

What does the Manifesto for a Global Economic Ethic propose?

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1. This manifesto does not simply formulate abstract formal moral claims or principles like “responsibility” or the “common good”. Instead, it articulates substantially defined values and ethical standards.
2. These values and standards are not concoctions of our times; instead they stem from humanity’s wealth of ethical experience that has accumulated since human beings, emerging from the animal state, have had to learn to behave humanly, e.g. not to kill other human beings the way they can kill animals – the prohibition of killing.
3. These values and standards thus have the authority of the great religious and ethical traditions of humanity behind them, as they have found expression in the innumerable testimonies of the diverse cultures over the course of the centuries.
4. Thus they are not regionally or nationally conscribed, but rather they are universal, despite the culturally determined forms of their expression. For in all cultures, people have been concerned to give special protection to life, property, dignity, and male-female relationships. In this way, the values and norms of non-violence and respect for life, justice and solidarity, honesty and tolerance, mutual respect and partnership have not been arbitrarily selected, but are rather structurally grounded in central areas of human life.
5. Underlying all these values and norms is the concern for humanity that has found its decisive concrete formulation in the Golden Rule of Reciprocity.
6. This manifesto is not a law that is meant to be enforced with sanctions; instead it is an appeal to self-commitment, which all the more is subject to the sanctions of the conscience.
7. This appeal is directed not only at economic leaders, businessmen and investors, but also at credit providers, employees, consumers, and at the diverse groups representing particular interests, in all the countries of the world. Thus it addresses itself to the political organizations and institutions, national and international, which together bear an essential responsibility for the formation and application of such a global economic ethic.
8. The manifesto for “Global Economic Ethic” sees itself as a support, from the ethical point of view, for all the current efforts to establish global moral standards, in particular for the UN Global Compact:
 - The demand of the Global Compact for respect and support of human rights presupposes the principle of humanity, which concerns rights and duties.
 - The acceptance of responsible standards for working conditions presupposes a basic attitude of justice and fairness and the ethical commitment to a just economic order.
 - The protection of the environment according to the precautionary principle presupposes respect for all living things, including animals and plants.
 - The struggle against corruption in all its forms presupposes the commitment to honesty and justice.