Islamic Ethics and Character Building

Edited by Fatimah Abdullah

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Megawati Moris

Introduction and Background

The term Secular Humanism is alternatively known as Humanism and it is often spelled with a capital 'H' to distinguish it from other forms of humanism. There is no universal doctrine or tenet for all Humanists to adhere to but various declarations and statements have been issued in an attempt to unify the Humanist identity. Nonetheless, member organizations of its umbrella organization the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU)[1] are required by law to accept the *Minimum Statement on Humanism* which is stated below.[2]

Studies have shown that over one billion people in the world today define themselves as atheist, agnostic or nonreligious. In the United States of America, considered as the most religious of the world's

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1 International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) is the sole world umbrella organization embracing Humanist, atheist, rationalist, secular, skeptic, Ethical Culture, free thought and similar organizations worldwide. It is founded in Amsterdam in 1952 and is a democratic union of more than one hundred member organizations in forty countries. See International Humanist and Ethical Union, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Humanist_and_Ethical_Union (accessed 30 May, 2011).

2 "Secular Humanism" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secular_humanism (accessed 30 May, 2011).