The use of the term "Wikipedia" throughout the document includes not only Wikipedia projects but also Wiktionary, Wikisource, Wikivoyage, etc.

I could have started with universalism, the "Philosophie des Lumières". But at the beginning, there is the World. Contemporary. As it is. Today, in 5 years, in 10 years. The environment in which the Wikimedia movement is immersed.

I'm not telling you anything new; the world is becoming increasingly divided along a clear boundary, pitting two camps against each other. On one side, there's the "Good" camp representing democracy, universalism, the rule of law, and the respect for human rights, primarily embodied by the USA and Europe. On the other side, there's the Evil camp embodied by China, Russia, Turkey, Pakistan, and possibly some African powers already, and likely Brazil in the future. The situation with India remains uncertain, as it leans towards the US (due to its strained relations with China), but with a somewhat ambiguous and questionable stance, especially regarding the war in Ukraine, for example.
The third world war has already begun and is just waiting for the potential Chinese annexation of Taiwan within the next decade to officially manifest itself as explicit military confrontation between China and the USA.

NGOs and professional organizations in all sectors, including political ones (such as the Council of Europe), are extremely weak and lack procedures to prevent the infiltration and soft power tactics of notorious dictatorships. These dictatorships have understood very well (their intelligence services have understood) how to make the most of this kind of infiltration to destabilize the West.

Wikimedia is not exempt from this rule and is also subjected to this kind of soft power (there is no reason for it to be otherwise), allowing the venom of political stances from dictatorships to spread. This is in complete contradiction with our values. The reason, in my opinion, is the lack of embodiment of the universalist values that are ours among the individuals who make up the Wikimedia community.

1. Full-embodiment of Wikimedia values in individuals

1.1 Introduction

Mind experiment: You are at an important Wikimedia event, such as the Wikimedia Conference Berlin 2022 or the latest Wikimania. The conference is going well, with no homophobic or denialist remarks, no cases of harassment; the values of the movement are being embodied at this particular event. You run into friends about whom you have no doubt regarding the embodiment of the movement's values, not only at Wikimania but in their

personal lives, at work, with their families, when they go to the stadium, with their partners. There are also many people you know less well, with whom you only engage in small talk, whom you only greet, sometimes from a distance. Are you really sure that for these individuals, on an individual basis:

- Do they sometimes make homophobic remarks at the stadium?
- Can they personally handle the frustration of a romantic breakup without resorting to violence against their ex-companion?
- Do they personally acknowledge that transgender identity is not harmful to humanity? That transgender individuals are just like any other humans, and it's not a "trend"?
- Do they personally recognize that vaccination is a benefit to humanity?
- Do they personally acknowledge that climate change is an extremely important issue, not limited to ecological transition but also, and more importantly, to the question of the collapse of biodiversity?
- Do they personally acknowledge all the genocides as presented in neutral Wikipedia articles on the subject, as well as the number of victims as determined by serious historians? The list is long: Armenian Genocide, Holocaust, Holodomor (if it is acknowledged), Uyghur genocide, etc.
- Have they ever been involved in a corruption case? Not necessarily legally, but if there is a serious argument supporting suspicion.
- Are they a feminist (in the broad sense) and do they personally wish for social equity among genders?
- Are they convinced that Wikipedia is a tool for scientific skepticism capable of countering and debunking fake news and all forms of conspiracy theories?

Mind experiment Ending.

I believe that the weakness of our movement lies here. The lack of true embodiment, not only during a Wikimedia event but in all aspects of individual life, especially in an individual's political beliefs, weakens the movement. Addressing this point can improve many aspects of the movement's functioning.
The movement has less impact on the world than it did 3 or 5 years ago. I have this feeling. Ultimately, because of this lack of embodiment or a far too partial embodiment. A functional movement capable of truly impacting the world needs trust and unity around our values, especially for leadership positions within our movement.

Indeed, I have the feeling that collectively we are not as skilled and strong as we were a few years ago. This is also true for the projects themselves. I have observed this on several WikiProjects, not just those in languages I am proficient in.
I have an interesting case with a few years in between. An experienced contributor conceals their conflict of interest, denies its existence, and uses editing the Wikipedia article related to conflict of interest.

- A few years ago: The request to administrators was resolved in a day, invoking principles and presenting rational arguments. Additionally, there may be a block.
- 2023: Lengthy debates, strong opposition from contributors for reasons related to the atmosphere or empathy for the contributor in question, irrational statements. I believe we will eventually reach the same conclusion, but it will take three weeks.

From both a Wikimedia and a Wikipedian perspective, there is a moral decline, a loss of values, and a relativization of principles that weakens us further and further.

Suggestion: For all committee members, leadership positions at Wikimedia, and all employees: It is mandatory to sign a charter, an oath of honor before taking office, which includes various points listed somewhat in the spirit of the "mind experiment" list. Specific, precise points that are not subject to interpretation. This oath of honor should have <u>legal significance</u>. If any aspect of the individual's existence who has signed it contradicts this charter, the Wikimedia Foundation is entitled to pursue legal action against the individual. Ideally, this kind of charter would be signed by all employees (to become an employee you need to have signed that charter).

1. "I solemnly declare that I acknowledge the genocide... and the number of associated victims..."
2. …
3. …

A few dozen points in the charter.

1.2 Advantages

1.2.1 Improving by embodiment of values

2e Mind experiment: This charter system was implemented by the foundation in February 2024. You are attending the Wikimedia Conference 2024, a gathering of the movement's leadership, with all the committees.
…
Mind experiment Ending.

Your level of trust in others within the movement has greatly improved. There are fewer implicit obstacles in the way things work, everyone is focused and aligned with the values, and thus with the goal (positively and significantly impacts the world). We are more of a team, a true team. Less implicit distrust, more mutual trust. We are making progress.

At this stage, we have changed ourselves; we can now try to change the world.

1.2.2 Wikimedia Ethical Organization Operating Template

In addition to the mandatory charter, we create a brief document summarizing our values and how they are implemented within the organization. This document is somewhat in the spirit of the Agile Manifesto (in form), and we release it under a free license (like the charter). Anyone who wishes can use it. Adherence to the Wikimedia Manifesto and the effective use of the charter are sufficient to be compliant with the Wikimedia Ethical Label (terminology to be improved).
We immediately render all ethical certification labels for organizations obsolete, which too often consist of vague harassment prevention processes that are non-functional and never used.

We begin to change the world a little bit.

Bold companies start adopting the Wikimedia Ethical Label; this implies that it positively changes the lives of people working for the company, but potentially also those of people working for suppliers and clients. The ultimate ethical goal would be to say, "We use the Wikimedia Ethical Label; all our employees have signed the charter, all our responsible volunteers have signed the charter, and we only work with suppliers who have signed the charter." There is indeed some "poetic sensitivity" in this vision, but also something achievable.

Why not take it further, into the realm of politics: imagine if your city implements the Wikimedia Ethical Label? The mayor and city councilors, once elected, must sign the charter to be able to serve.

1.2.3 Resilience to infiltration

The charter mechanism is an excellent indicator of an individual's sincerity or insincerity. I wish a safe return home to the user who, in this example, works for an intelligence service of a dictatorship. It's audacious that they would eventually sign the charter, including the statement "I solemnly declare that transgender identity is a good thing for humanity" (or something equivalent and just as specific). Yes, we might lose some people, probably the ones we need to lose; the charter acts as a smart ethics filter.

In my last Affcom document sent, I wrote something like "We need everyone". I was excessively consensual (it was an AffCom document after all), and I don't actually believe it. We don't need people who ultimately wish us harm. And there may be a way to get rid of them.

1.2.4 Potential for dissemination within the movement

- In the more distant future, one can envision, for example, that a chapter president must sign the charter (the question of whether or not it includes legal consequences depends on many other legal parameters).
- It could also be an option for someone to become a sysop on a project by signing the charter (version without legal consequences).

1.3 Who is going to write that charter?

Late in the reflection, at a certain point, I thought, "Who exactly makes up the board?" I knew some of them, of course, but not all of them and not exactly. And that was the beginning of a little adventure. I undertook to go through all the boards since their inception, classify them, and then try to objectively assess their respective potentials. In essence, I thought a bit about each member of each selected board (using exclusively data available on Metawiki, on candidacy pages, "I do this in life", "I speak three languages", "I live here", that kind of

thing). Then, based on different quantified criteria, I evaluated their personal ethics (according to the criteria from the first mind experiment), their ability to oppose (the ability to defend and hold an idea that you believe is crucial and vital for the movement, even when everyone is against you), a form of "life experience" assessment, and something I called "poetic sensitivity" (not only idealism). And I assigned scores. I calculated averages for each board. And the September 2023 board surpasses all the others. We've never seen anything like this in the entire history of the movement. I know it's flattering, everyone likes compliments. But it's also, and above all, perhaps a unique opportunity? Strong decisions at the right time.

Why am I telling you this? It's because I think it should be the board that writes the charter. You can discuss it with ethicists, with all the people you see necessary. The important thing is not to forget any significant criteria (which might be missing by default). It can be done quite quickly, in two months (did I mention that you got an excellent score?), with some work for the legal experts. And you can have the tool in three months, perhaps much sooner. Then, the actual use of it, the date depends on several parameters, that's another question.

For that writing, I strongly advise against involving the community in any form of work like MC/DC. The initial results demonstrate the limited effectiveness of this option. Essentially, "respect is good, discrimination is bad" is clearly insufficient, especially over such a duration. I do not wish to halt MC/DC in any form; I understand its community importance.

2.Affiliation Strategy & Conflict Management

Preamble: I wish for the removal of AffCom in its current form, as quickly as possible and as smoothly as possible. It's not working (I will explain some of the reasons later). These are structural reasons, and it's nobody's fault.

2.1 Affiliation Strategy

2.1.1 Context

Would we accept a Wikimedia chapter in Belarus? Obviously not, as the conditions are not met, with also two Wikimedians in the government's prisons.

Considering our values, should we then accept a Chapter/User group in a country where a journalist is in prison? Recent example: Tajik Wikimedians User Group, with 6 journalists currently in prison, because they are journalists.
This question can be extended to include the illegality of homosexuality in some African countries, where some people are indeed imprisoned for it, and various forms of severe discrimination, as you see fit.

2.1.2 Big picture

The charter allows us to achieve a high level of ethics among Wikimedia movement leaders. We also need to achieve a comparable level of ethics within the organization itself. This, in my view, involves spreading the Wikimedia brand in territories compatible with Wikimedia's values.

I have contemplated several options, and the best one so far is to use an index related to press freedom, specifically freedom of expression. A high level of freedom of expression implies a high level of adherence to our values in the respective country.

I suggest considering this with the World Press Freedom Index, which is updated annually. The idea is that each year, the Foundation specifies the minimum index required for a genuine Wikimedia chapter recognized by the Foundation. The value of the minimum index can be determined either by the board or by a dedicated committee.

For example, for the current year, a minimum score of 63.0 would seem prudent to me. https://rsf.org/en/index

Only countries with a score >= 63.0 would then be eligible to obtain or maintain a Wikimedia chapter recognized by the Foundation. The funding for these chapters is provided through the ad hoc Grant Committee.

Countries, including existing chapters/user groups, lose the right to use the trademark, cannot be called Wikimedia, and cannot receive direct funding from the Foundation. They would become local associations, such as "Friends of Wikipedia in ...".

Of course, we don't abandon them financially. We assist them as much as possible, and they can receive funding through regional or continental grants exclusively. This type of Regional Grant Committee is quite effective and seems to have a high level of support from contributors.

Furthermore, this provision allows us to, in a way, reverse soft power. States close to the 63.0 index will be tempted to benefit from the Wikimedia spotlight by improving their rank. For this to happen, the Wikimedia brand needs to shine very brightly, and for it to shine brightly, we need to be ethically beyond reproach.

2.1.3 Organization & Strategy

I suggest replacing the current Affcom Subcommittee Affiliation with an exclusively professional structure consisting of at least two individuals. This means that the community can transparently track the various affiliation cases (which are much less numerous than before) with the professionals.

This involves having contributors (let's say 3) who have no authority over the procedures discuss each month with the responsible person who explains the various ongoing cases. These contributors have access to all affiliation documents, and they observe.

Outside of the procedure, they have a right to veto, which they can only use collectively (all three contributors must agree) on a specific case that they consider problematic in its handling. A veto must be thoroughly justified. The veto suspends the process for that case, which is then transferred to the board for further consideration.

Designation of the three contributors: an open question. I have some ideas, but at this stage, it's not an urgent detail (important but non-urgent). I just want to emphasize that this type of position, focused on ethics and transparency, can be a very good first experience in the ecosystem for a contributor with strong potential.

Like the two professionals, the three volunteers should also be required to sign the charter, an oath of honor.

2.2 Conflict Management

Preamble: The theme of conflict management (in its broadest sense) deserves thorough consideration. There are numerous situations and divergences. Such a study must be conducted before contemplating any drastic changes. That's why I focused on adjustments, some of which are significant.

I believe I can say that I have read every byte of the AffCom wiki (I don't necessarily recommend the experience), and I don't think I've ever found a conflict resolution that truly elevates the movement. The results are often unclear, do not always improve things, and, most importantly, never contribute to the improvement of the organization itself.

It's a matter of objectives and, therefore, mindset. In conflict resolution, the minimum is to effectively resolve conflicts. Conflicts are inevitable and are part of any organization, a living entity. The goal is to use conflict to understand the structural reasons behind it and, in turn, improve the organization itself.

It's exactly like an individual. If they make the effort, they use conflict to understand its reasons, take their share of responsibility, reflect on the conditions of the conflict, and analyze what they find dysfunctional in their own behavior during the conflict. They improve, becoming a better person.

This is also a limitation of the Affcom subcommittee Conflicts, as it has the unfortunate habit of selecting members who have never had the slightest conflict on Wikipedia, whose nature (completely respectable) is more inclined to avoid conflict, and one could say of them, "this person is absolutely non-confrontational." This is a good thing, of course, but in the context of conflict resolution, I have significant doubts about the relevance of this profile.

2.2.1 All kind of Conflict to manage (including Interpersonal conflicts) & Improvement of the organization through conflict management

[This title is way too long.]

The new conflict committee deals with conflicts in their entirety. There are no longer distinctions like (from Affcom usage):
- Interpersonal conflict => T&S;
- Organizational conflict => Affcom, Subcommittee Conflict (current situation).

This approach poses many problems. There is no organizational conflict that does not have an interpersonal aspect. Often, interpersonal conflict is the key to resolving the conflict in the strictest sense.

The current situation, example:
An essentially interpersonal conflict comes to Affcom for organizational reasons. The first decision: we ignore the interpersonal conflict and focus exclusively on the organizational aspect (which means nothing tangible if we don't have insight into the interpersonal dimension). We pass it on to T&S. T&S does its job (very well) and assesses whether there are sufficient grounds to take on the case (harassment, threats, etc.), but in this case, there aren't. It's returned to Affcom, which had already discarded this part of the case long ago. The result is that absolutely no one has addressed the interpersonal conflict. We resolve nothing at all; we simply overlook it, and in practice, we do very little. It's perfectly absurd, and the consequences for the movement are certainly significant (frustration, disengagement, and more), making them quite difficult to measure.

So, the new committee not only adopts a mindset oriented towards conflict resolution but also aims to improve the organization by identifying the root causes of said conflict. Furthermore, the conflicts accepted by the committee encompass all forms of conflict, primarily interpersonal conflicts.

2.2.2 Conflict Committee Members Selection

- Members interested in this committee follow the same process as today to apply. The difference is that they need to have 150,000 edits on at least two Wikimedia projects (excluding Wikidata) and significant activity in the last six months. A Wikimedian is more likely (or unlucky, depending on the perspective) to have encountered conflicts on Wikipedia.
- The current committee selects the candidates and produces a shortlist for the board.
- The board chooses from the selected profiles, accepts and rejects candidates (did I mention…). It justifies its decisions regarding rejections with a brief note available on Meta. This note discusses competence and suitability for the position (in a respectful and positive manner).
- Last step, official announcement of the selected individuals.
- Committee members must sign the ethical charter, ideally a version with legal consequences.