

Charter of Principles

Approved on 28 March 2006



Brazilian Committee on
Human Rights and
Foreign Policy

Preamble

Considering that the international relations of Brazil must be governed by the prevalence of human rights (art. 4, II of the Brazilian Federal Constitution);

Considering the principles and obligations contained in the Brazilian Federal Constitution, particularly those aimed at protecting and promoting fundamental rights and guarantees (Title II of the Constitution);

Considering the fundamental commitment to democratic participation and oversight, and to publicity and morality that should permeate all spheres of the exercise of power by the State, embodied in our Constitution (art. 1, II; art. 37, main clause of the Constitution);

Considering that foreign policy, while the primary preserve of the Executive (art. 84, VII, VIII, XIV, XIX and XX), is also subject to participation and oversight by the Legislative (art. 49, I, II and X; art. 50, paragraph 1) and the Judiciary (art. 102, I; art. 5, XXXV of the Constitution);

Considering the priorities established by the National Human Rights Program (2002), that specifies as the duty of the Brazilian State, among other things: the dissemination of the concept of human rights as a necessary and indispensable condition for the formulation, execution and evaluation of public policies; the implementation of international acts, declarations and treaties to which Brazil is a party and the observance of the rights and duties embodied in the Constitution, especially those contained in art. 5 (respectively, art. 2, III; art. 2, IV; art. 2, VI of Decree No. 4.229/2002)

Considering the regional commitment of Brazil to the main Inter-American human rights instruments, particularly the American Convention on Human Rights (1969);

Considering the international commitment of Brazil to the main international human right instruments, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966);

The representatives of civil society organizations, international organizations and the three branches of the Republic, gathered in Brasília and listed below, sanctioned the creation of the Brazilian Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy:

Baha'i do Brasil Community, Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis (Ibase), Conectas Human Rights, Forum of National Human Rights Organizations (FENDH), Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), Human Rights Studies Center of UNIEURO, Institute for Socioeconomic Studies (Inesc), Global Justice, Lower House Commission on Human Rights and Minorities (CDHM), Migrations and Human Rights Institute (IMDH), National Human Rights Movement (MNDH), National STD/AIDS Program (Ministry of Health), National Union of Finance and Control Analysts and Officers (UNACON), Office of Congressman Orlando Fantazzini, Office of the Federal Prosecutor for the Rights of the Citizen (Public Prosecution Service), PPS Party Leadership in the Lower House and the Staff of Congressman Geraldo Thadeu, Senate Commission on Human Rights and Participative Legislation. In addition to these organizations, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Brazil agreed to provide logistical support during the initiative's first year (see the list of current Committee members at www.dhpoliticaexterna.org.br).

Mission

The mission of the Brazilian Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy is to:

"Promote the prevalence of human rights in Brazilian foreign policy and strengthen civil participation and social control over this policy, through mechanisms of dialogue between the branches of the Brazilian State and civil society".

Commitments

The organizations that form the Brazilian Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy agree to develop activities related to the promotion of human rights and the monitoring of Brazilian foreign policy that has an impact on fundamental rights and, through the Committee, to:

- 1) Influence and monitor the decision-making processes in Brazilian foreign policy that impact the protection and promotion of human rights, including, among other things, the negotiations, ratification and implementation of regional and international instruments related to or directly affecting the protection of human rights;
- 2) Influence and monitor the process of defining the Brazilian government's position in multilateral bodies and bilateral relations that could affect the protection and promotion of human rights in other countries;

Furthermore, the organizations that endorse this charter of principles agree to respect the diversity of interests of their fellow Committee members and to pursue the promotion of social dialogue and non-partisan discussion on foreign policy and human rights.

Courses of action

The Committee will develop activities along the following courses of action, to be detailed in the planning approved at the start of each year:

- 1) Promote the creation and strengthening of formal mechanisms for civil participation in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of Brazilian human rights foreign policy;
- 2) Create opportunities for articulation and dialogue between the various governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of Brazilian human rights foreign policy;
- 3) Promote human rights and foreign policy education activities, with a view to qualifying the various actors involved in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of this policy;
- 4) Produce and disseminate information on the preparation and handling of Brazilian human rights foreign policy in order to make it more widely known and transparent.

For more information, go to:

www.dhpoliticaexterna.org.br

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