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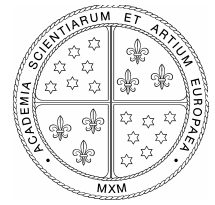
## CHARTER OF TOLERANCE

### PREAMBLE

Human life undergoes steady change. The specific elements of our time are the speed and the extent of far-reaching changes, which can lead to crises of self-orientation. This, in turn, may lead to a multitude of intolerance phenomena that need to be countered by a culture of tolerance.

To determine the basic virtue of tolerance seems to be one of the most important necessities of our life. The increase in individualism seduces many people not to care about others any more but to concentrate absolutely on their own world. This imperils the acceptance of human rights, which provide each human being with inherent values independent of their personal achievements and usefulness. The family becomes endangered, too, and is less and less able to perform its main task of being a stable core of human communities. The importance of people and all their surroundings is measured only in economic terms, which forces everyone into the wake of consumption and endangers any long-term development.

The global trend of people to becoming closer and to sharing their different traditions and world views makes it indispensable for them to reassure their cultural identity over and over again. Every person should accept and respect other people's differences and values. That will only be achieved if all can agree on the basic consensus of tolerance. And if a consensus cannot be established, there must exist at least a guarantee for peaceful coexistence.



We ask every individual to fulfil and practice the idea of tolerance in his or her sphere of influence in order to consolidate societal freedom and a peaceful future. We also like to remind all public officials of their duty to bring their influence to bear that everyone will recognize tolerance as a common good of all humankind.

### **Tolerance: The Virtue of Living Together**

1. **Tolerance** is the individual readiness to stand up for the dignity of any other human being.
2. **Tolerance** is part of a value system that emphasizes human dignity.
3. **Tolerance** requires a person's ability to understand other people and to respect different behaviour.
4. **Tolerance** is based on a self-confident point of view.
5. **Tolerance** serves as a protector of dignity and freedom of each human being within his or her own cultural environment.
6. The guaranty and continuing development of **tolerance** should be considered our common duty and the fundamental element of any education.

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Munich: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2000, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2000, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2001.

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