



PACT OF TEGUISE

NO MORE ANIMAL ABUSE

We, the people and our civil society entities, are gathered in the municipality of Teguisse, Canary Islands, moved by the outrage we feel about the heinous crime against "Timple", a street dog from this municipality, committed with a despicable level of cruelty that ended his life. We are equally appalled by the judicial verdict, that acquitted the two material authors from any effective penalty. We are determined to change this reality, by promoting civic means for prevention of animal abuse and for judicial punishment for any form of animal abuse. We declare today, August 17th 2020, we commit to a SOCIAL PACT under the name of "PACT OF TEGUISE" (Pacto de Teguisse), that aims to protect animal rights under judicial laws, to be developed by social and political entities who are against any sort of abuse or cruelty to vulnerable beings. To pursue this determination we propose a common road-map:

- 1. To modify national legislation in order to prevent animal abuse, by means of education in empathy and peace culture;*
- 2. To modify national legislation in order to punish animal abuse, in those cases where prevention strategies have not been successful;*
- 3. To promote necessary legislation that will foster responsible coexistence with other animals;*
- 4. To promote the proper training of municipality workers so they can correctly put into effect the existing legislation from the different levels: European, national, autonomic and local.*

We consider

Lately, there has been a considerable change related to animal protection. In the last decades, our society has experienced an unprecedented level of awareness about the protection, respect and defense of other animals. Animal rights have



become a significant matter for our cultures to address.

Sentient beings

There is compelling scientific evidence about the significant cognition and sentient capacity of other animals, as well as an understanding of their physical and emotional needs and well-being. These studies, based on the needs and capacities of other animals, show that non human animals know about the environment through their senses, and that they experience emotions such as joy, fear, stress, anxiety, happiness; both alone, or in the context of their relationship with other living beings. Sentience is the capacity to feel, perceive, or experience subjectively. This capacity is considered to be the minimum state of consciousness, thus, sentient beings are conscient beings. Because we know animals to have the ability to suffer gives us moral and ethical obligations not to cause them any unnecessary harm.

A system that ignores the abuse to those who need protection, is both unjust and unethical system, and goes against evolved, democratic and empathetic societies.

Peace culture and inter-related violence

When anyone willfully acts against the environment and its living beings, they also act against the integrity of the human being. Any effort to improve the relations between human and non-human animals will be beneficial to our own species and to all species.

Numerous scientific studies show the connection among animal cruelty and violence between humans beings. Animal abuse can be indicative of a deeper problem, both at the level of the person who commits the abuse, as well as in the society that tolerates such an abuse. Education of the society will generate a sustainable tool to avoid abuse and cruelty to animals.

Regulatory, legislative frameworks and precedents

There are many references to these animal protection principles:

- In accordance with the **World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)**, animal welfare is “the physical and mental state of an animal in relation to the conditions in which it lives and dies” . So, there will be well-being if the animal is healthy, comfortable, well-fed, in safety and when the animal does not feel unpleasant sensations, such as pain, fear or stress, and when the animal is allow to express relevant behavior for the mental and physical well-being.

- Spain ratified in 2017 the **European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals**, signed in Strasbourg on November 13th, 1987, which obliges the signatory countries to comply with a number of dispositions in relation to the protection of pet animals. Within the statements of this European Convention, it is declared that the human being has the moral obligation to respect all living creatures and to bear in mind the special kind of relationship between the human being and the pet animals, to which there is special recognition to the relevance on their contribution to the quality of life and value to the society.

- Animal welfare and animal protection by the people is valuable to our communities. These points are made in article 13 of the **Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Treaty of Lisbon)**. All members of the Union must adapt their legislation to this treaty, which also defines animals as sentient beings.



• On July 7th, 2012, with the release of the **Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness**, a group of neuroscientists, with the support of renowned scientists and academics such as Stephen Hawking, sent a clear message to humanity: “the weight of evidence indicates that humans are not unique in possessing the neurological substrates that generate consciousness. Non-human animals, including all mammals and birds, and many other creatures, including octopuses, also possess these neurological substrates”. This declaration keeps having a great impact in scientific, social and political contexts.

• In 2019, academic representatives and jurists proclaimed in the Toulon Declaration at Toulon University, that “animals must be universally considered as nonhuman natural persons and not as things”; a reality that must be recognised in legal systems in order to align scientific understanding with the recognition of the Legal Personality of Animals. The Toulon declaration aims to reinforce the Cambridge Declaration, more from the jurist perspective, deepening the recognition of nonhuman animals as legal entities, in the context of the research about consciousness and neuroscience.

From the fact that sentient individuals can experience benefits and harm, profound ethical, legal and political implications arise.

Thus, we DECLARE:

In the light of the ever-present, ever-increasing cases of animal abuse, it is necessary to pursue a new educational and legal framework. We, the individuals and entities that sign **THE PACT OF TEGUISE**, are committed to work to achieve the following outcomes and to deliver the tools that will take us to the social context that we long for:

1. State Level

- 1.1 Reform of the penal code to impose tougher punishment in cases of animal cruelty;
- 1.2 Reform of the civil code, to distinguish animals from things, in line with the Treaty of Lisbon;
- 1.3 A National Animal Protection Law that would apply across all Spanish territory;
- 1.4 Educational materials, developed in an interdisciplinary way, on animal protection and responsible co-existence concepts, to be used in all areas of the obligatory education curricula (primary and secondary school)
- 1.5 To reform the Free Legal Aid law to include the figure of the court appointed lawyer in cases of animal abuse.

2 Regional Level

- 2.1 To write and to approve a new regional law about animal protection in the Canary Islands government – and in each of the autonomous regions of Spain.

3. Municipal level

- 3.1 To foster proper training for public employees in the management and practice of public policies related to animal protection.
- 3.2 To approve new ordinances related to animal protection, that comply with the current European, National and regional regulatory frameworks.

In memory of all the animals who have been victims of ruthless cruelty, abuse and agony; and in order to achieve a more humane, peaceful, empathetic, evolved and compassionate society, we sign **THE PACT OF TEGUISE**, with the commitment to do everything we can to achieve the goals that unite us today.

Signed in the village of Teguisse, this 17th day of August of 2020.

