

Charter for guiding the exercise of socioeconomic responsibilities

The original version of the charter is in italics (version of the Alliance site)

We have the responsibility of making sure that the socioeconomic rights are lived out wherever they are established and make them known where they are respected through our day-to-day acts of production, trade, consumption, and economy.

All of us have the responsibility to make sure that Human Rights are present in our way of thinking and in our actions.

In order to ensure the blossoming of the human being, we must respond to the immaterial aspirations as much as to their material needs.

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The contribution toward the liberty and dignity of each person in his/her work, trade, and consumption implies that each one fight against the forms of exploitation, of alienation, and of socioeconomic domination.

The dignity of each person implies that they will contribute toward the liberty and dignity of others.

A lasting peace cannot be established based on a continuation and growth of the socioeconomic inequalities, poverty, and social exclusion.

or

Peace cannot be established without a social justice that expands the liberty of the less favored.

A lasting peace cannot be established without a justice that respects human dignity.

The exercise of economic power is only legitimate when it is at the service of the common good and is controlled by those over which this power is directly or indirectly exercised.

The exercise of power is only legitimate when it is at the service of the common good and is controlled by those over which this power is exercised.

In the economic decisions that deal with short-term priorities, we should make efforts to evaluate the long-term economic, social, and ecological consequences and adopt a stance of prudence.

In the decisions that deal with short-term priorities, we should make efforts to evaluate the long-term consequences and adopt a stance of prudence.

The consumption of natural resources in order to respond to essential human needs for life should be in conjunction with an active protection of the environment, which in turn meets up to the disparities between generations and among countries.

The consumption of the natural resources in order to respond to the human needs should be in conjunction with an active protection of the environment.

The search for economic prosperity is only fair if it improves the situation of the less favored.

The search for economic prosperity through the mechanisms the market provides should be integrated with a concern to divide the wealth up fairly.

Human development passes through the respect and development of the plurality of the forms of wealth and of mercantile, non-mercantile, and non-monetary trade.

When taking advantage of the financial system, we should favor the non-mercantile trade, which is indispensable for the development of the human being.

The liberty of scientific research implies in the acceptance of it being limited to ethical criteria that is free of any subordination to economic interests.

The liberty of scientific research implies in the acceptance of limits by ethical criteria.

Education based on competition and the search for material success should be balanced out with education for cooperation and for solidarity.

Education focused on excellence and based on competition should be balanced out with education for solidarity and for the culture of peace.

To deal with the challenges of today and the future, it is just as important to regulate the worldwide economic interdependencies as it is to protect the diversity of the means of production and of local trade, and recognize its richness.

To deal with the current and future challenges, it is just as important to unite ourselves in the action to protect cultural diversity and to take advantage of its richness.

The full exercise of our economic and social responsibilities implies that each one act in a way so that another person's material conditions for exercising responsibility improve.

Supplementary Principle

Charter of Social Responsibilities

Based on an interpretation of Amartya Sen

Preamble

The question of social responsibility is central to the ethical and economic reflection of Amartya Sen, Nobel Economics Prize winner in 1998. The link between ethics and economy is the theme of her work "Economy is a Moral Science" (Sen, 1999). Based on quotes from Sen's text, it seemed possible to the author that a charter of social and socioeconomic responsibilities could be drawn up.

Development of capitalism and social responsibilities

"With the birth and expansion of capitalism, interdependencies and social interactions in modern societies faced a constant increase sustained by the rapid expansion of the commercial trade and of social relations."¹ "With the increase in the level of interdependency, it has become natural to think about extending reciprocal responsibilities. Despite capitalism being ferociously individualistic, it has contributed in practice to this tendency towards integration, by making our lives all the more interdependent. Furthermore, the unprecedented growth in economic prosperity experienced by modern economies makes it possible to take on social obligations which were simply not financially viable before."²

Principles

1. *"Social responsibility is based on the recognition of the fact that the life of individuals in society ends up in interdependencies, which implies in reciprocal obligations linked to the economic, political, and social relations that they mutually maintain."*³
2. *"The fact that the greatest prosperity of some can be compatible with the survival of others in poverty, implies in a special social responsibility with those to whom the economic processes favor less."*⁴
3. The exercise of individual, civil, political, and economic liberty implies in a social responsibility, or shall we say obligation, with others and with society.
4. Individual liberty imposes on each one of us the responsibility of defending the civil and political rights of another, but also the responsibility of favoring the growth of the skills that truly make the differences for people to lead the lives they choose."⁵

1 Sen A., "A economia é uma ciência moral ", La découverte, Paris, 1999, p.92.

2 Sen A., *ibid.*

3 Sen A., *ibid.*, p.119.

4 Principle inspired in the following phrase: "The fact that the greatest prosperity of some can be compatible with the survival of others in poverty, reinforced the arguments in favor of a special social responsibility for those to whom the economic processes favor less." Sen A., *ibid.*, p 120.

5 Principle inspired in the following phrase: "Society's responsibility to individual liberty implies that we give importance to the expansion of those 'skills' that really make it possible for people to become different." pp. 64-65.

5. The exercise of our individual liberty includes our responsibility of ensuring the socioeconomic conditions that make us capable of behaving as autonomous and responsible individuals, such as caring for health, the guarantee of a minimum level of education, the fight against poverty, and of social security.⁶
6. The effective possibility of the populations to participate in the public decisions that affect their day-to-day life represents one of the fundamental social responsibilities that without, we cannot deal with the socioeconomic dilemmas on our planet.⁷
7. The exercise of our social responsibility implies in the public discussion of the economic policies and of the private socioeconomic choices that affect the populations and the environment.⁸
8. The possibility of participating in the processes and in the economic decisions determines the respective part of the social responsibility of each one.⁹
9. The economic and social inequalities are only legitimate if they improve the position of the less favored.¹⁰
10. Social justice, or in other words, the reduction of the economic and social inequalities, is legitimate if it expands the liberty of the less favored, and therefore their capacity to exercise their social liberty.

6 Principle inspired in the following phrase: "These responsibilities do not simply include measures such as health care, the guarantee of a minimum income, the fight against poverty, and social security (without which the exercise of liberty would be extremely restricted)." *ibid.*, p.120.

7 Principle inspired in the following passage: "These responsibilities do not simply include measures such as health care, the guarantee of a minimum income, the fight against poverty. The possibility of effectively participating represents one of the fundamental social responsibilities, that without, we cannot deal with our social dilemmas."

8 Principle inspired in the phrase, "Consider the responsibility as a social responsibility includes the participation in the crucial decisions of the people involved." *ibid.*, p. 122.

9 Principle inspired in the following phrase: "The possibility itself of participating in the decision process that determines the respective part of the social responsibility and of the financial strength, is part of the most elementary social responsibility that exists." *ibid.*, p. 96.

10 This is once again taking up the Principle of Difference, by John Rawls.