

# Constituent Charter

## Working Procedures and a Calendar

**fph** | Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer  
pour le Progrès de l'Homme

Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation  
for the Progress of Humankind

Executive office  
38 rue Saint Sabin  
75011 Paris - France  
T : + 33 (0)1 43 14 75 75  
F : + 33 (0)1 43 14 75 99  
E. mail : paris@fph.fr  
Web : www.fph.ch

Headquarters and Swiss office  
Chemin de Longeraie 9  
1006 Lausanne - Switzerland  
T : + 41 21 342 50 10  
F : + 41 21 342 50 11  
E. mail : lausanne@fph.ch  
Web : www.fph.ch

Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World



of the Alliance  
for a Responsible,  
Plural and United World  
in its **2004 | 2010** Stage

FPH PROPOSAL  
FOR A  
COLLECTIVE  
DEBATE

*The second stage of the Alliance supposes a definition of its nature, its objectives, the common ethical principles to which the Allies refer, its working procedures, and its calendar.*

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## **Constituent Charter of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World**

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The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, born in 1994, gathers citizens' alliances, institutions, movements, and individuals committed to joining their efforts, experiences, and intelligence to contribute to designing and driving the changes needed to build a fair and viable world.

A citizens' alliance is an international collective process built over time for the long term using a decentralized form of organization and is not a formal institution. It is made up of the initiatives undertaken by its allies, i.e. those who act in the name of the alliance. Citizens' alliances match the needs of a globalized society, in which collective action requires reconciling respect of differences and the pursuit of a common project, flexibility and rigor, the autonomy of initiatives and the feeling of collective belonging.

### **Nature of the Alliance**

The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World is all of the following:

- a shared adventure and a history;
- a vision, that of a global community to be built;
- a will, that of overcoming helplessness and, by pooling efforts, to understand and to influence realities, the scale and the complexity

of which are too great for us individually;

- a set of collective working procedures and methods, developed and mastered over ten years of working with them;
- elements of a collective identity born from shared values and a common history;
- an image, a logo, and a Web site through which the existence, the philosophy, and the proposals of the Alliance have been progressively known;
- a forum for sharing initiatives, thinking, and what has been learnt.

## Objectives of the Alliance

The Allies' commitment to pursue and to develop the Alliance is based on a finding, a rejection, a conviction, and a principle.

**A finding:** that the interdependence among the peoples of the world and between humankind and the biosphere is irreversible, which compels us to manage this unique, complex, and fragile planet jointly for the benefit of the coming generations and the integrity of the living world; that the current models of production, consumption, life, education, and governance resulting from the past centuries are no longer adapted to the realities and needs of the twenty-first century, which requires us to undertake profound mutations, both individually and collectively.

**A rejection:** of a world with no equity in which all forms of exchange among persons and peoples would be reduced to marketable trade.

**A conviction:** that dialogue and joint work, pursued over time among the peoples, among the different social and professional spheres, are the only way to bring forth viable alternatives to the current evolution of the world.

**A principle:** according to which Allies can only claim to be and to remain so insofar as they contribute, however modestly, to the joint effort.

## Ethics of the Alliance

The Alliance functions inasmuch as everyone respects the common ethical principles ensuing from the Charter of Human Responsibilities. Allies are committed, in particular, to:

- sharing their experience;
- being continuously alert to what they can learn from others;
- keeping the Alliance alive by making it known, by circulating its work and findings, and by maintaining connections with the other Allies;
- watching out for any innovation or initiative inspired by the same concerns and values, wherever it comes from;
- refusing a simplistic view of the issues and continuously enriching their understanding of the world;
- to making of the Alliance an open, tolerant place, where others are welcome;
- promoting a culture of peace and cooperation;
- complying with the jointly adopted working procedures;
- using the name of the Alliance exclusively in accordance with its constituent Charter;

Every Ally, whether person or institution, accepts that his, her or its participation in the Alliance be public but beyond that, commits to complying with the jointly defined rules of confidentiality.

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## Working Procedures

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In keeping with the nature and the challenges of the Alliance, the working procedures are aimed at five objectives:

- to build, safeguard, and transfer the memory of a plural history;
- to structure the connections, the information, the experience sharing, and the debates;
- to define the rules according to which one can take an initiative or a stand in the name of the Alliance;
- to enhance the working methods on a continuous basis;
- to support the future development of the Alliance and to make of the Constituent Charter its cement.

The procedures exist only insofar as people and organizations are willing to finance them, design them, and implement them. Their only value is that given to them by Allies to fulfill the commitments they have made to others. For economic and practical reasons, they rely largely on computer systems, the Internet, and the World Wide Web.

## Building, Safeguarding, and Transferring the Memory of a Plural History

The Alliance is a collective human adventure built over the years at the service of common objectives. It is distinguished from ordinary networks and discussion forums by its projection into the long term, its ability to learn from its achievements and failures, its memory of the conditions for developing collective proposals, and its clear vision of everyone's initiatives. The Alliance is not an institution, but its existence depends on its capacity for continuous institution and consolidation. It was conceived at the start by the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation (FPH), which defined its methods and

fixed its deadlines. Yet, in its first stage, 1994-2001, the Alliance was made of interwoven and sometimes contradictory stories. This history is presented on its Web site.

In its second stage, its story should be even more collective and diverse, for the evolution of the Alliance will be produced through the combination of Allies' initiatives. Every year, a group of volunteer Allies, as diverse as possible in its geographical, cultural, social, and professional rooting, will take on the responsibility of producing a reasoned and easily readable summary of the year gone by in the form of **Alliance Annals**.

## Structuring the Connections, the Information, the Experience Sharing, and the Debates

### The Directory

The public part of the Alliance Directory is displayed on the Web site. All the Allies currently listed in the Directory were included on the basis of their endorsement of the 1993 *Platform for a Responsible and United World*. They will be invited to confirm their wish to remain in the Directory on the basis of the Constituent Charter.

The Directory includes a Participation in Initiatives section, which allows every Ally to describe his or her activity and to offer or request cooperation to facilitate the constitution of affinity groups. Allies make it their duty not to clutter others with useless information and endeavor to answer, individually or collectively, questions from other Allies.

### Periodic circulation of information on initiatives

The vitality of the Alliance relies on the quality and complementarity of the initiatives, and on the interactivity of relations between Allies and the outside world. For many Allies,

access to the Alliance Web site is neither feasible nor affordable; besides, overabundance of information must be avoided. Hence the need to circulate summarized information in several languages on all the initiatives in progress or being considered, via e-mail and on a quarterly basis.

### **Alliance Experience Bank**

Experiences and thinking are goods that are multiplied when they are shared. Allies organize freely to circulate these experiences and this thinking locally. On the other hand, on a global scale, such sharing is only possible by using the technological possibilities of the Internet.

The starting format for Experience Reports and Document Abstracts was defined through its use. Improvement of the format and technology will be introduced after discussion among Allies with good practice in experience sharing.

### **Web Site**

The Alliance Web site is both its display window for the public and its primary workplace. Opened in 1996, it has been redesigned several times to make it easier to read and use. It is a structured resource center—its requirement for unity—to which information is nonetheless added through decentralized means—its requirement for safeguarding the autonomy of initiatives and the pluralism of opinions. Every Ally can therefore add information to the Web site on his or her own responsibility regarding the accuracy and the quality of such information.

To access this common information tool, Allies who have computer equipment accept to help those who do not.

Downloading and publishing the information, experiences, and proposals contained in the Alliance Web site is not subject to copyright on condition that such information is not published partially, that its source is clearly stated, and that the principle of good faith is complied with by not taking the information out of its context.

6 Allies who wish to may join a committee of Alliance Web site users.

## **Defining the Rules for an Initiative to Be Taken in the Name of the Alliance**

For the Alliance to remain a living being and to develop, it is important that Allies be able to take action and initiatives in its name. To do so, they can use as needed all documents having the Alliance label; on the other hand, for any new undertaking, it is in everybody's interest that two principles be applied:

**The principle of previous information:** any Ally who wishes to take an initiative in the name of the Alliance is held to presenting it on the Web site and showing that the project complies with the Constituent Charter. Agreement of the other Allies is considered as obtained if there has been no motivated objection in the month following the publication of this information on the Web site.

**The principle of good faith,** in compliance with the Ethical Charter: open to all other Allies, compliance with the diversity of opinions, spirit of cooperation, etc. Good faith is considered to be acknowledged in the absence of motivated objections from other Allies.

As an illustration, these principles can apply: to the opening of a collective debate on the Web site of the Alliance; to the exploitation of Experience Reports; to initiatives aiming to implement the common calendar; to the presentation of the Alliance in outside events; to the launching of a new thinking and action workshop.

For documents and proposals (written or video documents, CD ROMs, DVD ROMs) wishing to display the Alliance logo, this logo should be a quality label committing the credibility of the Alliance, even though opinions are expressed under the responsibility of their authors.

This label reflects: the quality of the thinking, its rooting in a variety of experiences, and the collective working process that led to this document.

Here again, documents displaying the logo should be submitted on the Alliance Web site for one month before they are circulated publicly and any observations and reservations should be integrated into the document in some form or another.

At the outcome of the first stage of the Alliance, the documents displaying the Alliance label are:

- the *Platform for a Responsible and United World*, reference text;
- the *Proposal Papers*, produced by the Thematic Workshops and Socioprofessional Networks of the Alliance and developed between 1999 and 2002, as well as their later versions;
- the *Charter of Human Responsibilities*, the current version of which was achieved on the basis of the debates that took place at the World Citizens Assembly in December 2001;
- the *Agenda for the Twenty-first Century*, produced by the work accomplished at the World Citizens Assembly;
- the present *Constituent Charter*, which is the foundation for its redefinition in 2004.

## Enhancing the Working Methods on a Continuous Basis

The working methods are part of the common heritage of the Alliance and apply to all the aspects involved in collective-intelligence building. They range from the organization of meetings to the facilitation of multilingual e-forums, covering experience compilation and the development of proposals.

Their constant enhancement and circulation are part of the Allies' mutual responsibilities. For better visibility, a section of the Web site, managed by a group of volunteer Allies, will present the tools and methods in an educational form.

## Supporting the Future Development of the Alliance and Making of the Constituent Charter Its Cement.

The non-institutional character of the Alliance is a great wealth, which guarantees its openness and diversity; on the other hand, it induces limits and weaknesses. In particular, the Alliance hasn't the legal bodies to exercise authority or the formal democratic mechanisms—such as a general assembly, a board of directors, or a voting system—usually associated with institutions.

In this second stage of the Alliance, which is just opening and is aiming for even more diversity, difficulties will inevitably arise, for instance in the application of the working procedures, in the interpretation of the Constituent Charter or compliance with it, in the previous-information requirement, or in the principle of good faith, without which the Alliance would lose its coherence.

Problems, and even conflicts that arise can often be solved through discussion among Allies. In cases where discussion does not prove to be enough, there needs to be a mechanism that can be resorted to before an actual conflict appears. For this, the Alliance must have an arbitration body, a support and intercession group, guarantor of the Constituent Charter. For it to be legitimate, this group must be made up of people well-known for their involvement in the Alliance, their personal disinterestedness, their own good faith, and their knowledge and understanding of its history.

The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World is already ten years old. The FPH, which took the responsibility launching it, feels it is its responsibility to constitute and set up, at the start of a new stage of its existence, a «support and intercession group,» guarantor of the Constituent Charter. The group will be constituted from a call for candidates and on the basis of the above-mentioned legitimacy criteria. Once constituted, the group will be renewed

through co-option, according to rules that it will have determined. The group will be made up of seven persons including a Foundation representative standing for Latin Europe geographically. The other six, three men and three women, will be from each of the other continents, that is: Africa, America, North Asia and China, Southeast Asia and Oceania, South Asia and India, and Northern and Eastern Europe.

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## Common Calendar for the 2004-2010 Stage

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### General Calendar

The establishment of a common calendar is, for any alliance, as basic as it is a paradox. Basic, because in the absence of a central authority, it is through the common calendar, the priorities that it proposes, and the deadlines that it fixes that everyone's different initiatives can be made consistent with one another. A paradox, for the same absence of a central authority makes it difficult to establish and implement this common calendar.

From 1994 to the World Citizens Assembly in 2001, such a calendar had been established in its main lines right from the start of the Alliance; it was, so to speak, an integral part of the legacy that every Ally was invited to adopt.

The reference calendar for the 2004-2010 stage has as its starting point the Charter of Human Responsibilities and the Agenda for the Twenty-first Century, and as its finishing line the organization of a «Constituent Assembly,» which would take its inspiration from the 2001 Assembly. This future Assembly would gather representatives of networks, citizens' alliances, and movements from all the socioprofessional spheres and the different regions of the world.

The value of this reference calendar depends on its acting as a starting point, as the sharing of a common projection. It will only be achieved insofar as effective initiatives are born, with their specific human, material, and financial means, to translate it into acts.

The 2004-2010 period could be organized into five main working directions:

- *building a global community* and making the Alliance one of its construction sites;

- *disseminating and adapting the Charter of Human Responsibilities in the different regions of the world and in different socioprofessional spheres*, as a common ethical pedestal on which to build the global community;
- *doing further work and circulating the Proposal Papers of the Alliance*, those that have been drafted so far and those that will be started on in the coming years;
- *translating into practice the proposals produced by the Alliance* by contributing to implementing changes from the individual to the global levels;
- *renewing democratic approaches* by giving rise to local or regional citizens assemblies benefiting from all of the Alliance's methodological experience.

## Development of Biennial Strategies

Beyond the Allies' decentralized initiatives, it is in the interest of the Alliance to have a *common strategic framework*, to be renewed every other year. The value of this framework, just as for the calendar, depends on the interest it generates among the whole of the Allies and on every Ally's willingness to contribute to implementing it.

A public Alliance e-debate will be organized every other year for a period of three months. Allies who wish to, will state their own view on the priorities for the period to follow. A facilitation committee made up of volunteers, as diverse as possible geographically and socioprofessionally, will make the commitment to study the whole of the proposals, then, thanks to the methodology developed within the Alliance, will determine a small number of strategic lines, which will be proposed to all the Allies as action priorities for the two years to follow.