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Some Alternative and/or Complementary Declarations to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

*«Respecting human rights involves a conscious effort
to find our common essence beyond our apparent
divisions, our temporary differences, and our
ideological and cultural barriers».*

(Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former UN Secretary-General)

I. INTRODUCTION

Since 1948, the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) have been developed and further defined in treaties, declarations and resolutions adopted by United Nations and by several regional bodies, including the Organization of African Unity. Contributing to this process were many of the formerly colonized countries in Africa or countries in Asia and elsewhere that had been denied a voice in defining the nature of human rights and fundamental freedoms. All of these treaties, declarations and resolutions reinforce the universally held belief that every government is obliged to protect the rights of the people within its borders. Despite this, governments continue to violate human rights and often try to justify their actions on grounds of «security» or «sovereignty». It is therefore up to the international community as a whole to protect these rights on behalf of people all over the world.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights represents a fundamental instrument that had, has and will have a great impact on the democratic development of every society and on the proper observance of human rights. The principles enounced in UDHR represent a true cornerstone for the global community and a necessity in preserving human's fundamental rights and liberties. Nevertheless the present society is in a continuous development and different parts of the world have different traditions, backgrounds and ways of thinking. That is why they have adopted declarations aimed at completing, or becoming an alternative, to the UDHR.

This paper will carry out a brief analysis of the most relevant of these declarations, and will try to draw some conclusions on their pretense to complete, update and improve the impressive legacy of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2. THE CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

On August the 5th, 1990, representatives of fifty-four Muslim countries met in Cairo and signed the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (hereafter called the Cairo Declaration), to serve as guidance for the member states in the matters of human rights.

The Cairo Declaration, aims to preserve Islamic social and economic values; promote solidarity amongst member states; increase cooperation in social, economic, cultural, scientific, and political areas; uphold international peace and security; and advance education, particularly in the fields of science and technology. Muslim opinion remains divided on the relationship between international human rights principles and the Islamic legal heritage, and on the compatibility between the two.

On Human Rights Day, 10 December 2007, the Ambassador of Pakistan, spoke glowingly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, noting the contribution made to its creation and to the two international covenants by many Muslim countries. He then went on to claim that the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam: «is not an alternative, competing worldview on human rights. It complements the Universal Declaration as it addresses religious and cultural specificity of the Muslim countries». However, when analysing the provisions of the Cairo Declaration in comparison with those embedded at the UDHR, it can be easily noticed the contrast between them, due to the difference of culture, thinking and background which had an important impact on the elaboration of the two documents.

The Cairo Declaration prescribes that

«All men are equal in terms of basic human dignity and basic obligations and responsibilities, without any discrimination on the basis of race, color, language, belief, sex, religion, political affiliation, social status, entitled to human sanctity and the protection of one's good name and honor during one's life and after one's death.»

While in regards to gender equality, it specifies that

«Woman is equal to man in human dignity, and has her own rights to enjoy as well as duties to perform, and has her own civil entity and financial independence, and the right to retain her name and lineage.»

In relation to colonialism and the peoples' rights, the declaration provides that

«Human beings are born free, and no one has the right to enslave, humiliate, oppress or exploit them. Colonialism of all types being one of the most evil forms of enslavement is totally prohibited. Peoples suffering from colonialism have the full right to freedom and self-determination. It is the duty of all States peoples to support the struggle of colonized peoples for the liquidation of all forms of and occupation, and all States and peoples have the right to preserve their independent identity and control over their wealth and natural resources.»

Some guarantees of freedom of religion, association, or the press, and assurances of equality and equal protection under the law are less approached than one might consider appropriate in this declaration. Muslim opinion remains divided on the relationship between international human rights principles and the Islamic legal heritage, and on the compatibility between the two. More than that, «all the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic *Shari'ah*», and «the Islamic *Shari'ah* is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification to any of the articles of this Declaration».¹

However, it is in the Preamble of both texts where the main difference between UDHR and the Cairo Declaration can be observed, since in the UDHR there is no mention of any religion while, on the other hand, the Cairo Declaration enshrines values and principles also provided by the UDHR, but with a religious connotation. For example in Article 11a states that: «Human beings are born free, and no one has the right to enslave, humiliate, oppress or exploit them, and there can be no subjugation but to God the Most-high». Therefore, the Cairo Declaration can be considered more an alternative instrument than a complementary one.

3. THE BANGKOK DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The Bangkok Declaration on Human Rights signed in 1993 represents «a carefully balanced construction bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds».² Its importance and multispectral purpose qualifies it as a complimentary Declaration to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Bangkok Declaration claims to contain «the aspirations and commitments of the Asian region»,³ and its recognition of the principle of universality is linked to a claim of respect for cultural diversity.

The Asian states express a positive attitude towards human rights in general, regarding them as attempts to regulate the use of state power within a

¹ Peter Bailey: «The creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights» (available online at www.universalrights.net/main/creation.htm).

² Susan Koshy «From Cold War to Trade War: Neocolonialism and Human Rights», *Social Text* Vol. 17, No. 1 (1999), pp. 1-32 (available online at www.jstor.org/stable/466713).

³ Rebecca Wallace, Anne Holliday, Adam Gearey, *International Protection of Human Rights*, University of London Press, London, 2005.

system of sovereign states, and to prevent abuse of governments' drastic power over the lives of their citizens. This respect is also confirmed by the reaffirmation of their commitment to the principles contained in the UDHR, «within the context of international cooperation, and not through confrontation and the imposition of incompatible values». The declaration stresses «the importance of education and training in human rights at the national, regional and international levels and the need for international cooperation aimed at overcoming the lack of public awareness of human rights». More critically, the Asian states emphasize the urgent

«need to democratize the United Nations system, by eliminating selectivity and enhancing procedures and mechanisms in order to strengthen international cooperation, based on principles of equality and mutual respect».

Due to its recent nature it contains assertions related to poverty which is considered one of the major obstacles «hindering the full enjoyment of human rights». What is more, it condemns

«terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations as one of the most dangerous threats to the enjoyment of human rights and democracy, threatening the territorial integrity and security of States and destabilizing legitimately constituted governments.»

One of the most famous sentences of the declaration states that

«while human rights are universal in nature, they must be considered in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds.»

Hence, recognition of the principle of universality appears linked to a claim of respect for cultural diversity.

An interesting point of the declaration is the existence of human rights in the economic context. The Asian states «express concern that international human rights mechanisms relate mainly to one category of rights» and stress the «interdependence and indivisibility of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, and the need to give equal emphasis to all categories of human rights» and to «address them in an integrated and balanced manner together with development, democracy and social justice». They point to international macroeconomic factors, as reflected in the «widening gap between the North and the South, as the main obstacles to the realization of the right to development».

The Bangkok Declaration articulated the concern among some of the region's political elite, about the predominance of liberal cultural values within the international system. The Declaration was an attempt to re-orient human rights discourse in recognition of the value and importance of cultural difference.

As a diplomatic text such as the Bangkok Declaration can be supposed to be a carefully balanced construction, identifying the «Asian human rights agenda»

solely with the controversial statements on the Declaration would be a biased representation of it.⁴

4. THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

African Charter on Human and People's Rights was profoundly inspired by the traditions and values of African society, including African concepts of law and rights, as well as influenced by many negative historical experiences that have affected the continent in recent and distant times. Even if in some academic circles it has been considered as «the least developed or effective, the most controversial of the regional human rights systems, modest in its objectives and flexible in its means»,⁵ it is undeniable that the African Charter guarantees certain human rights and fundamental freedoms for individuals.

The African Charter may be characterized as an original and innovative instrument in the field of human rights. It is, indeed, clearly distinguishable from other regional and universal legal instruments in this area, as it recognizes the «people» as the holder and beneficiary of such «third generation» rights or «rights of solidarity» as the right to development, peace and a satisfactory environment. African Charter is not only an instrument that can be read in a manner fully compatible with the standards laid down by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but also may be credited with a real «added value». ⁶ The African Charter is somewhat an avant-garde or revolutionary legal instrument founded on existing or emerging universal cultural values, such as «solidarity» (between individuals, through the enshrinement of one's duties in parallel with his rights, between peoples, whether or not they form States and between States parties to it should reflect the African conception of human rights [and] should take as a pattern the African philosophy of law and meet the needs of Africa.⁷

Both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter stipulate that everyone has equal rights and freedoms. If the UDHR enumerates the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, the Charter completes these enumeration with references to ethnic group, tribe or clan affiliation. Both the UDHR and the Charter declare that everyone is entitled to respect for his or her life and safety. It also states that no one may be

⁴ Eva Brems: *Human Rights: Universality and Diversity*, Kluwer Law International, Dordrecht, 2001, p. 56

⁵ Malcom Evans, Rachel Murray: *The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights: the System in Practice 1986-2006*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p. 25.

⁶ Fatsah Ouguergouz: «The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, A Comprehensive Agenda for Human Dignity and Sustainable Democracy in Africa», *UN Chronicle* June-August (2004), available online at http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1309/is_2_41/ai_n6363959/

⁷ Fatsah Ouguergouz: «The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights...», cit.

arbitrarily deprived of his or her right to life. Exploitation and slavery, torture and ill treatment are prohibited. The Charter also provides basic freedom of association, freedom of movement, and participation in government. The right to a fair trial is widely enshrined, including the right to

«an appeal to competent national organs against acts of violating his fundamental rights as recognized and guaranteed by conventions, laws, regulations and customs in force; the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty by a competent court or tribunal; the right to defense, including the right to be defended by counsel of his choice; the right to be tried within a reasonable time by an impartial court or tribunal.»

The charter also guarantees the right to property, which may only be encroached upon in the interest of public need or in the general interest of the community and in accordance with the provisions of appropriate laws. The document enumerates the right to work under equitable and satisfactory conditions, the right to education.

Unlike the UDHR, the African Charter, again taking into consideration the specifics of the continent, provides for the rights of all peoples to existence. These people «shall have the unquestionable and inalienable right to self-determination, shall freely determine their political status and shall pursue their economic and social development according to the policy they have freely chosen». What is more, «colonized or oppressed peoples shall have the right to free themselves from the bonds of domination by resorting to any means recognized by the international community». A new element in contrast to UDHR is the right of all peoples to a general satisfactory environment favorable to their development, a so-called right of the fourth generation.

In contrast to the UDHR, which is a document that enshrines only rights, the African Charter includes also duties, therefore asserting that

«Every individual shall have the duty to respect and consider his fellow beings without discrimination, to maintain relations aimed at promoting, safeguarding and reinforcing mutual respect and tolerance, duties towards his family and society, the State and other legally recognized communities and the international community.»

All in all the Charter sets out to combine the specific needs and values of African cultures with standards that have been recognized as universally valid, containing in a single document, legally recognized civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.⁸ The African Charter apparently tried to take account of certain realities specific to the African continent, modernity and universality which triumph over tradition and regionalism, although the latter clearly find their place in its normative content.⁹

⁸ Amnesty International: *A Guide to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*, Amnesty International, London, 2006 (available online at <http://www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?lang=e&id=ENGIOR630052006>).

⁹ Fatsah Ougurgouz: «The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights...», cit.

5. THE DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF MAN

On occasion of the 2006 World Council of the Russian People, the Russian Orthodox Church suggested that the concept of human rights accepted in most modern secular societies should be re-examined.¹⁰ «In the complex of rights and freedoms of man, ideas are gradually being integrated that not only contradict Christianity, but traditional moral understandings about man in general» chairman of the world council, Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill said at that time. A year later, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexiy II echoed those thoughts in a speech before the Parliament of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, presenting the Declaration on the Rights and Dignity of Man as «the first document in history that officially applies Orthodox dogma to one of the most pressing socio-political problems in modern society – human rights». An orthodox political scientist, Alexander Dugan, one of the drafters of the current document told Russian daily *Kommersant* that it would be «a powerful philosophical institution designed to influence the legal model of the Russian state».

The Declaration on the Rights and Dignity of Man has a vivid international character. Its fundamental statement is that man, as a unique person, has not only freedom and undoubted value, but also dignity that he gains by performing the good. It inserts the international political and legal relations in a paradigm of good and evil of which men have refused because of the ultra liberalization of the concept of rights and liberties and returns to the understanding of the person's and international relation's eternal moral base.

The declaration proclaims the right to life and is against the so-called *right* to death. And it states that

«human rights and liberties are effective inasmuch as they help the individual to grow in good, defend the individual from evil within and without, promote the individual's positive role in society. It is in this perspective that we respect not only civil and political rights and liberties, but also social, economical and cultural rights.»

The declaration underlines that the «rights of the man has at its base the values of the personality and must be directed to the realization of its dignity», reiterates that «without morality there is no dignity», and also sustains that values like faith, morality, sanctity are not positioned lower than human rights. In such a way, it becomes the response of Russian civilization to the globalization project.

It is important to emphasize that this conception contains strong anti measures against personal, as well as governmental and religious selfishness (nationalism, fundamentalism).

In the light of this conception, taking on itself responsibility for the world and defending its eternal values, Russia becomes an actual world religious center,

¹⁰ See «Russian Church Stands against Human Rights», *Kommersant. Russia's Daily Online* 23 June 2008 (available online at www.kommersant.com/p905231/r_530/human_rights_and_freedoms/)

updating its eternal idea of itself. There is nothing unusual in the fact that the Church is the one striving to develop a genuinely Russian conception on the world. It is not the case of combining the Church with the government. It is normal that the power that seeks for the expression of the national spiritual line turns for help to the Church, the keeper of the spiritual ideals of the people.¹¹

In answering the questions on how this Declaration is different from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Church official Vsevolod Chaplin answered:

«We do not dispute the International Declaration of Human Rights, but we believe that is not sufficient for the peaceful and harmonious development of the human. The rights and liberties of man without the sense of morality, without duties, responsibilities, education sooner or later will certainly lead the world to a spiritual and then also to a material crisis.»

In conclusion it can be stated the position of Church official Vsevolod Chaplin in answering the question what is the legal status of the Declaration:

«Of course, this is not the law and also not a political document. This is the trial to formulate certain values of the Russian civilisation that are proposed for our nation to realize and for dialogue with other nations and civilizations. So this document can and must be read, discussed, thought upon its use and based on it – there must be developed different proposals.»

6. THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON THE HUMAN GENOME AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights was adopted by UNESCO in 1997. The process by which the Declaration was created is also to be considered in order to assess whether it represents an example of ethical and democratic drafting. Also, the substantive content of the Declaration is to be considered and measured against the pre-existing regime so as to assess whether it represents an intelligible and coherent response to the concerns raised capable of offering guidance now and into the future. By evaluating these procedural and substantive matters, one might draw some tentative conclusions about the utility and significance of the Declaration.¹²

The declaration affirms that «the human genome underlies the fundamental unity of all members of the human family, as well as the recognition of their dignity and diversity». Everyone has a right to respect for his dignity and for his rights regardless of his genetic characteristics. That dignity makes it imperative not to

¹¹ See «Декларация о правах человека и достоинстве личности», RIA Novosti 14 April 2006 (online at www.rian.ru/online/20060414/46372754.html).

¹² Shawn H. E. Harmon: «The Significance of UNESCO's Universal Declaration on the Human Genome & Human Rights», *SCRIPT-ed*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2005), pp. 20-46 (available online at www.doaj.org/doi/func=abstract&id=112325).

reduce individuals to their genetic characteristics and to respect their uniqueness and diversity. Referring to the human genome, the document states that it is subject to mutations. «It contains potentialities that are expressed differently according to each individual's natural and social environment, including the individual's state of health, living conditions, nutrition and education». In regards to the persons concerned, the documents stipulates that the rights to

«research, treatment or diagnosis affecting an individual's genome shall be undertaken only after rigorous and prior assessment of the potential risks and benefits pertaining thereto and in accordance with any other requirement of national law. No research or research applications concerning the human genome, in particular in the fields of biology, genetics and medicine, should prevail over respect for the human rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity of individuals or, where applicable, of groups of people.»

According to Shawn H. E. Harmon, the genome has two dimensions: a general dimension inasmuch as it is a characteristic of all those who belong to the human species, and an individual dimension inasmuch as it is different for each human being, who receives it from his or her parents at the moment of conception: this is what it normally means to speak of the «genetic heritage» of a human being. It seems clear that this «heritage» should be given fundamental juridical protection.

Conclusions can be drawn about the Declaration's significance and proper place in the international bioethical and human rights scene based on the extent to which the Declaration gives the touchstone values of autonomy, equality and solidarity effect in the genetic context through the articulation of understandable and internally consistent substantive rights, and answers the questions identified above which represent gaps in the pre-existing regime.¹³

7. THE VALENCIA DECLARATION OF HUMAN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Valencia Declaration of Human Duties and Responsibilities from 1998 comes to fulfill and complement the inalienable human values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Because of such negative and dangerous phenomena as nuclear weapons production and proliferation, high military expenditures, terrorism, trade of conventional weapons, genocide, armed conflicts, harmful scientific and technological experiments, international crime, and corruption take bigger and bigger proportions, international community found necessary to frame the duties and responsibilities that would prevent and eradicate them.

The Valencia Declaration uses for the first time in Article I the term «global community» which means

¹³ Shawn H. E. Harmon: «*The Significance of UNESCO's Universal Declaration on the Human Genome & Human Rights*», cit.

«States –including their governments, legislatures and judicial institutions– international, regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, public and private sector corporations, including transnational corporations, other entities of civil society, peoples, communities and individuals taken as a collective».

The Valencia Declaration pretends to develop Article 29, Paragraph (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulates that «Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible». Duties and responsibilities are correlative and synalagmatic to the rights and liberties and the global community owes to the human community certain moral responsibilities. The global community has an abiding collective duty to promote and protect diversity in the human family, to respect the rights of minorities and to recognize and ensure the existence and rights of indigenous peoples, in particular their rights to preserve, maintain and develop their distinct identities and characteristics.

It is important that not only states, namely their three powers (legislative, executive and judicial) are responsible and bound to observe the duties and responsibilities enshrined in the Declaration, but also that international, regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, public and private sector corporations, including transnational corporations, other entities of civil society, peoples, communities and individuals taken as a collective are bound to do so. The Valencia Declaration has the purpose to unify, generalize and make these duties and responsibilities universal and binding at a global level. Peoples, communities and individuals taken as a collective have proved during the time that their voice must be heard and their aspirations must be taken into consideration because they can express in the most direct way the problems they face and the protection they need.

As Justice Richard J. Goldstone said in 1999, in its Introduction to the Valencia Declaration, when the text was submitted to the Director-General of UNESCO Federico Mayor Zaragoza, the most salient features of the Valencia Declaration could be summarized as follows:

- The human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, remain universally significant and are inalienable and indivisible.
- Respect for the dignity and equal rights of all members of the human family as contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments remains the foundation for peace, human security, freedom, justice and development in the world.
- Notwithstanding the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international human rights instruments, full and

effective realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the achievement of real and lasting peace based upon the principle of human security, continue to elude the global community.

- An equitable global order based upon cooperation, broad-based participation and the equitable sharing of resources and benefits of scientific and technological progress is a necessary prerequisite for the effective realization of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the achievement of human security.
- There is a collective duty upon the global community to co-operate to achieve, for present and future generations, a secure human existence free from nuclear threats, aggressive war, acts of mass violence, gross human rights violations, mass population displacement, environmental destruction and degradation and poverty.
- The global community has a collective duty to promote global peace through effective collective security arrangements and mechanisms in conjunction with taking appropriate action to promote rapid and effective disarmament.
- New technologies, scientific progress and the process of Mondialisation have brought about significant new developments and challenges to the world community. The proper and responsible management of these challenges and developments will require global, regional and sub-regional solutions based upon the precepts of joint responsibility and solidarity. In particular, the global community has a collective duty to address the actual and potential impact upon and consequences for human rights and fundamental freedoms of new technological and scientific developments and the process of Mondialisation.
- International crime and corruption undermine the effective realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and pose a threat to global peace and security and the stability of States. The global community has a collective duty to cooperate to prevent, punish and eradicate international crime and corruption.
- Governance based upon the will of the people and respect for the rule of law is essential for the achievement of full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and human security. The global community has a collective duty to promote participatory government.
- All cultures, traditions and civilizations have an intrinsic value, are of equal worth and require equal respect within the framework of universal and indivisible human rights and fundamental freedoms. The global community has an abiding collective duty to promote and protect diversity in the human family, to respect the rights of minorities and to recognize and ensure the existence and rights of indigenous peoples, in particular their rights to preserve, maintain and develop their distinct identities and characteristics and to protect their means of livelihood.
- All members of the human family are of equal worth. There is a collective duty of the global community to work towards the eradication of

discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, property, birth or other similar such grounds and the achievement of real and substantive equality. In particular there remains an abiding responsibility in accordance with international law to eradicate totally and unconditionally all forms of racial and religious discrimination, to overcome persistent discrimination against women and the major obstacles that stand in the way of substantive sex and gender equality, including violence against women in all its manifestations, and to recognize and eradicate the consistent and systematic discrimination against and marginalization of disabled persons.

- There is a special and growing duty upon the global community to recognize and protect the rights of the child, and to recognize and ensure that the worth, dignity, capacity and rights of the elderly are at all times respected.

- All members of the human family have the right to enjoy their basic needs under conditions of equality. The' global community has a collective duty to co-operate to ensure the right of every member of the human family to enjoy an adequate standard of living and quality of life, including the right to adequate food, housing, social security and adequate healthcare.

Education is one of the most important vehicles for the pursuit of peace, progress, human development, tolerance and the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. There is a collective duty upon the global community to promote, respect and ensure the right to education of all members of the human family, and to ensure that education is directed towards the development of the human personality, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and a culture of peace and tolerance.

- The right to an effective remedy for the violation of human rights or fundamental freedoms is essential to the enforcement of such rights and freedoms. The global community has a collective duty to establish and improve national, regional, sub-regional and international enforcement mechanisms for the prevention of, and remedies for, the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms¹⁴.

In conclusion it can be mentioned that Valencia Declaration is a necessity in the 21st century, where freedoms and liberties must be protected. Global community has the duty to promote the implementation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms in all circumstances. If moral duties are a consequence of natural tendencies towards happiness and perfection, responsibilities involve the sense of solidarity, understanding, respect towards someone's convictions and rights.

¹⁴ The Valencia Declaration is available online, in English at <http://globalization.icaap.org/content/v2.2/declare.html> and in Spanish at www.cic.gva.es/images/stories/declaracion_de_valencia.pdf

8. CONCLUSION

As stated by Amnesty International on occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this document

«sets down the basic principles at the very heart of the human rights movement. It has enabled remarkable progress in human rights, inspiring international human rights standards, laws and institutions that have improved the lives of many around the world».

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The fact that different communities of states have adopted other specific documents is a testimony of the diversity and richness of the existing approaches in the protection of human rights. In more specific terms, the Cairo Declaration can be considered more an alternative instrument to the UDHR, because it enshrines different values and another understanding over some basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Bangkok Declaration provides for approximately the same spectrum of values as the UDHR, but adapted to the peculiarities of the societies it was drafted for. The African Charter was meant to take account of certain realities specific to the African continent, complimenting to the universality of rights adopted before. Both the Declaration on the Rights and Dignity of Man and the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, come to supplement the UDHR, by adding some elements of the human rights perspective which were not found relevant or necessary at its adoption time. They tend to reflect the development of the concept of human rights and its ongoing modernization. Finally, the Valencia Declaration of Human Duties and Responsibilities is an innovative instrument that reflects the other side of the coin called «human rights». And it is a perfect completion of the synalagmatic effect of the rights and liberties enshrined in the UDHR.

Anyway, all the Declarations analyzed above represent a binding necessity for the present times, inherent instruments for the countries which adopted them. These instruments tend to reflect the values and principles, traditional and cultural backgrounds of their societies and despite of their alternative or complementary character, they do provide basic and vital rights and duties for the contemporaneous realities.

¹⁵ See www.amnesty.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights-anniversary.