

Charta Mppu Charter

Movimento Politico per l'Unità - Politics for Unity Movement *

PREAMBLE

Politics, at local and international levels, is under enormous pressure today, caused by global issues which are often unprecedented. At the same time the world is increasingly interdependent and shows a new awareness of the dignity and rights of individuals and peoples. As often happens in history, it is precisely in these complex scenarios, when facing great challenges, that new ideas, new approaches, and new perspectives develop.

This is what happened during the Second World War in relation to the initial ideas put forward by Chiara Lubich¹ who began promoting mutual love among peoples, having perceived that it was possible, thus bringing light into the darkness of the strife ridden 20th century.

This ideal of unity² sees political action as "the love of all loves"³. It brings together both personal dreams and hopes for a better society into a common project and encourages people to give of themselves for the sake of humanity. Out of all this emerged the Politics for Unity Movement (MPPU), an international experience in political innovation that aims to:

- **contribute to a future that does not bring about unfair or uniform globalization, but a world united by political relations that express respect and mutual love between social groups, cities, states, and peoples, in which all recognize a rotating authoritative body for matters concerning the whole world.**
- **promote and defend the fundamental values of the person and of peoples, favoring the weak, implementing universal brotherhood politically, supporting economic policies based on the social use of goods and the global sharing of resources, respect for the environment and the paths of justice and freedom;**
- **support institutional structures that respond to the dynamics of unity and distinction**

¹ Chiara Lubich (1920-2008), who founded the Focolare Movement in 1943, is considered one of the most significant spiritual personalities of the twentieth century. She was at the forefront of ecclesial communion, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue and dialogue with people without formal faith, a tireless promoter of a culture of unity and brotherhood among peoples. (www.centrochiaralubich.org)

² "... the ideal of unity that animated my existence and that of the Focolare Movement, which I represent, is an ideal that we recognize as a gift that God wanted to make to the people of our time. It is a free gift, intended for all. It does not require registration and memberships. It does not divide people according to their culture, religion, or political affiliation, but rather illuminates each on what unites him or her to others, emphasizing the appropriate distinctiveness and originality of the contribution that each person can bring to the common design of humanity ... what Jesus prayed before his death: "Father ... that all may be one" (Jn 17:21). "(Chiara Lubich, United Europe for a United World, European Movement Conference, Madrid, December 3, 2002).

³ "In reality, the task of this manner of "political love" is to create and preserve conditions which enable all other types of love to blossom: the love of young people who want to get married and who need a house and job; the love of those who want to study and who need schools and books; the love of those who have their own business and who need roads and railways, clear and reliable rules.... Thus, politics is the love of all loves, which gathers into the unity of a common design the resources of persons and groups and provides the means for each one to freely fulfill his or her own vocation. Politics also fosters collaboration among all, bringing together the needs with the resources, the questions with the answers, instilling mutual trust among all. Politics can be compared to the stem of a flower which supports and nourishes the renewed budding of petals in the community." (Chiara Lubich, Innsbruck, 9 November 2001. "A Thousand Cities for Europe" European Conference).

* Updated letterhead and English translation of "Movimento Politico per l'Unità" - June 2020

between the various levels of political communities, and support shared and relational decision-making models which are based on well-functioning social networks and institutions and ongoing participatory procedures which uphold democracy in every nation;

*The Centres of the Politics for Unity Movement -MPPU
on behalf of all those who adhere to it in the whole world,
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meeting on 23 and 24 June 2016 at Castel Gandolfo, Italy
committed themselves to put this present Charter into practice:*

PART ONE PRAXIS, THOUGHT, FORMATION, COOPERATION, DIS- SEMINATION

Art. 1 – POLITICAL ACTION

Those who adhere to MPPU – openly and freely, and who hold office in institutions or in parties, or in public office at any level, or who work in the field of social and political research, or are committed to active citizenship – endeavor in practice:

To build **relationships inspired by universal fraternity**: among themselves, in their own parties and among different parties, in institutions, in all spheres of public life, in relations between States;

To understand in depth the history, role and purpose of their own political project and that of others; the institution in which they work and other institutions; their own city and other cities; their own people and other peoples ... by acting toward others as they would like others to act toward them⁴;

To constantly renew genuine political love towards **their city, their region or their own country**, while knowing they are working **in and for a global political horizon**;

To make their own the present sufferings and as yet unhealed wounds of persons and peoples; to take part in action aimed at **healing divisions and conflicts**, by promoting pathways to reconciliation;

To put forward fair programs in which **the most disadvantaged citizens and peoples** are given priority in political agendas, by promoting the culture of giving, knowing that this can give rise to positive and unforeseen events which **multiply the expected results a hundredfold**;

To consider **political engagement as a backdrop to the political role of the entire social body** and to promote dialogue with and among economic, social, and cultural realities, in order to direct all their efforts towards the common good;

⁴ There is a universal law, expressed in the sacred books of the major religions and wisdom texts of many cultures. It's so precious that it is called the Golden Rule: "To do unto others what we would them to do to us and to not do unto others what we would not like them to do to us." (cf. Luke 6:31)

To renew constantly **the pact that binds elected officials and voters** well beyond election day, paying attention to ethical, participatory and programmatic aspects of the mandate to which everyone must contribute, being **detached from any personal gain**, according to their duties and responsibilities;

To develop **responsibility and expertise in political, technical, or diplomatic action, or in research** and to seize every opportunity to make their contribution to the renewal of political style, of individual policies, international relations, laws, and local and international institutional structures;

To exercise their political role, or their technical role, at the service of the common good and shared goods, placing themselves above every partial interest, **being accountable for their actions and their use of resources** with regularity and transparency.

Art. 2 – A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

The **political culture** which MPPU brings and wishes to spread, develops in the encounter and dialogue between the ideal of unity, with its good practices, and political thought at work in history and contemporary reality⁵.

Its **commitment to research and study** occurs mainly in collaboration with Abba School⁶ and the Sophia University Institute⁷ – both of which, like the MPPU, are expressions of the Focolare Movement – through university and post-graduate courses, with research groups and scholars dedicated to approaching various fields of knowledge in the light of the ideal of unity.

To this end the MPPU prefers **interdisciplinary and intercultural work**, in the belief that mutual enrichment can help shed light on the values of individual nations⁸, towards a shared understanding of the world situation, which can be a reference point for a new humanism founded on the culture of unity.

⁵ The *inundations* are a result of a particular form of dialogue – the dialogue with the world of culture – which the Focolare Movement began some years ago. It is a dialogue between the wisdom which the charism of unity has to offer and the various fields of human knowledge and endeavor, such as politics, economics, sociology, the natural sciences, communication, education, philosophy, the arts, health, ecology, law, and still others. (Chiara Lubich, Message to the Voluntaryfest, Budapest, 16 September 2006)

⁶ Study Centre of the Focolare Movement, active since 1991.

⁷ The Sophia University Institute is a centre for academic research and formation, in which life and thought, diverse cultures and disciplines meet in a strong relational context. It is based at Loppiano - Incisa in Val d'Arno (Florence). In future it is envisaged that local branches will be established in other countries, with specific research objectives. <http://www.sophiauniversity.org>

⁸ I dream of greater encounter and mutual enrichment among the various cultures in the world, so that they may give rise to a world culture that highlights those values which have always been the true wealth of individual peoples, and I dream that these values will be seen by all as global wisdom. ... I dream of a united world in which the various peoples all recognize one another in the rotation of a single authority. In a word, I dream of already witnessing the new heavens and new earth, as far as this is possible here on earth. I am dreaming of many things, but we have a millennium to see them come true." (Chiara Lubich, New City 2000, No.1)

Art 3 - FORMATION

The MPPU promotes **political formation based on the testimony and the culture** it brings, valuing experiences, ideas and sound political achievements which have developed in different historical, geographical and cultural contexts. To this end it organizes:

- **periodic meetings** where politicians, diplomats, civil servants, students and active citizens can share experiences, ideas and projects in relation to a) the ideal of unity; b) its implications for life and political action; c) best practices;
- **conferences, seminars, panels and forums** addressing specific subjects and enabling discussion in an atmosphere of mutual listening and cooperation, respecting different viewpoints and affiliations, with the purpose of evolving ideas and shared solutions, which can be made available with- in their spheres of action;
- training courses and debates **for young people** interested in studying and renewing politics and policies; interdisciplinary and intercultural formation opportunities in communities, workshops on ideas and concrete initiatives for active citizenship and political participation in local realities or in international and national institutions.

Art. 4 - COOPERATION

MPPU constantly cooperates with similar organizations in the Movement involved in **dialogue with contemporary culture** in various social fields and disciplines and thus expresses one of the specific aims⁹ of the Movement.

It acts in synergy with the New Humanity Movement¹⁰ and Youth for a United World¹¹ which, inspired by the same ideal of unity, set up **active citizenship projects** or contribute to awareness raising, or seek to renew individual human activities and social structures in order to enhance the effectiveness of these activities.

The international Center collaborates with the NGO **New Humanity** regarding its contacts with international institutions¹².

It also supports shared activities promoted with or by other associations **or by organizations and institutions that have aims similar to its own.**

Art. 5 - DISSEMINATION

To make available and **disseminate its ideas and experiences**, MPPU uses public initiatives, studies and publications, suitable and effective current means of communication, and any other appropriate initiative.

⁹ cf: General Statutes of the Focolare Movement, Specific end, Art. 6

¹⁰ New Humanity – the social dimension of the Focolare Movement, wishes to contribute to the renewal of relationships, structures, and the life of cities through professional and civic commitment (or active citizenship) by seeking courageously, and together with others, concrete solutions to the great questions of humankind. www.umanitanuova.org

¹¹ Youth for a United world (Y4UW) are present in 180 countries, with different cultures, religions and nationalities. They are united by their choice to live for universal fraternity and to prepare themselves, - through study and civic engagement – to make this a key element of politics, economics, work, safeguarding the environment, sport, communications, science, and the arts. www.y4uw.org www.unitedworldproject.org

¹² International NGO, active in over 100 countries. Since 1987, New Humanity enjoys Special Consultative Status with ECO-SOC of the UN and General Consultative Status since 2005. Since 2008, it has been recognized as an NGO partner of UNE-SCO. It takes part in the programs of the European Commission.

PART TWO

THE NETWORK OF MPPU CENTERS AND RELATIONS WITH THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT FOR MPPU'S INTERNAL ORGANIZATION, PRESIDENCY AND RESOURCES.

Art. 6 – THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The activities of MPPU in the world are coordinated by a **minimal service structure** that consists of an International Center made up of three to nine people. All its members are committed to a personal and appropriate commitment to engage actively in the tasks of the Center and to take part in regular meetings. They are chosen with an open and transparent deliberative and elective process, according to Articles 8, 9 and 10 following.

Art. 7 – THE PRESIDENT of MPPU, CO-PRESIDENT AND GENERAL SECRETARIAT

The President **supports and facilitates the work of the entire MPPU network worldwide**. He/she ensures that the goals of this Charter are always pursued at all levels. He/she is responsible for the relationship between the MPPU Centers in the world and between the MPPU and the Center of the Focolare Movement with its branches. He/she officially represents MPPU International.

He/she commits to be based at the International Centre. He/she ceases to exercise his/her political office in institutions and political parties while in office.

He/she carries out this task in close collaboration with a Co-President and a Secretary who have general organizational roles. The President, Co-President and Secretary work **to ensure that the basic principles of MPPU are applied in internal and external relations and in any initiative**.

Art. 8 – THE PARTICIPATIVE AND DELIBERATIVE PROCESS

During the six months prior to its expiration (see Art. 13), the International Centre shall prepare a final report on its mandate to be sent to the National Centres and the President of the Focolare Movement. Within the same month, every National Centre, established or under development (see Art.12), prepares and sends to the Secretary at the International Centre **a list of no more than five candidates for the renewal of the International Centre**, accompanied by photos, with brief curriculum vitae and other presentation materials which can be disseminated with prior informed consent.

The Secretary of the International Centre checks that these applications meet the essential criteria expressed in Articles 6 and 7. He/she arranges for the translation of the curriculum vitae in the main languages used by the National Centres and within the fifth month before the expiry of the mandate, sends that list to **all National Centres (established and under development)** and, for information, to the President of the Focolare Movement.

The National Centres organize, follow and collect the results of a **participative and deliberative process**, which has at least the following characteristics: a) an in-depth dialogue within the National Centre and each local centre; b) an extensive and open involvement of MPPU adherents in different territories (see Article 1); c) a well prepared deliberative phase in which an international plan of action might be identified and the list of three candidates as indicated in the following paragraph.

Within forty-five days of the expiry of the mandate of the International Centre, **the National Centres** (established and under development) send **their programmatic indications and proposed list of three candidates** to the Secretary of the International Centre. The three candidates must include at least one candidate with a different nationality and a different geographical origin to the ones who currently form the National Centre. No more than one candidate may be nominated in addition to those on the list sent from the International Centre. In this case, the National Centre must furnish appropriate explanation and all relevant background information concerning such a candidate.

Art. 9 - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE CENTER

At least thirty days before its expiration, the International Centre sends the results of a participative and deliberative process, as indicated in the previous article, to the **President of the Focolare Movement**. The President, taking account of these, and being able to choose another person, **appoints the members of the International Centre** (see Art. 6).

Art. 10 - THE FIRST MEETING AND ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENCY

The International Centre composed as such is convened by the senior member for a programmatic work session lasting no less than three days. Preceded by a thorough discussion, the first act of this session is the **election, by a two thirds majority, of the next President and Co-President**. They choose the **Secretary** from among the remaining members of the new International Centre.

At the end of this session the following documents will be sent to all the centres (both established and under development): a) the composition of the International Centre; b) **the programmatic document of their term of office accompanied by a three-year budget of expenditure**; c) **the programme for their first year in office**. The same will be delivered to the President of the Focolare Movement.

Art. 11 - THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL CENTERS

The MPPU National and Local Centers are composed following political geography and in coordination with the International Center. They are composed, according to the development of MPPU in a place, in a way **similar to that** of the International Centre in accordance with Articles 8, 9, 10 and 13 of this Charter, except that the appointment of the members, as provided in Article 9, takes place by mutual agreement between the International Center (or the National Center when it comes to centers of regions or cities) and those who represent the Focolare Movement, at every territorial level.

Where such centers are not yet established, the initiatives of MPPU may be entrusted – by the International Centre, or by the National Centers, depending on the territorial level, with the agreement of the delegates of the Focolare Movement in that place – **to a person who coordinates its work on a temporary basis in that developmental phase**.

The Local and National Centres, and the International Centre, while maintaining their independence and different tasks, keep up ongoing mutual contacts, thus contributing to the agenda and taking **shared responsibility** for major decisions affecting the development of MPPU worldwide.

Art. 12 - THE QUALIFIED MAJORITY

In case of decisions to be taken by majority vote, each of the governing bodies, referred to in Articles 6 and 11, acts on the basis of a **two-thirds** majority of the members. The votes that may occur during the participative and deliberative process, under Article 8, should reach a two-thirds majority of those present.

Art. 13 - DURATION OF MANDATES AND REPLACEMENT OF MEMBERS

All members of the International, National and Local Centres remain in office for **three years** and may be reappointed for **not more than two consecutive terms**. In case of resignation or impediment, the President of the Focolare Movement, or whoever represents her at the National or Local Centres, makes new appointments in agreement with the International Centre (or with the National Centre when it comes to the Centres of regions or certain cities). If those resignations or impediments concern the President, Co-President or Secretary of the MPPU Centres, the process indicated in Article 10 is followed. In this case, it is possible to vote by correspondence, or by other means of telecommunication.

Art. 14 - PROJECTS AND RESOURCES

The International Centre can take advantage of collaboration with New Humanity or other appropriately identified NGOs, as entities through which it may also apply for appropriate institutional funding. The National and Local Centres can, in their countries, make use of similar organizations and associations at national and regional levels.

The MPPU subsidizes its activities following the principles of **sobriety, transparency and public knowledge**, also with contributions freely given by those who share its aims and/or projects.

Reports of activities carried out by MPPU, including balance sheets, will be drawn up by the individual Centres and published on their own websites or other sites they are associated with.

Participation by members of the MPPU Centres, at all levels, is free and not remunerated, except for the Secretary General, whose collaboration may be either gratuitous or in consideration of payment¹³.

The Centres can benefit from voluntary or paid collaboration which, in cases where they require the partnership with NGOs or other organizations, must be agreed beforehand.

Art. 15 - APPROVAL AND REVISION

This Charter, drawn up after a participatory process across MPPU worldwide, was presented to the General Council of the Focolare Movement on 3rd May 2016 which approved it. It comes into force after it is signed by the representatives of the MPPU Centres gathered at Castel Gandolfo, Rome, Italy, on 24th June 2016. All revisions proposed by MPPU or by the General Council of the Focolare Movement, must follow the same approval process.

¹³ "except for the Secretary General, whose collaboration may be either gratuitous or in consideration of payment": Additional amendment, proposed to the MPPU Centers and MdF Central Delegates, approved on 20/04/2018.