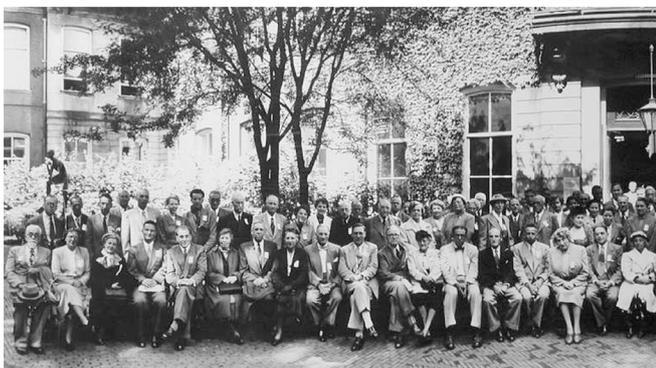


A HISTORY OF GLOBAL HUMANISM

Humanist ideas have existed all over the world since records began. There have also been humanist groups in countries throughout the world. Because humanists believe that their ideas and values can help to change the world for the better, they have often sought to work together - both by cooperating with other humanist groups, and by trying to work on a global scale towards what they believe would be a happier, fairer world for everyone.

In 1896, the same year as the Union of Ethical Societies (now Humanists UK) was formed, an **International Ethical Union** was also created. This brought together representatives from societies in the UK, the United States, and Europe, to discuss their shared values, and establish better relationships between them.

In 1952, the International Humanist and Ethical Union was formed. This is known as **Humanists International** today. Its first members were the American Ethical Union, American Humanist Association, British Ethical Union (now Humanists UK), Vienna Ethical Society, and the Dutch Humanist League. As well as holding global conferences bringing humanists from across the world together, Humanists International campaigns for freedom of religion and belief and works to protect non-religious people at risk of persecution.



Some of the founding members of Humanists International (1952)

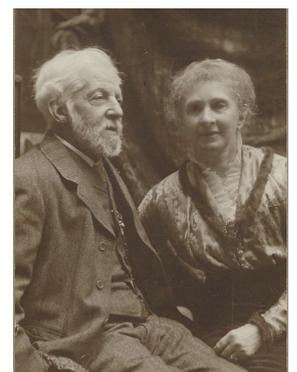


Humanists have cooperated internationally for a wide range of causes. Pictured here is humanist Adela Coit (*back row, second from left*) at the International Woman Suffrage Alliance congress in Budapest, 1913

International cooperation and the application of humanist principles on a global scale have always been important to humanists. The first directors of UNESCO (Julian Huxley), the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (John Boyd Orr), and the World Health Organization (G. Brock Chisholm) were all prominent humanists.

THE WORLD AT WAR

Many humanists have been active workers for peace on an international level - believing that the best way to secure the happiness and safety of all people is to work for the prevention of war. Felix Moscheles was one of these. A member of the ethical societies, he was a painter and peace activist. He was President of the International Arbitration and Peace Association and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Felix Moscheles was also an advocate of an international language called Esperanto, which he believed would increase understanding between people across countries, and reduce conflict.



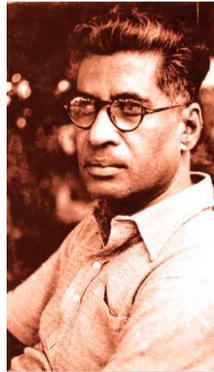
Felix and Margaret Moscheles

M.N. ROY

Manabendra Nath Roy was an Indian humanist and revolutionary, who created the Radical Humanist Movement in India. He was a founding member of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, and one of its first Presidents.

“ It must be realised that human existence is self-contained and self-sufficient; and that, therefore, man can find in himself the power to work out his destiny, to make a better world to live in.

M.N. ROY



A TRULY GLOBAL HUMANISM

Today, Humanists International is made up of over 120 humanist, atheist, rationalist, freethought, and Ethical Culture organisations from over 60 countries. It aims to provide a voice for humanists the world over, as well as defending those at risk of persecution for expressing humanist beliefs.

The photograph below shows staff and board members of Humanists International in 2021. The board includes humanists from Belgium, Ghana, Guatemala, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, the UK, and the US.



THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL COOPERATION

Another example of humanists playing a prominent role in working together internationally, was a **League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Cooperation**. The League of Nations itself was the first worldwide, intergovernmental body founded to promote world peace. The Committee (formed in 1922) brought together scientists, researchers, teachers, and artists from all over the world to share ideas and

knowledge. Scientist and humanist Marie Curie (pictured) sat on it for many years, and classicist Gilbert Murray - who was President of Humanists UK 1929-30 - was its Chairperson for over ten years.



“ What being a humanist means to me is taking a stand with humanity, taking a stand inspired by human rights and human values... Humanism is a way of thinking and living that emphasises the agency of human beings. Humanism stresses the fact that we, human beings, are capable of changing the world. ”

LEO IGWE, founder of the Humanist Association of Nigeria and board member of Humanists International

