

# The rights of man

**ARTICLE I** – MEN ARE BORN AND REMAIN FREE AND EQUAL IN RIGHTS. SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS CAN BE FOUNDED ONLY ON THE COMMON GOOD.

**ARTICLE II** – THE GOAL OF ANY POLITICAL ASSOCIATION IS THE CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL AND INDISCTIPRIBLE RIGHTS OF MAN. THESE RIGHTS ARE LIBERTY, PROPERTY, SAFETY AND RESISTANCE AGAINST OPPRESSION.

**ARTICLE III** – THE PRINCIPLE OF ANY SOVEREIGNTY RESIDES ESSENTIALLY IN THE NATION. NO BODY, NO INDIVIDUAL MAY EXERCISE ANY AUTHORITY WHICH DOES NOT PROCEED DIRECTLY FROM THE NATION.

**ARTICLE IV** – LIBERTY CONSISTS OF DOING ANYTHING WHICH DOES NOT HARM OTHERS: THUS, THE EXERCISE OF THE NATURAL RIGHTS OF EACH MAN HAS ONLY THOSE BORDERS WHICH ASSURE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY THE FRUITION OF THESE SAME RIGHTS. THESE BORDERS CAN BE DETERMINED ONLY BY THE LAW.

**ARTICLE V** – THE LAW HAS THE RIGHT TO FORBID ONLY ACTIONS HARMFUL TO SOCIETY. ANYTHING WHICH IS NOT FORBIDDEN BY THE LAW CANNOT BE IMPEDED, AND NO ONE CAN BE CONSTRAINED TO DO WHAT IT DOES NOT ORDER.

**ARTICLE VI** – THE LAW IS THE EXPRESSION OF THE GENERAL WILL. ALL THE CITIZENS HAVE THE RIGHT OF CONTRIBUTING PERSONALLY OR THROUGH THEIR REPRESENTATIVES TO ITS FORMATION. IT MUST BE THE SAME FOR ALL, EITHER THAT IT PROTECTS, OR THAT IT PUNISHES. ALL THE CITIZENS, BEING EQUAL IN ITS EYES, ARE EQUALLY ADMISSIBLE TO ALL PUBLIC DIGNITIES, PLACES, AND EMPLOYMENTS, ACCORDING TO THEIR CAPACITY AND WITHOUT DISTINCTION OTHER THAN THAT OF THEIR VIRTUES AND OF THEIR TALENTS.

**ARTICLE VII** – NO MAN CAN BE ACCUSED, ARRESTED NOR DETAINED BUT IN THE CASES DETERMINED BY THE LAW, AND ACCORDING TO THE FORMS WHICH IT HAS PRESCRIBED. THOSE WHO SOLICIT, DISPATCH, CARRY OUT OR CAUSE TO BE CARRIED OUT ARBITRARY ORDERS, MUST BE PUNISHED; BUT ANY CITIZEN CALLED OR SEIZED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE LAW MUST OBEY AT ONCE; HE RENDERS HIMSELF CULPABLE BY RESISTANCE.

**ARTICLE VIII** – THE LAW SHOULD ESTABLISH ONLY PENALTIES THAT ARE STRICTLY AND EVIDENTLY NECESSARY, AND NO ONE CAN BE PUNISHED BUT UNDER A LAW ESTABLISHED AND PROMULGATED BEFORE THE OFFENSE AND LEGALLY APPLIED.

**ARTICLE IX** – ANY MAN BEING PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL HE IS DECLARED CULPABLE IF IT IS JUDGED INDISPENSABLE TO ARREST HIM, ANY RIGOR WHICH WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY FOR THE SECURING OF HIS PERSON MUST BE SEVERELY REPRIMANDED BY THE LAW.

**ARTICLE X** – NO ONE MAY BE DISQUIETED FOR HIS OPINIONS, EVEN RELIGIOUS ONES, PROVIDED THAT THEIR MANIFESTATION DOES NOT TROUBLE THE PUBLIC ORDER ESTABLISHED BY THE LAW.

**ARTICLE XI** – THE FREE COMMUNICATION OF THOUGHTS AND OF OPINIONS IS ONE OF THE MOST PRECIOUS RIGHTS OF MAN: ANY CITIZEN THUS MAY SPEAK, WRITE, PRINT FREELY, EXCEPT TO RESPOND TO THE ABUSE OF THIS LIBERTY, IN THE CASES DETERMINED BY THE LAW.

**ARTICLE XII** – THE GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF THE CITIZEN NECESSITATES A PUBLIC FORCE: THIS FORCE IS THUS INSTITUTED FOR THE ADVANTAGE OF ALL AND NOT FOR THE PARTICULAR UTILITY OF THOSE IN WHOM IT IS TRUSTED.

**ARTICLE XIII** – FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE PUBLIC FORCE AND FOR THE EXPENDITURES OF ADMINISTRATION, A COMMON CONTRIBUTION IS INDISPENSABLE; IT MUST BE EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED TO ALL THE CITIZENS, ACCORDING TO THEIR ABILITY TO PAY.

**ARTICLE XIV** – EACH CITIZEN HAS THE RIGHT TO ASCERTAIN, BY HIMSELF OR THROUGH HIS REPRESENTATIVES, THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC TAX, TO CONSENT TO IT FREELY, TO KNOW THE USES TO WHICH IT IS PUT, AND OF DETERMINING THE PROPORTION, BASIS, COLLECTION, AND DURATION.

**ARTICLE XV** – THE SOCIETY HAS THE RIGHT OF REQUESTING AN ACCOUNT FROM ANY PUBLIC AGENT OF ITS ADMINISTRATION.

**ARTICLE XVI** – ANY SOCIETY IN WHICH THE GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS IS NOT ASSURED, NOR THE SEPARATION OF POWERS DETERMINED, HAS NO CONSTITUTION.

**ARTICLE XVII** – PROPERTY BEING AN INVIOABLE AND SACRED RIGHT, NO ONE CAN BE DEPRIVED OF PRIVATE USAGE, IF IT IS NOT WHEN THE PUBLIC NECESSITY, LEGALLY NOTED, EVIDENTLY REQUIRES IT, AND UNDER THE CONDITION OF A JUST AND PRIOR INDEMNITY.

FRANCE SHALL BE AN INDIVISIBLE, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIAL REPUBLIC. IT SHALL ENSURE THE EQUALITY OF ALL CITIZENS BEFORE THE LAW, WITHOUT

DISTINCTION OF ORIGIN, RACE OR RELIGION. IT SHALL RESPECT ALL BELIEFS. IT SHALL BE ORGANISED ON A DECENTRALISED BASIS. STATUTES SHALL PROMOTE EQUAL ACCESS BY WOMEN AND MEN TO ELECTIVE OFFICES AND POSTS AS WELL AS TO POSITION OF PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

---

---