

Universal Declaration on Cannabis and Hemp

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with AI-assistance from

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Abstract

This document presents the Universal Declaration on Cannabis and Hemp, affirming that prohibition of cannabis and hemp is illegitimate under natural law and inconsistent with international law. Drawing upon human rights principles, ecological necessity, and historical evidence, the Declaration asserts that cannabis and hemp users are not criminals, but rather victims of an unlawful system of prohibition. Supporting data illustrates the global harms caused by prohibition, including mass incarceration, wasted public funds, black-market violence, and ecological obstruction. Recommendations for redress, legalization, and restoration are offered.

1 Introduction

For millennia, cannabis and hemp have been cultivated for medicine, food, fiber, and cultural practice. Despite their historical significance, the 20th century witnessed an

unprecedented global prohibition regime. This regime, rooted in political and economic interests rather than scientific evidence, criminalized natural human-plant relationships, leading to profound social, economic, and ecological harm.

This release introduces the *Universal Declaration on Cannabis and Hemp*, a normative framework designed to dismantle prohibition and align law with natural justice and international human rights. It is intended for governments, institutions, civil society, and individuals seeking clarity and guidance.

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2 The Declaration

Preamble

Guided by the principles of natural law, which recognize the inherent legitimacy of all living plants as part of the Earth's ecosystems;

Affirming that international law upholds the dignity, freedoms, and cultural rights of all peoples;

Recalling that cannabis and hemp have been cultivated by humanity for millennia, providing medicine, nutrition, fiber, and spiritual connection;

Recognizing that prohibition has resulted in mass criminalization, ecological harm, economic suppression, and violations of fundamental human rights;

We, the undersigned, declare the following principles to restore truth, justice, and lawful recognition to cannabis and hemp in all societies.

Articles

1. **Legitimacy under Natural Law:** Cannabis and hemp are inherently lawful and may not be subjected to criminalization. The existence of a plant cannot constitute a crime.
2. **Human Rights and Dignity:** No individual shall be deemed criminal for cultivating, possessing, or responsibly using cannabis or hemp.
3. **Prohibition as Unlawful:** Cannabis prohibition constitutes an unlawful scheme contrary to natural justice and international obligations.
4. **Ecological and Economic Importance:** Hemp and cannabis are essential for sustainable agriculture, renewable industry, and climate resilience.
5. **Cultural and Spiritual Heritage:** Cannabis holds sacred and cultural significance, protected under international norms of cultural and religious freedom.
6. **Redress and Restoration:** States must release prisoners of cannabis prohibition, restore civil rights, and repair harms inflicted.
7. **Global Recognition and Implementation:** Nations must align law with natural and international principles, dismantling prohibitive regimes.

3 Global Harms of Prohibition

3.1 Mass Incarceration

According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), over 8.2 million cannabis arrests were made in the United States between 2001 and 2010, with Black Americans nearly four times more likely to be arrested than white Americans despite equal usage rates [1].

3.2 Economic Costs

Global enforcement of cannabis prohibition costs governments billions annually. In the United States alone, federal and state expenditures on cannabis law enforcement exceed \$3.6 billion per year [2]. Meanwhile, the legal cannabis market is projected to exceed \$90 billion globally by 2030.

3.3 Organized Crime and Violence

Prohibition fuels black markets, empowering gangs and cartels. In Mexico, cannabis prohibition has been linked to cartel wars, contributing to over 150,000 homicides since 2006 [3].

3.4 Police Brutality and Civil Liberties

Cannabis prohibition often serves as a pretext for discriminatory policing, unlawful searches, and militarized law enforcement tactics, eroding civil trust and democratic freedoms.

3.5 Comparative Data Table

Table 1: Prohibition vs. Legalization: Selected Global Indicators

Indicator	Prohibition Regimes	Legalized Jurisdictions	Source
Annual arrests (US)	500,000+ (2020)	<50,000 (post-legal states)	ACLU, FBI
Gov. expenditure	\$3.6B enforcement	\$10B+ tax revenue	Cato, Statista
Black market share	100%	30–40%	UNODC, New Frontier
Violence index	High cartel presence	Reduced organized crime	Beckett 2017
Public opinion	<30% support (1990)	>65% support (2022)	Pew Research

4 Conclusion

The evidence is clear: cannabis prohibition is illegitimate under natural and international law, harmful to societies, and ecologically unsustainable. The Universal Declaration

on Cannabis and Hemp provides a normative foundation for global redress and future governance. It is now incumbent upon states, institutions, and peoples to implement this truth in policy and practice.

Notes & References

References

- [1] American Civil Liberties Union. *A Tale of Two Countries: Racially Targeted Arrests in the Era of Marijuana Reform*. 2020. Available at: <https://www.aclu.org/report/tale-two-countries-racially-targeted-arrests-era-marijuana-reform>
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- [4] Pew Research Center. *America's New Marijuana Majority*. 2022. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org>
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