

AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

RESOLUTION ON GLOBAL COMMUNITY & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

November 27, 2008 ~ Washington, DC

Humanists recognize that multiple forces are impelling humanity toward an increasingly interdependent world. The beginnings of a global society have become evident, making it critical that such a society be based on a recognition of one common humanity. Only on this basis will such a community have the potential for achieving lasting peace and opening new vistas for human achievement. The American Humanist Association therefore concludes that humanist values provide a necessary foundation for resolving the myriad challenges presented by the current state of international affairs, particularly lingering tribalisms.

BECAUSE humanists strive to create a system of universal ethics that apply fully and equally to all peoples;

BECAUSE humanists reject cultural relativist attempts to minimize the significance of our shared humanity by denying that ideas and standards can cross cultures, and decry attempts to claim a special status for religion as a subject which cannot be critiqued for fear of offending adherents;

BECAUSE humanists welcome the creation of a global, transnational society that is cosmopolitan in nature; is based on the pillars of reason, compassion, and dignity; and uses non-violent methods to resolve disputes;

BECAUSE humanists acknowledge that our species still faces various political, social, and economic challenges in creating a global community;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the *AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION*, in support of the creation of a global community,

Affirms its support for multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and its various programs and funds, the International Criminal Court, and the World Bank Group, which are creating a global framework for nations and their peoples to interact with each other;

Affirms its support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the minimum standard that nations should strive for when guaranteeing the rights of citizens;

Affirms its support for international conventions and treaties, including the nine core international human rights treaties as well as the Millennium Development Goals, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Geneva Conventions, which speak to the ideals of life that we all strive toward;

Affirms the aim of avoiding the use and distortion of creeds, beliefs, ideologies, and worldviews as a justification for violence (or even for the threat of violence) in pursuit of a goal;

Affirms the need to engage violent, non-state actors through dialogue if possible, in order to de-radicalize both individuals and groups away from violence, and with force if necessary, in order to prevent the loss of innocent life;

Affirms that there is a global responsibility to use peaceful methods to protect vulnerable populations against genocide, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity;

Affirms that in the event peaceful measures fail, humanitarian military intervention is justified against a sovereign nation, but only if all non-military means have been exhausted, military action is not simply a cover to achieve imperialistic goals, broad metrics for an exit strategy are established, and there is consensus for action among local, regional, and global stakeholders;

Affirms the continued necessity of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and calls for stronger safeguards to ensure that unsecured nuclear weapons and materials do not fall into the hands of violent ideologues who could use nuclear technology and knowledge for catastrophic ends;

Affirms that terrorism is a method of violence, not an ideology, and hence recognizes that homologizing and categorizing all violent ideologies under one umbrella prevents a nuanced understanding of the differing motivations and end goals of the peoples and organizations who espouse violence;

Affirms that through a mix of innovative technology, intensive planning, and coordinated global efforts we can achieve balanced development, which would allow poorer nations to raise their development indicators—national income, human resources and economic vulnerability—while also limiting the negative impact on our environment and natural resources.

Throughout this “pale blue dot,” as billions of people move through their daily lives, there exists a universal aspiration for a better life. It is what draws individuals to become participating members of society and it is what causes the continual improvement of societies. The challenges that our world faces now call for humanity to move beyond the in-group concerns of individual societies and work toward creating global, united responses.