

Introduction

The following is a document designed to serve as the foundation stone of the new organisation called The International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (ISPO). It will be the basis for setting up and running the organisation and all members of the organisation will be expected to uphold these principles and ideas.

International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (ISPO)

Founding declaration

Background: *We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. The world is in a perilous state and we have great decisions to make. The current patterns of production and consumption of resources are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources and a massive extinction of species. The gap between rich and poor is widening. A most poignant example is that the developed world, comprising under a third of the world's population, consumes three quarters of the world's food and over 80% of all other resources. This leaves the developing world, having more than two thirds of the world's population, to make do with the rest. The suffering resulting from this injustice has resulted in enormous global tensions.*

Many visions exist as to the required changes. The UN Charterⁱ, Charter 99ⁱⁱ and the Earth Charterⁱⁱⁱ, for example, concisely set out the changes in humanity's behaviour that are required. So why isn't serious progress being made to realise them?

We at the International Simultaneous Policy Organisation ("ISPO") believe that the greatest barrier to bringing about these necessary changes is destructive competition between nations to attract capital and jobs. The resultant divisiveness not only drives us apart, setting person against person and nation against nation, but also permits each to justify the continuance of such behaviour. Co-operation, by contrast, can bring us together to solve our problems in the knowledge that all of us are jointly responsible for our predicament. But we also recognise that co-operation to solve humanity's problems will not come about by chance. A practical method of achieving it is required and the gravity of our current situation necessitates speed. The changes must therefore take place within our existing framework of world politics and international relations.

We believe there exists a way to build the necessary consensus to facilitate the move from global competition to global co-operation; this is through the process first described by John Bunzl, which is the international "adoption" of the Simultaneous Policy. We have founded ISPO to promote and accomplish this. Simultaneous Policy is potentially a valuable practical tool to solve global problems that have hitherto been intractable when addressed unilaterally or even by groups of nations. We hope that the movement for global justice will wish to use it to help realise its aspirations.

1. **What is the Simultaneous Policy (Simpol)?^{iv}**

Simpol is both a policy and a process.

It is a policy which is to consist of a range of legislative measures to be implemented by all, or by virtually all, nations simultaneously. Its contents will be determined by all adopters, working together co-operatively. The individual policies that make up Simpol will be those that cannot presently be implemented unilaterally by individual governments, or restricted groups of governments, due to destructive global competition.

And it is a process whereby politicians can be led by civil society to implement such policies. It works essentially as follows: By adopting Simpol, individuals pledge to vote in future elections for ANY political party or candidate – within reason - that has pledged to implement Simpol (or, where an individual has a party political affiliation or preference, their adoption indicates their preference for that party to pledge to implement Simpol). When sufficient numbers have adopted, politicians will be obliged to pledge to implement Simpol, in order to be elected. When a party in power or a national government has pledged to implement Simpol, it will be required, with the consent of its citizens, to deliver on that pledge when the governments of every other country (or of a sufficient number of other countries) also do so. To be valid, pledges to implement Simpol shall be given in a manner specified by ISPO.

Organisations may pledge to support Simpol; this has symbolic meaning only since they cannot vote in national elections,

Adopting Simpol costs nothing and adopters are always free to cancel their adoption.

2. **Aim of ISPO**

Our aim is to empower people to transform the world by bringing about international co-operation, leading to a sustainable global society based on respect for the Earth and life in all its diversity. We will achieve this by promoting the adoption and eventual implementation of Simpol.

3. **Purpose**

Our purposes are:

- A. To encourage the establishment of National Simpol Organisations (NSPOs) in each country of the world;
- B. To determine the framework criteria to which all NSPOs must conform and to monitor and ensure their compliance therewith;

- C. To act as a centre for supporting and encouraging all NSPOs in their work and co-ordinating that work where necessary;
- D. To act as ultimate interpreters of this Founding Declaration and ensure the full compliance of all ISPO organisations therewith;
- E. To establish a Global Policy Board (or to appoint an appropriate third party organisation) whose function shall be:
 - 1) to receive and generate proposals for the policy content of Simpol, and
 - 2) to negotiate with each NSPO as to Simpol's final policy content (including any special provisions that may apply to individual countries).

4. Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles shall underpin the ethos of all ISPO organisations, their philosophy and their daily activities:

- A. Universal Inclusiveness:** We are all imperfect as individuals, as organisations and as nations and we thus strive to recognise, admit and to correct our shortcomings and not to unduly criticise others. By the same token, we also recognise that all of us, as individuals, are implicated to a greater or lesser degree in the destructively competitive spiral our world presently finds itself in and therefore that we all substantially share the same predicament, whatever our present role in today's world may be. Since none can - nor should - be singled out for blame, it is a fundamental guiding principle that any person be permitted to adopt Simpol^Y.
- B. Non-partisanship:** ISPO shall be a positive grouping of world citizens, interpreting the meaning of right human relations, standing for the oneness of humanity and for practical, not merely theoretical, unity. In its stance towards individuals, organisations, political parties, nations or others, ISPO shall take no side, foment no political or religious disturbance and feed no hatreds. ISPO and its representatives must, and must be seen to, take decisions free of improper influence from third parties. No ISPO organisation or representative shall accept financial support of any kind from any for-profit organisation. To further ensure ISPO's independence, Trustees shall take such additional steps they consider necessary, including making rules that limit or prohibit sponsorship, donations and other forms of income, and they shall ensure ISPO representatives make proper declarations of interests.
- C. Honesty and Integrity:** We shall be honest, open and transparent in all our dealings. When mistakes are made, we shall acknowledge them without recrimination.

- D. Accountability:** All ISPO organisations shall be accountable. Accountability is a preparedness to explain and justify one's intentions, actions and omissions to stakeholders, and the means by which this preparedness is manifested^{vi}.
- E. Democracy:** All members are of equal potential and have an equal right to participate in the running of their ISPO organisation. In all decision-making within ISPO organisations, everyone is listened to. All ISPO organisations shall, where practicable and in order of preference, make decisions based on the principle of (a) consensus or, if not practicable, then (b) no objection consent and lastly, (c) by vote. A vote may occur only after proper discussion of the matter at hand has taken place, and shall be taken on the principle of "one member, one vote".
- F. Unity and Diversity:** We recognise the proper and natural tension between individuality and commonality and shall not shrink from confronting divisions and dilemmas positively and generously, striving always to transcend them and so to integrate them in a higher and more harmonious whole. Whether we are dealing with individuals or nations, a fundamental guiding principle shall therefore be a recognition that the good of each is contained in the good of all. In all our dealings we shall thus strive for the 'whole' that unites us while honouring, including and celebrating the uniqueness of each 'part' that makes up the whole.
- G. Commitment:** In embarking on our stated aim, we the founding members of ISPO recognise the enormity of the challenge before us and that it will doubtless confront us with many difficulties and dilemmas. We nevertheless commit ourselves to work together through thick and thin – in the solidarity of human brotherhood – for as long as is necessary for the implementation of Simpol to be achieved.

5. **Membership**

- 5.1 Any NSPO, upon payment of a membership fee, is entitled to apply to become a member of ISPO. In countries where there is no NSPO, a government that has pledged to implement Simpol may apply to become a member.
- 5.2 The Board of Trustees shall:
- A) review the constitutional documents of an NSPO seeking to become a member to confirm their conformance with this Founding Declaration;
 - B) determine the membership fee to be paid;
 - C) decide what other criteria, if any, an NSPO must meet to become and remain a member of ISPO; and
 - D) decide what criteria a government must meet to become and remain a member of ISPO.

- 5.3 Any changes to an NSPO's constitutional documents that may result in the NSPO no longer meeting the criteria set by ISPO shall require prior approval of the Board of Trustees.
- 5.4 A member who has been deemed to have persistently violated the Principles contained in the present document may be suspended or expelled from the organisation by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the Management Board. Its suspension may be lifted, or it may be re-admitted (as appropriate) at the discretion of the Management Board.

6. Organs

6.1 Board of Trustees

- 6.1.1 The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for governance including
- A) acting as the ultimate guardian and interpreter of this Founding Declaration and other constitutional documents that may be adopted by ISPO;
 - B) ensuring ISPO has a strategic direction; and
 - C) appointing and supervising the Management Board.
- 6.1.2 Trustees shall be unpaid, although they may receive reimbursement for expenses.
- 6.1.3 There shall be a minimum of three trustees and a maximum of eleven.
- 6.1.4 The Trustees shall be appointed by the Members. Their appointment shall be for a maximum of three years and they shall automatically retire by rotation.
- 6.1.5 The Chair to be chosen by Board members from among their number.
- 6.1.6 The Board of Trustees shall meet at least four times per year.

6.2 Management Board

- 6.2.1 The Management Board shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees.
- 6.2.2 The Management Board shall be responsible for day-to-day operations, implementing the strategy decided by the Trustees; lobbying; managing relations with other organisations; fund-raising and campaigning. Managers may be paid a salary, as well as being reimbursed expenses.

7. General provisions

Changes to this Founding Declaration may be made by vote, which shall be open to all members. The Board of Trustees shall determine what percentage of the vote is required to pass such a resolution, bearing in mind local laws and practice, and consistent in particular with Guiding Principle 4E above.

Document dated _____ 2003.

Document signed by:

Reference documents:

ⁱ The UN Charter can be found at <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html>

ⁱⁱ The website of Charter 99 can be found at <http://www.charter99.org>. The charter can be viewed or downloaded from there.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Earth Charter can be found at <http://www.earthcharter.org/earthcharter/charter.htm>

^{iv} For further information on Simpol, see the book "The Simultaneous Policy" by John Bunzl (European Publications, London 2001 ISBN 1-872410-4 and 1-872410-0).

^v M. Scott Peck "The Different Drum", Arrow, 1990.

^{vi} Freedom to Care's "Charter of Accountability", see www.freedomtocare.org

Other documents that served as inspiration in drafting this text:

Michael J Sheeran "Beyond Majority Rule - Voteless Decisions in the Religious Society of Friends"
(Quakers)