

A logo for human rights – the winning logo, selected from over 15,000 entries from participants in 190 countries, has been presented to the public in New York

There is finally a symbol for human rights. On 23 September 2011, alongside the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the “Logo for Human Rights” initiative unveiled the winner of an international online competition. In May, the initiative issued an international call for logo submissions and invited people to judge them online. The response was impressive: from over 15,000 entries, a prominent jury together with the internet community selected the winning logo. The new human rights logo is now available to everyone at no cost as an open source product at www.humanrightslogo.net.

The winning design is by Predrag Stacic of Serbia. The 32-year-old freelance graphic designer had the idea for his design when reading the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “In the preamble it says that human rights are the foundation for creating a free, just, and peaceful world in the future. I put that in the design using two universal symbols – a hand and a bird – to make something new.” The winner of the competition does not think that a single logo can change the world. “Not this one either. But a logo is a symbol around which people can rally, and people can change the world.”

The initiative expects the new logo to be widely accepted, because it was developed by the people for the people and was also chosen by them. It is to give a face to peaceful human rights efforts worldwide.

The international competition a “Logo for Human Rights” was started on 3 May 2011. In the course of only three months, 15,396 logo designs were submitted from participants from over 190 countries. From these, a jury of prominent human rights activists and designers chose the ten best. After that, all people from all over the world had three weeks to vote online on the top ten logos and choose a winner.

The initiators were positively surprised at the high level of participation: millions of people followed the competition since the opening ceremony in May. Federal Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle had the following to say: “The great success of the competition shows that human rights are an important topic in all countries of the world. Many people have obviously felt that a universal symbol for human rights was missing. This gap has now finally been filled.” He also said that people from all over the world had come together for discussions and had been able to exchange ideas on human rights and design.

An international jury of renowned and high-ranking personalities supported the initiative, including UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay (South Africa) and five Nobel Peace Prize winners – Aung San Suu Kyi (Myanmar), Shirin Ebadi (Iran), Muhammad Yunus (Bangladesh), Mikhail Gorbachev (Russia) and Jimmy Carter (USA) – as well as Angelina Acheng Atyam (children’s rights activist, Uganda), Waris Dirie (supermodel and women’s rights activist, Somalia), Roland Emmerich (Hollywood director and producer, Germany), Carolyn Gomes (human rights activist, Jamaica), Juanes (pop star and peace activist, Colombia), Somaly Mam (human rights activist, Cambodia), Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu (human rights activist, Sri Lanka), Jimmy Wales (Wikipedia founder, USA), and internationally renowned design experts such as Ahmad Humeid (Jordan), Javier Mariscal (Spain), Erik Spiekermann (Germany) and others, including the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Germany, Mauritius, Senegal, Singapore, and Uruguay who had taken the initiative in creating a platform for the logo competition.