



**IDERNE**

Institut D'Études et de Recherches Nord-Europe

## CHARTER of the "I.D.E.R.N.E."

IDERNE, the North European Institute for Research and Studies is a society of free men and citizens, sticking to the principles of freemasonry, and especially to their universal character, and eager to pool their work and ideas in order to push forward the European idea as well as the principle based on this French concept of a secular society called *laïcité* and the humanistic values which are in our opinion essential for a good understanding between nations.

Considering that it is difficult for this *laïcité* to spread across Europe because of the various historical, cultural and religious influences at work in the contemporary societies which make up the European Union, we intend to promote it for the very reason that we consider it as an essential element in the cultural construction of a coherent political body.

We are particularly keen on promoting absolute freedom of thought as a prerequisite for a good working of democracy in an impartial environment providing the right conditions for the discussion and working-out of laws making life better for everybody. Consequently, we consider *laïcité*, which turns a multicultural society into an harmonious whole and is the very basis of equality, as a crucial factor of intellectual and social development, a major tool to cope with social as well as societal issues and to reach a balance based on the humanist principles giving everyone an equal opportunity and securing peace.

Noticing that France is the only European country which mentions in its constitution this *laïcité* based on human rights, the separation of the State and Churches and the rejection of any kind of cultural relativism , we are working to turn it into an organizational principle for every human society and also into the essential condition of a social life freed from the restraints imposed by religious institutions.

As we suggest that this principle of *laïcité* – and the underlying values of freemasonry - should be used as a reference framework for the European community in general, we offer to give the Sisters and the Brothers training and information on the benefits of a European construction which has, nevertheless, to be more precisely defined. For that purpose, we plan to help people to realize its importance both on an individual and on a collective level as it appears as the future and crucial condition of peace, stability, social progress and equity in Europe but also as an essential tool against the rise of communitarism, minority or community rules which are by definition not exactly favourable to the development of a genuine freedom of thought and of real tolerance. We also plan to put our ideas forward by

distributing our papers and studies and by organizing events to publicize them, but also by favouring exchanges between researchers through transnational networks.

Freemasons united by the bonds of universal Fraternity, we want to extend its benefits to Europe as a whole through our example, our writings, our words, by putting the human being consistently at the centre, by trying to reunite what is scattered, in shared harmony and the respect of the differences.