

Declaration of the Rights of the People of Earth to create and ratify a World Constitution and hold sessions of the Provisional World Parliament

We, the citizens of the Earth, have the right and duty to establish a viable world government capable of maintaining the Rule of Law among all nations in place of the disastrous anarchy now prevailing among sovereign states, to abolish massively destructive armaments and end all wars, to protect the global environment for future generations, and to create economic justice and prosperity for all the citizens of our planet.

1. These are the times the world will not soon forget. Future historians will wonder how a few of us maintained our sanity and dignity in the face of the global breakdown of world order. Never in history have so many people been starving to death on Earth. Never have so many people lacked clean water or sanitation. Never has there been so much poverty and misery.

Never in history have so many people possessed so many weapons and engaged in continuous mutual slaughter of one another, in Columbia, Afghanistan, Sudan, Uganda, Chechnya, Iraq and elsewhere. Never have human beings everywhere on Earth been so insecure. Never has the average person anywhere on Earth felt so afraid and the future seemed so hopeless. Fifteen years after the collapse of the USSR, the threat of a global nuclear holocaust remains in place, while the superpower continues to develop space-based and tactical nuclear weapons.

Nowhere in previous history has the world faced a possible breakdown of its planetary ecosystem. Never has the ozone layer that protects the Earth from the sun's deadly radiation been threatened. Never have the ocean fisheries been collapsing from over-fishing, never before has grazing land been turning to desert on a global scale from overgrazing, never has agricultural land disappeared at the astonishing rates that we see today. Never before has the world's fresh water supply been endangered.

2. Some people in every age of historical crisis have been the visionaries, the civilizers, the advanced thinkers, who see the way forward beyond the narrow assumptions and petty issues of their day. Some people in every age have spoken for universal principles, for justice and human dignity, for equality and freedom among nations, peoples, and individuals of the Earth. These are the civilizers; these are the voices of legitimate creativity. These are the ones who establish new institutions and give renewed hope for the future.

The legitimacy of an action is not always whether it is approved by some majority. Very often in history the majority have represented reaction, intolerance, and injustice. The legitimacy of an action is whether it moves history forward toward greater universality. The innovators within history, like the writers of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man or the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have always been a tiny minority.

The legitimacy of their work derives from its universality. The movement of history, the extension of rights, is from the tribe to the clan to the territory to the nation to the entire planet. The ultimate universality is the sovereignty of the people of Earth. New eras of legitimacy in history have been initiated by those who extended human rights and freedom to ever greater numbers of people and to those who promoted the just rule of law in human affairs.

The criterion of legitimacy in human affairs is moral universality. The core of democracy is not majority rule but the protection of minorities from both majorities and tyrants. It is equal rights for all under just laws. Nor is legitimacy derived from either power or existing institutions by themselves. Gigantic systems of power have existed historically from the Roman Empire to the many European Empires, to the present American Empire. The fact of military, bureaucratic, or institutional power does not lend legitimacy.

The only criterion is whether human rights, dignity, freedom, and justice prevail because of these institutions. This is why democracy is the ultimate criterion of legitimacy, democracy defined as any system that promotes rights, dignity, freedom, and justice in human affairs. Only global democracy represents the sovereignty of the people of Earth.

3. The present institutions of the world are failed institutions. The global economic system has not led to prosperity for most of the Earth's citizens, but to starvation, poverty, disease, and misery for the majority. The present global political systems of the world, called territorial nation-states, have not led to a just or peaceful world order, but to endless wars, destruction of peoples and cultures, imperial domination and conquest, and global systems of exploitation of the weaker by the stronger.

The United Nations has not led to a world where the many rights listed in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been extended to the Earth's citizens, but to denial of those rights for the majority and continuous increase in war, poverty, social chaos, and environmental destruction. By the criterion of legitimacy set forth in this document, these institutions have

made themselves illegitimate. Citizens of Earth have the right and duty to create new institutions that represent the people of Earth.

4. The sovereignty of the people of Earth is represented in those who seek universal human political, social, and economic rights. The sovereignty of the people of Earth is represented in those who seek universal economic justice and the common good of all who live on Earth. The sovereignty of the people of Earth is represented by those who promote the rule of law on Earth and an end to the barbaric rule of militarized force and violence. The sovereignty of the people of Earth is represented by those who seek global democracy in the form of federal world government.

It is irrelevant whether the people of Earth elected representatives to write the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*. What matters is that the people of Earth have the opportunity to ratify the *Constitution* and begin the rule of just law in the world. It is irrelevant whether delegates to the Provisional World Parliament were elected by their countries as representatives to the Parliament. What matters is that the delegates promote universal human rights, justice, freedom, and prosperity.

Those who represent the people of Earth in this quest are not self-appointed partisans of special interests. Such self-appointed demagogues are easily identifiable by their programs that always deny rights and dignity to those they oppose. Delegates to the Provisional World Parliament are appointed, under Article 19 of the *Constitution*, by the universal principle of morality on which the *Constitution* is based that is the criterion of legitimacy in human political and economic affairs. Their work includes all persons on Earth, and excludes none.

5. At this juncture of world history, no nation can have a fully legitimate democracy. For the very existence of "sovereign" nations means that the rights of those outside its borders are ignored or betrayed. At this junction of world history, no nation can protect the environment for future generations. The destruction of the planetary ecosystem is beyond the scope and effectiveness of any nation-state.

At this juncture of world history, no nation can create economic justice. For in today's globalized economy, prosperity for individual nations always involves exploitation and poverty for other nations. The nation-state system is dead. Only those representing global democracy through federal world government can possibly represent legitimacy in human affairs.

The present world system not only embodies failed institutions but it is also built on morally illegitimate institutions. Every human being is morally required to live under democratically legislated universal laws. Without the rule of enforceable world law, human affairs are always in a *de facto* state of war in which the stronger or more clever will be able to take advantage of the weaker.

Genuine law legislates equality, freedom, and the principle of justice for all. Yet in the world system today there is no genuine law, for nations are all victims to the social, military, and economic chaos that characterizes international affairs and afflicts all persons living within particular nation-states. The unenforceable pronouncements of the treaty system that constitutes the United Nations is a travesty of genuine "international law." We are morally required to live under universal democracy and federal world government representing all persons on Earth equally and creating the just rule of enforceable law on Earth.

6. In the face of our world condition in the past five decades, world citizens had every right to create the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*. In the face of the global chaos resulting from monopoly capitalism and the system of sovereign nation-states, these world citizens also had a duty to write a *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*. We do not characterize these acts as the noble actions of do-gooders contributing to the human project. We describe here the universal duty of every citizen on Earth to live under the rule of enforceable world law.

Our work is not only more legitimate than that of politicians within nations who pass legislation excluding the majority of humanity from the laws they write. Our work is absolutely obligated by the demand for universality in human affairs and by the need to protect future generations from the lethal consequences of present institutions. It is with this understanding that we affirm our right and duty to hold future sessions of the Provisional World Parliament, to work unceasingly to activate the fledgling institutions of democratic world government, and to communicate to every citizen on Earth the absolute need to ratify the *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*.

