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# Charter For a Livable World

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# Charter for a Livable World

## Preamble

The Earth is our Home. Every human being must take care of her. Yet she is threatened with ruin. In her basement there are stocks of nuclear weapons inherited from the Cold War that could blow her up at any moment and wipe out

her six billion inhabitants ten times over. Higher up there are some tenants waging war permanently, killing and massacring each other, and there are others threatening to do the same. The privileged few indulge in feasting and flaunt their luxurious lifestyles under the eyes of their starving neighbours. Some people waste water while others don't even have enough to drink.

Crippling and lethal epidemics are spreading in a context of general indifference, sometimes being provoked by the negligence or greed of public health officials. Basic services to the people are sold off to private corporations.

Speculation ensures what a Nobel-Prize economist has called "the triumph of greed". The gap between rich and poor is becoming a chasm. A handful of predators with the slogan "All for us, nothing for others" can even cause the collapse of whole states.

The environment too is being degraded. Landscapes become ugly, become arid, become concrete; wastes pile up and chemical pollution increases. Invisible radioactive contamination, of civil and military origin, is making whole regions unlivable and heightens everywhere the risks of cancers, heart disease and deformed babies. The genetic heritage of all life - human, animal and vegetable - is being attacked everywhere. Animals are treated as vile matter. Many humans have the same fate. Species keep disappearing, biodiversity is regressing or falling into the hands of cynical multinationals. Natural resources, raw materials, and fossil fuels are all being depleted.

The climate is deteriorating. In recent decades, the rise in average temperatures across the globe has provoked worrying phenomena, some insidious, some extreme: ice melting, sea-levels rising, floods, hurricanes, droughts and fires... The damage is huge, the victims are numerous, the future climate predictions are frightening. Migrations are developing, erratic and tragic movements of population, driven by necessity.

The current crises are ecological, economic, financial, social, political, military, medical, demographic, cultural, humanitarian... The list of worries is long.

### **And yet we are not necessarily doomed.**

There are many reasons for hope. The world still has astounding beauty, and so does the human heart. When disasters come, we see solidarity between neighbouring countries and even nations far apart. In the most unexpected forms and places, peoples are stirred by indignation and revolt to push for democracy, freedom and justice. Today's media, which can promote subservience, can also help to promote these liberations. In numerous countries, a significant proportion of youth is mobilising and seeking to grasp its own destiny. Even in quiet everyday ways, alternative means of production, consumption and exchange, alternative modes of living are coming into being.

Politics and technology can offer solutions, provided they are subject to a humanist ethic that cares about freedoms, equity and solidarity.

It is still possible to give our shared Home better foundations and a renovated structure, to make it a convivial dwelling for those who live in it and a welcoming one for future generations.

The Consultative Gathering for a Livable World, meeting in Saintes (France, Charente-Maritime) on 27- 30 October 2011, gave itself the goal of establishing a new charter - inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and other existing texts like the Earth Charter of 2002 - a Charter for a Livable World setting out the principles that should be basic to any political agenda that aims at the common good.

As from November 2011, this Charter is being placed online for signing by our fellow-citizens, and (in France) by the

candidates in the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2012. In addition, these candidates will be invited to make a series of precise commitments that translate these principles into practical measures.

Citizens, readers, voters, it behoves each one of us to make our voice heard, before, during and after the elections. For our horizon is not limited to one electoral cycle, even a very important one. Each individual is invited to sign the present "Charter for a Livable World" and also to act on it. Before, during and after the elections. WE are the world, it is our desires and what we create from them.

## Articles

### 1. Peace and Disarmament

Understanding between peoples is essential if we are to make the world livable. A world at war can resolve none of its problems. Conflict resolution has to be done peacefully.

#### 1.1. Stopping the Trade in Arms and Warfare

##### WE WANT

- A. A ban on the arms trade, we want different uses for the industries that are now producing arms, and we want a halt to arms exports.
- B. An end to all the arms-industry fairs.
- C. A ban on all mercenary fighters.
- D. The promotion of nonviolent methods of conflict resolution, education for nonviolence, and the dissemination of nonviolent education methods.

#### 1.2. Participation of France in International Disarmament

##### WE WANT

- A. The withdrawal of France from the military structures of NATO and the revision of all her military cooperation agreements, with a view to dissolving all military alliances in the world.
- B. The abolition of the collective death penalty: the banning and elimination of all weapons of crime against humanity, the so-called "weapons of mass destruction", nuclear, biological, chemical or new-technology weapons.
- C. The effective and complete application of the 1925 Geneva Convention banning biological weapons and the 1993 Paris Convention on chemical weapons.
- D. The withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from the "high alert" or "hair-trigger alert" status which makes its possible to

fire them immediately.

**E.** A commitment by France to engage in negotiations with the other nuclear-armed states, whether or not they have signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty, with a view to achieving a convention for the elimination of all nuclear and radioactive weapons, with international monitoring that is strict and effective.

**F.** The opening of a national debate on nuclear arms and a referendum consulting the French people on the following question :

« Are you in favour of France participating, with the other states, in the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons, in the framework of reciprocal international monitoring that is strict and effective? ».

**G.** The transformation of the Ministry of Defense into a Ministry of External Security, Disarmament and International Cooperation.

## **2. Food, Water, Health**

Human beings, as animals, share the needs of all species for air to breathe, water to drink and food to eat. For individual persons, the satisfaction of these basic needs depends on their own activities, socially organised activities, and the natural and artificial environments in which they live. The maintenance of good health depends on these also.

### **2.1. Air, Water and Soil**

#### **WE WANT**

**A.** A recognition that air, water, soil and subsoil are the common possessions of humankind, to be protected against pollution and pillage, and managed in a collective and reasoned manner.

**B.** Access to potable water. This is already recognised as a basic right for all humans, and must be implemented effectively.

**C.** Equitable sharing of water resources among communities.

**D.** Changes which place water management and distribution under citizens' control, recognising them as public services, and which place them out of reach of the appetites of multinationals.

**E.** The restoration of water-rich areas and natural water cycles wherever that is possible.

**F.** The establishment of measures to prevent the wastage of water.

### **2.2. Food and Agriculture**

#### **WE WANT**

Policies that are decided and monitored democratically at all levels (national, European, global) aiming at:

- A.** Preventing the use of food as a weapon against any nation or population, anywhere and by anyone.
- B.** Banning the seizure of wild or domestic biodiversity by multinational companies through the patenting of living matter.
- C.** Protecting natural animal and vegetable biodiversity, and respecting wild, domestic and farmed animals.
- D.** Applying the precautionary principle to all matters of agriculture and pastoral farming, and notably excluding the open-field growing of plants that are genetically modified (GMOs) or mutant organisms.
- E.** Supporting the transition of agricultural practices towards respect for the planet (soil, subsoil, air, water, biodiversity, farm animals, human health...) by agriculture that is natural and biological (not chemical) with the abandonment of industrial farming and with reduced consumption of animal proteins.
- F.** Promoting local production for local consumption and developing short circuits of production and consumption.
- G.** Replacing the financial aid now given under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy with aid to farming practices that promote employment, good environments and high-quality food.
- H.** Giving absolute priority, at the national, European and global levels, to food-producing cultivations and food sovereignty.
- I.** Adapting agriculture, in the face of climate change, so that it makes more economical use of water, fossil fuels and other inputs.
- J.** Setting up citizens' monitoring of the institutions that make decisions about agriculture, and of the agricultural research bodies.

### **2.3. Health**

#### **WE WANT**

- A.** The preservation of Social Security, with its accounts balanced thanks to the payment of dues by the State, along with the suppression of certain exemptions and the opening of Social Security financing to sources other than the paid workforce.
- B.** The creation, maintenance or reestablishment of all the infrastructures (including local ones) that are necessary for public health: hospitals, maternity clinics, health clinics, rest homes, walking services, psychiatric monitoring services...
- C.** The establishment of a totally independent expertise system for overseeing medications, health care systems and all medical practices.

D. Respect for free choice of treatments and therapies, along with the individual's right to die with dignity.

E. The development of all forms of health prevention and health education.

F. An end to the dependency of medical research on telethons, public appeals or private foundations - research should be publicly financed, with monitoring by citizens and institutions (the Public Audit) and should be transparent in its communications.

G. Democratic monitoring of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and adequate budgets for it to achieve the eradication of endemic diseases, the free distribution of anti-retroviral drugs against AIDS, the prevention of diseases, and for contraception and family planning.

H. The emancipation of the WHO from all pressures contrary to its prime mission of transparent information and protection of public health - and in particular the abrogation of the agreement of 28 May 1959 (resolution WHA 12-40) which subordinates the WHO's publications about radioactivity to the prior consent of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), these being currently seen as lying in the IAEA's domain.

### 3. Institutional and Social Justice

There is no peace without equity between people, and no equity without justice. When justice is fragmented between individuals, groups, social categories, ethnic groups or States, it can be reestablished by judicial institutions; yet it rests primarily on social justice, which is linked to the economy. In order to place human values in the heart of the economic system, we must change our perceptions of economic activity, production and consumption, indeed, our perception of our needs.

#### 3.1. Institutional Justice

##### WE WANT

A. The same justice for all.

B. Justice that is independent.

C. Justice that is diligent.

D. Justice that is free of charge.

E. An end to practices and procedures that aim to deter those brought before the courts from exercising their rights to remedy or appeal.

F. A penal system based on the proportionality of sentences, with preference given to alternatives to imprisonment, with respect for persons imprisoned, with prevention of recidivism, and with preparation for release and reintegration into society.

G. Legislative and budgetary measures enabling the above demands to be satisfied.

## 3.2. Social Justice, Employment, Solidarity, the Economy

### WE WANT

- A. Reductions in military budgets, including that of France, and their diversion to eradicate hunger and malnutrition worldwide. In future no child, no adult anywhere should die of hunger or suffer from it; in future no resident of France should need the assistance of food-banks or charitable groups in order to have decent food and housing.
- B. The maintenance of existing employment, and the creation of new jobs, so as to satisfying legitimate economic, ecological and social needs, recognised as such by the people, and not so as to help the powerful few to make exorbitant profits.
- C. The sharing of all socially necessary work-time among all, so as to provide jobs and incomes to job-seekers, to offer more free time to those in work, and to enable everyone to retire at 60 at the latest, if they so wish.
- D. An equitable sharing of wealth produced, notably by restoring to wage-earners a much greater proportion of value-added and productivity gains, and by creating a minimal and a maximum annual wage and by fiscal reform.
- E. The possibility, for any individual who fails to find work, of having the real right to training throughout life (at any time and without being humiliated), and the means to have a decent life, including if necessary by granting everyone from birth a universal and unconditional "existence income", this being a principle worthy of discussion.
- F. The maintenance and restoration of socially useful jobs through employment legislation that is adequate and really implemented, and by combat measures, in France and Europe, against the delocalisation and outsourcing of jobs and against social and fiscal dumping.
- G. The development of new economic activities, market-based or otherwise, of cooperative, social and solidarity activities, through local, NGO and citizens' initiatives, responding to human needs through aid from the State and local bodies, through people's banks, and through the cooperative movement. These institutions can have recourse to a local currency promoting local exchanges and investments.
- H. A strengthening of the role of consumers' groups, patients' groups and victims of prejudice. They should be able to appear and speak in group actions at tribunals.
- I. The neutralisation of speculators by the establishment of rigorous monitoring and regulation of the financial markets, and also the energy and raw-materials markets. There needs to be a final end to "speculation bubbles", by means of an appropriate form of tax.
- J. The dissolution of the financial rating agencies - or their neutralization to make them harmless. Their replacement by a European public agency.
- K. The defense, restoration and strengthening of public services.

## 4. Environment, Climate, Energy, Alternatives to Nuclear Power

The productivist model of growth is leading humankind to its ruin. Massive pollution and depletion of resources require us to adopt life-styles of greater sobriety and solidarity, respectful of life and the natural balance, and adapted to the finite character of the Planet Earth.

### 4.1. Protection of the environment

#### WE WANT

A. The factoring into all political and economic decisions, in advance, of pollution risks, accumulation of wastes, and wastage. Pollution of all kinds must be combated, especially in regions where resources (such as gold, uranium, schist gas...) are being exploited without regard for the indigenous people.

B. A systematic application of the precautionary principle and of citizens' monitoring to all scientific research and all new technologies, be they in genetics, therapeutics, nanotechnology, energy forms, climate action, or means of production, transport or communication.

C. Recognition and study of the effects of electromagnetic pollution on public health and the environment, with the findings published, and advised or limited in accordance with Resolution 1815 of the Council of Europe, 27 May 2011.

D. The genuine honouring of the Nagoya moratorium on geo-engineering (29 October 2010), of which France is a signatory. The aerial dispersion of substances harmful to public health has to stop. Objective information must be given on military electromagnetic programmes, such as HAARP (USA), SURA (Russia) or others.

### 4.2. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Sources of Energy

#### WE WANT

A. Energy sobriety and energy efficiency.

B. A « right to energy » limited to meeting, as a priority, the vital needs of all. Energy consumption "for comfort" is not a right; it is desirable, but only in quantities and forms that are compatible with the general interests of humanity.

C. The financing and implementation of a vast programme of thermal insulation of dwellings and other existing buildings.

D. The development and diversification of renewable forms of energy (solar, wind, water, geothermal, marine current, tides, swells, biomass etc.), but excluding the agro-fuels that incite speculation and have a negative balance-sheet for energy, environment and human impact.

E. The gradual and long-term replacement by renewable sources of energy of fossil and non-renewable fuels (coal, oil, gas, uranium), which are being depleted and which contribute to global warming by CO<sub>2</sub> and heat loss.

F. The deconcentration and decentralisation of electricity production. Power should be produced, as much as possible, close to the places of consumption. Communities, businesses and citizens' cooperatives should be able to

produce the electricity they need while remaining connected to the national and international distribution network.

G. The granting of building permits to businesses and malls only provided they themselves produce all or some of the energy they consume.

### 4. 3. Phasing out Nuclear Technology and Combating Global Warming

#### WE WANT

A. A stop to the propaganda that is put out by the French government and the sector enterprises (EDF, AREVA, subcontractors) in favour of electronuclear energy, paid by the taxpayers and consumers.

B. Trustworthy information that is comprehensive and strictly accurate concerning the different sources of energy and their real costs, in monetary terms that include all the hidden costs, and also in social and environmental terms. We must take account of all those parameters. **(1)**

C. An immediate and binding decision to phase out nuclear technology, as quickly as possible, in the framework of a decentralised policy based on energy sobriety and efficiency and on renewable forms of energy. The people need to be closely associated with this decision and its implementation.

D. A follow-up for the Kyoto Protocol, with the adoption internationally of measures to limit the production of greenhouse gases and to combat global warming by effective means.

- ▶ **(1)** To specify the cost of an electronuclear kWh, one needs to factor in all the expenditure on: nuclear scientific and technical research since the creation in 1945 of the Commissariat for Atomic Energy, the building of power plants and other basic nuclear facilities, their maintenance, the military deployments and the foreign aid or bribes given to countries producing uranium, the extraction, transport and treatment of ores, the operating of the plants, the transport of new and used fuel and its stockpiling, the dismantling of plants, the surveillance of highly radioactive wastes for thousands of years, the medical treatment given to victims of daily or accidental radioactive emissions, the cost of deaths, the insurance premiums for insuring against major accidents... One realises that this last figure is impossible to calculate, since no private insurer agrees to cover such risks. Perhaps this means that an electronuclear kWh is a UFO - an Unidentified Fiscal Object?

### 5. Europe and International Relations

Europe is made up of people living on one continent, formed into States and languages with varying cultures, who have sometimes made common cause and sometimes fought one another, and who are now deriving from this long common history the desire to become a single cultural and political entity, founded on values and aspirations that are capable of harmonising their differences and preserving peace.

Defined thus by the awareness and desire of her component peoples and persons to share one destiny, Europe needs to learn the lessons of her own past, in its noblest moments but also its disappointing and tragic moments, so as to bridge the chasm the European Union's huge democratic deficit and build a future more worthy of her values and aspirations.

#### 5.1. Building a Democratic Europe

## **WE WANT**

- A. The effective application in Europe of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
  
- B. The re-founding of the European Union on democratic bases : the drawing up of a societal pact through broad citizens' discussions in all the member states and at all levels; the democratic naming of a convention mandated to draft a Europe constitution; and referendums on this bill on the same day in all member states of the EU.
  
- C. A constitution replacing the principle of competition with principles of cooperation, equity, solidarity, and harmonisation without uniformity, in the fields of politics, the economy, the environment, society and culture.
  
- D. A petition written and translated into all the EU languages (and esperanto) for the purpose of launching this constitutional process.

## **5.2. France in a Peaceful Nuclear-free Europe**

### **WE WANT**

- A. The abrogation of the Euratom Treaty and the transformation of Europe into a zone without nuclear arms or nuclear power-plants.
  
- B. The dissolution of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as a military alliance.
  
- C. A French and European international cooperation policy aiming to create everywhere conditions favorable for peace, for sustainable development and for people to remain voluntarily in their own countries. In any case, all migrants with exception, whether or not they have papers, must be treated with due consideration for human dignity.

## **6. Democracy, Security, Freedoms, Human Rights**

Democracy, or government by the people for the people, is both an ideal and a means for reconciling contradictory aspirations. After the long process of long or short wars and truces that has formed the Europe of today, her citizens, and French citizens among them, consider that respect for human beings and the deepening of democracy are the best guarantors of a just and lasting peace, within Europe and right around the globe.

### **6.1. Democracy**

#### **WE WANT**

- A. Processes that permit the people affected by a decision to join together at each level of decision-making, directly if possible or indirectly through representation.
  
- B. A system where, in representative bodies, the representatives are appointed by the people affected, using a proportional principle that guarantees that minorities receive representation, and that supplements the elected members with a number of volunteers named by random ballot.

- C. The restoration of strict separation of powers between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.
- D. Transparency in the use of taxes.
- E. The reaffirmation of the secular principle as a principle of tolerance and conviviality in the framework of a Republic that is both a unity and a plurality.
- F. A State that is independent and neutral with regard to all religious and philosophical beliefs, so long as these respect public freedoms and the autonomy of individuals.
- G. The application and transmission, within schools, of the republican values of freedom, equality and fraternity, and the involvement of families in this civic and citizenship education.
- H. The counting, whenever votes are cast, of informal votes alongside those which express a preference.
- I. A system of effective Citizen-Initiated Referenda, different from that indicated in article 11 of the French Constitution by the constitutional law of 23 July 2008.

### 6.2. Security and Freedoms

#### WE WANT

- A. Security for all citizens, with respect for their rights and freedoms.
- B. The monitoring of penal policy by Parliament.
- C. A genuine relaunching of policies for preventing delinquency.
- D. Individualisation of penal sanctions in accordance with revised penalties and a new scale of penalties, offering alternatives to prison for minor delinquency. Prisons must be totally rethought and rehabilitated.
- E. Honouring of the principles of justice for minors (as set out in 1945), retaining the priority going to education.

### 6.3. Human Rights

#### WE WANT

- A. Respect by France for equality of rights between all citizens.
- B. A return to the French tradition of welcoming foreigners and refugees and offering them decent living conditions (work, housing, papers...).
- C. An end to unjustified identity-monitoring by facial features.

D. The re-attachment of those conducting inquiries to the independent judicial authority.

E. A citizens' discussion on video-surveillance and on the various dossiers that are held on individuals.

### **7. Information, Communications, Education, Culture**

#### **7.1. Information, Communications**

##### **WE WANT**

A. The guaranteeing of the freedom of the press and of journalists on all occasions.

B. All information available concerning our health or our survival. This should be communicated without cost in rapid and intelligible form.

C. Accessibility to computer technology for all, though never compulsory. Instruction in its use should be accompanied by warnings against its dangers. Computer tools, hardware and software should not be made obsolete unnecessarily. Their ecological footprint should be minimized and there should be compensation for it.

D. An end to the use of modern means of communication for disinforming the public. Schools and NGOs need to initiate young people in cooperative computer use (free software) and teach them to regard critically the information they receive from press, media and history books. The struggle against manipulation of consciousness must be continued.

#### **7.2. Education, Culture**

##### **WE WANT**

A. Prioritization in the State's budget for education, for initial and ongoing training, and for culture - learning how to live and think.

B. An end to the labelling and categorizing of children at school from a very young age as being "at risk". On the contrary, all children should be encouraged throughout schooling to maximize their capacities through development and individual talent.

C. Better cooperation of schools with parents, from pre-school to the top of college, with schools becoming an open place for personal and collective culture, unusual encounters, artistic experiences, intercultural and transgenerational exchanges, mixing of social milieus, a place for debates, the learning of languages, educational trips, and the discovery of societies in and beyond Europe...

D. Apprenticeships, not only in basic apprenticeship fields, but also for concrete activities and know-how: gardening, cooking, handyman work, raising animals, machinery, ecological installations... Schools should have confidence in young people and should draw out their creativity..

E. Dignified mainstreaming of handicapped people, excluded people, pupils in difficulty and foreigners. We want

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re-establishment and support for the "RASED" networks (specialized aid to students in difficulty), the EGPA programme (adapted general and professional teaching), and the necessary places available in the IMEs (medico-educational institutes).

F. The removal of the ever-larger administrative obstacles that block initiatives taken by teachers, pupils or students.

G. An end to the view that culture is a superfluous, luxury activity reserved to a few stars or a few short-term media sensations who receive increasingly bad treatment. Professionals and amateurs need to join together to stimulate a lively popular culture. Culture must become the people's affair, and aesthetic emotions the salt of our social existence.

### In short, we want a Livable World

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#### TO SIGN THE CHARTER

- ▶ On line: [http://www.petitions24.net/signatures/pour\\_un\\_monde\\_vivable/](http://www.petitions24.net/signatures/pour_un_monde_vivable/)
- ▶ By email: [pourunmondevivable@gmail.com](mailto:pourunmondevivable@gmail.com)
- ▶ By post, to this address : EGMV  
C/o ACDN  
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The complete official text of the Charter for a Livable World may be seen, along with other information about the Consultative Gathering for a Livable World, on this blog:

<http://www.mondevivable.over-blog.com>

That version is the only officially authorized one.

The Charter is available in English as well as the original French on the website of ACDN : [www.acdn.net](http://www.acdn.net) .

The groups and NGOs that participated in the Consultative Gathering are authorized and invited to reproduce the Charter on their sites, provided that its text is published in extenso, including these lines on this page.

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I, the undersigned, having become cognisant of the Charter for a Livable World, endorse it and make it my own. I agree that my signing may be made public.

- ▶ FAMILY NAME:
- ▶ First Name:
- ▶ Town :
- ▶ E-mail address (not to be published) :

Date Place

Signature