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ÜSKÜDAR UNIVERSITY'S MANIFESTO FOR UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES AND RIGHTS

In a world witnessing the tragic unfolding of wars in Ukraine and Palestine, Üsküdar University's Manifesto for Universal Human Values and Rights stands as a beacon of hope and a powerful call to action. Signed by over 400,000 individuals and organizations, this groundbreaking document reaffirms our shared commitment to the fundamental principles of human dignity, equality, and justice.

The Manifesto, built upon 24 golden values, serves as a moral compass in a world grappling with conflict and suffering. Its principles, including justice, honesty, transparency, courage, compassion, and mercy, provide a framework for navigating the complexities of our time and striving for a more peaceful and just world.

The Wars in Ukraine and Palestine: A Violation of Fundamental Human Rights

The ongoing wars in Ukraine and Palestine represent a flagrant violation of the very values enshrined in the Manifesto. The senseless loss of life, the displacement of millions, and the destruction of communities are stark reminders of the devastating consequences of unchecked violence.

A Call for Solidarity and Action

In the face of these atrocities, the Manifesto's call to action is more urgent than ever. We must stand united in our condemnation of these wars and our unwavering commitment to the principles of human dignity, equality, and justice.

Üsküdar University, as a signatory of the Manifesto, is unwavering in its commitment to promoting peace and human rights. We believe that education has the power to transform individuals and societies, and we are dedicated to using our platform to foster a culture of respect, understanding, and tolerance.

Join Us in Making a Difference

We invite individuals and organizations worldwide to join us in this crucial endeavor. By signing the Manifesto and actively advocating for peace and human rights, we can collectively make a difference in ending the wars in Ukraine and Palestine and creating a world where the principles of the Manifesto are universally respected and protected.

Together, we can create a more just, equitable, and peaceful world for all.

«MANIFESTO FOR UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES AND RIGHTS»

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We, two academic institutions, representing both Asia and the Turkic World, namely L.N Gumilyov Eurasian National University Astana/Kazakhstan and T.C. Uskudar University, Istanbul/Turkiye, inspired by the life, works and legacy of our great personalities and humanists along the Silk Road, *inter alia*, Abu Nasr Al Farabi (870 - 950) and Hodja Ahmed Yasawi (1093 - 1166), as well United Nations (UN), UNESCO, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and greatest world thinkers, and we opened manifesto for universal human values and rights for signature.

UN charter defines major goals as follows.

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small,
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained,
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom [1].

Within the scope of international «Living Values Education Program (LVEP)» project supported by UNESCO, living values are prepared by UNICEF education cluster under 12 values as «happiness, honesty, humility, cooperation, freedom, love, peace, respect, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance, and unity» and recognized by UNESCO [2].

UN states that «All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.» in article 1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Subsequently, it is stated that «The right to life, the right to a fair trial, the right to equality, the right to liberty, the right to health, the right to asylum, the right to protection from torture, the right to obtain necessities, the right to travel, the right to marry, the right to property, the right to freedom of opinion, conscience, religion and expression, the right to assembly without aggression, the right to social security, the right to work, the right to education and learning, as well as duties and responsibilities towards the community are emphasised.»

In article 30, it is stated that «Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein» [3].

Abu Nasr Al-Farabi, world-scale scholar and philosopher from the Turkic World, one of the preeminent thinkers of the Islamic Golden Age, author of metaphysical, psychological, and political theories, Second Teacher of the World, discusses virtues under two titles as Ethical (I) and Intellectual (II).

Ethical values are defined as;

– Temperance, - Courage, - Generosity, -Justice,

And Intellectual values as;

– Wisdom, - Emotional intelligence, - Social Intelligence [4].

Thus, the most important points of ethics by Al-Farabi: true happiness is the possession of all these 7 virtues. Moreover, virtuous people Al-Farabi calls free in nature, and summarized that «*Our Planet Earth will become virtuous and transform into one universal excellent state only when all the nations co-operate and help each other for the purpose of reaching felicity*».

Sayyid Hodja Ahmed Yasawi (Hadrat-i Turkistan, Hazrat Sultan), world-famous theologian, spiritual mentor, religious scholar, educator, Turkic poet, philosopher, the most prominent religious figure in the history of Sufism (a mystic movement in Islam), founder of the first Turkic Sufi Order, in his poems highlights the importance of virtues such as wisdom (1), patience (2), and excellence (3), and how they contribute to genuine dignity (4) and personal growth (5) and emphasizes the virtues of love (6) and trust for/in the human being, Motherland and the Divine (7).

As a scientific reference, Howard Earl Gardner, the developer of the theory of multiple intelligences, places values as **24- character strengths under 6 Virtues** [5].

I-Wisdom: 1. Originality, 2. Curiosity, 3. Openness to Learning, 4. Open-mindedness, 5. Broad Perspective,

II-Courage 6. Honesty, 7. Courage, 8. Resourcefulness, 9. Enjoyment,

III-Humanity 10. Compassion, 11. Capacity to love and be loved, 12. Social Intelligence,

IV-Justice: 13. Fairness, 14. Leadership, 15. Citizenship,

V-Temperance 16. Forgiveness, 17. Humility, 18. Attention, 19. Self-control,

VI-Transcendence: 20. Appreciation of Beauty, 21. Gratitude, 22. Hope, 23. Humour, 24. Spirituality

As **Uskudar University**, we defined **24 golden values** as «Justice, honesty, transparency, courage, compassion and mercy, empathy and responsibility, trust, shame, humility, cooperation, halalisation, greeting, sincerity, forgiveness, generosity, altruism, gratitude, pluralism, participation, libertarianism,

accountability, reconciliation, innovation, loyalty» in the Higher Human Values Awards [6].

After analysing all the above-mentioned human values and virtues, we realized that following the World War II experienced by our civilization between 1939-1945, and by its results establishing UN in 1945, and publishing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the attitudes that practise, support and remain silent on widespread, brutal, disproportionate, systematic terror and violence have been increasing.

Humanity hoped that the twenty-first century would herald a new era of global cooperation. At the end of its first quarter this; however, we, unfortunately, witnessed that it turned out to be a mirage. Nationalism and xenophobia, inequalities and horrific violations of human rights are growing speedily. In fundamental ways, the world has gone in reverse and is once again in danger. The risks cannot be underestimated for the threat is a deadly war on a global scale. Because conflicts have deepened, and new dangers have emerged. Global anxieties about nuclear weapons are the highest since the cold war, moreover, climate change is moving vastly and fastly.

On the other hand, 2025, which opens the gate for the 21st Century's second quarter, will be a landmark milestone that expresses the momentous stand on the issues of war and peace, security, and development, as well as rule of law and shrinking humanitarian space. In particular, in the event of the failure of the international community to establish totally new pacific, safe, secure and prosperous rhetoric, philosophy, architecture, landscape, geopolitical, geoeconomic space and order for our fragile planet, the threat of apocalypse is noteworthy.

Recently, we have witnessed examples experienced in the Middles East, Central Asia, and Africa. The events in Gaza have been a tragic example. It is noteworthy **that the global conscience is disturbed** by the terror and violence reaching the level of genocide broadcast live on social media. There is a global questioning including university youth. In his famous quote, **Dante** (1265-1321) says «The deepest place in hell is reserved for those who remain unresponsive to evil».

After analysing all the above-mentioned human values, serious «**human and social inequality**» created by the psychopolitical events of recent 25 years become a threat to global peace. It is time to turn to ourselves, rather than to the enemies that politics shows us, and make enemies of the hatred, racism, colonialism, discrimination, marginalisation, and silence against evil. However, only together we can define, promote, and implement our universal virtues, settle conflicts, overcome hatred and defend shared universal values.

Today, we want to remind you of the values that have been neglected to make our generous planet more livable, fair, peaceful and sustainable, regardless of race, color, religion, language, belief, culture and country. Based on the events experienced, we, as two universities, predicted that universal concepts and ideas should be reviewed. As N.L. Guliyev National Eurasian University Astana/Kazakhstan and Uskudar University, Istanbul/Turkiye, we thought that it was a sin for the University community, which is the environment where human rights and freedom are experienced and discussed in the highest level, to remain silent in such a situation. We wanted to make our voices heard with an institutional understanding rather than an individual reaction and express our thoughts with a manifesto.

1. We resolutely oppose wars blinded by political, ethnic, religious, sectarian, ideological, etc. ambitions, terrorism and acts of violence originating from any minority or majority.

2. We strongly condemn the disproportionate use of force and the killing of unarmed people, civilians, and children.

3. Humanity has reached a level of development that can solve problems by talking in the 21st century. We strongly object to humanity being judged by primitive dogmas.

4. Economic history bears witness that our beautiful blue planet has a generosity and abundance to satisfy everyone.

5. We strongly reject the political «**God Complex**», which breeds greed, insatiability, irresponsibility, and ruthlessness. No one can ascribe divinity and holiness to themselves. Everyone is equal in terms of rights and opportunities.

6. There is a strong need to pivotally reform UN, as well as to re-read and digest the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

7. In the framework of UN reform, we propose that it is imperative to establish a «**World Parliament**», in which all the states of the world are equally represented.

8. No state should be privileged. If the goal is justice, the method in this age is libertarian, participatory and egalitarian democracy. We emphasize that «**Positive Politics**» is the solution for humanity.

9. The most important thing that distinguishes civilized societies from uncivilized societies is that they do not use violence as a method of seeking rights and solving problems. In principle, we reject the method of violence dating back to the savage period of humanity.

10. We declare that the human species has the potential to self-destruct if we fail to develop an egalitarian policy that considers the above-mentioned human rights and values.

As a result in today's world where faith in human rights weakened, the two university Senates discussed this manifesto and deemed it appropriate to sign it and declare it to all sensitive people.

REFERENCE

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2. <https://www.doc-developpement-durable.org/file/programmes-de-sensibilisations/Living Values PACE.pdf>
3. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
4. Tanabayeva A., MAAssalimova A., The Relevance Of Al-Farabi's Social And Ethical Views in The Modern World, KazNU Bulletin. Philosophy series. Cultural science series. Political Science Series. 3, (57). 2016
5. Gardner, H. (1983). Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences. New York: Basic Books
6. <https://insanidegerlerodulleri.com/>

In this vein, we hereby open our Manifesto for signature.

Help us reach our goal of 100.000 signatures on the eve of 2025. Then the Manifesto shall be circulated as a document of the UN General Assembly and Security Council: <https://uskudar.edu.tr/manifesto/manifesto-for-universal-human-values-and-rights.html>