential opportunities for realizing enriched lives for ourselves and for generations yet to be born.

HUMANIST PRINCIPLES IN BRIEF

- Do not dominate through lies.
- Do not believe in Magic & Superstitions.
- Be tolerant to peoples beliefs and be in position to tell them facts about their beliefs.
- Say no to war, resolve differences by sitting on table and reach a consensus.
- Learn to share with those who are in need, selfishness Excessive greed & jealousy makes u no person.
- Embrace reason and strongly believe in things backed by empirical evidence.
- Humanists affirm that problems can only be resolved by means of human reason, intelligent effort, critical thinking joined with compassion and a spirit of empathy.
- Humanists support the development and extension of fundamental human freedoms, as expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Humanists uphold the broadest application of democratic principles in all human relationships.
- Humanists reject beliefs held in absence of verifiable evidence, such as beliefs based solely on dogma, revelation, mysticism or belief in fairy tales, dreams and souls.