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# COMMITTED TO HUMAN RIGHTS

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The yearning to be free and live with dignity is shared by every human being on the planet. But how do we define such a life?

Philosophers, clergy, and even individuals have their own definitions, but in legal and practical terms, the minimum requirements for a life of freedom and dignity can be measured by a set of international standards called “human rights.”

Human rights – the right to think and speak freely, to vote, to receive a basic education, and to be free from torture or enslavement, among others – are innate: people are born with these rights, and always have them, just because they are human. And these rights never go away: individuals retain them even if those in power do not recognize or enforce them.

Human rights standards are derived from all major religious texts and the founding documents of many countries – from the Magna Carta and the French Declaration on the Rights of Man to the US Constitution.

On December 10, 1948, in the aftermath of the horrors of World War II, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) – a “Bill of Rights for all humankind,” as Eleanor Roosevelt, the UDHR’s chief architect, called it.

The UDHR established the principle that human rights are universal. It also made all governments collectively responsible for protecting them, and laid the foundation for a range of international human rights laws, which governments must obey.

Sadly, as global headlines today attest, the rights outlined in the UDHR are not always upheld or enforced.

**The National Center for Civil and Human Rights is committed to raising awareness — through its exhibitions, programs, and events — about human rights and how they are protected.**



# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

## ABBREVIATED

- ARTICLE 1** Right to Equality
- ARTICLE 2** Freedom from Discrimination
- ARTICLE 3** Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
- ARTICLE 4** Freedom from Slavery
- ARTICLE 5** Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
- ARTICLE 6** Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
- ARTICLE 7** Right to Equality before the Law
- ARTICLE 8** Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal

- ARTICLE 9** Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
- ARTICLE 10** Right to Fair Public Hearing
- ARTICLE 11** Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
- ARTICLE 12** Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
- ARTICLE 13** Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
- ARTICLE 14** Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution

# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

## ABBREVIATED

- ARTICLE 15** Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It
- ARTICLE 16** Right to Marriage and Family
- ARTICLE 17** Right to Own Property
- ARTICLE 18** Freedom of Belief and Religion
- ARTICLE 19** Freedom of Opinion and Information
- ARTICLE 20** Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
- ARTICLE 21** Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
- ARTICLE 22** Right to Social Security

- ARTICLE 23** Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
- ARTICLE 24** Right to Rest and Leisure
- ARTICLE 25** Right to Adequate Living Standard
- ARTICLE 26** Right to Education
- ARTICLE 27** Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community
- ARTICLE 28** Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document
- ARTICLE 29** Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development
- ARTICLE 30** Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

## PREAMBLE

WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

WHEREAS disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

WHEREAS it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

WHEREAS it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

WHEREAS the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

WHEREAS Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

WHEREAS a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

December 10, 1948



# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLAIN LANGUAGE VERSION

## **ARTICLE 1**

Every human being is born free and equal in dignity and rights.

## **ARTICLE 2**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms in this Declaration, regardless of sex, race, language, religion, political affiliation, social standing, or any other status.

## **ARTICLE 3**

Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.

## **ARTICLE 4**

No one can be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade are prohibited.

## **ARTICLE 5**

No one can be tortured or subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

## **ARTICLE 6**

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

## **ARTICLE 7**

Everyone is equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of the law.

## **ARTICLE 8**

Everyone has the right to seek legal help and access the justice system when rights are not respected.

## **ARTICLE 9**

No one can arrest or detain you arbitrarily, or send you away from your country unjustly.

## **ARTICLE 10**

Trials should be public and conducted in a fair manner by an impartial and independent tribunal.

# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLAIN LANGUAGE VERSION

## **ARTICLE 11**

You are considered innocent until it can be proved you are guilty according to the law. If you are accused of a crime you have the right to a defense.

## **ARTICLE 12**

You have the right to protection under the law if your privacy, family, home, or reputation are attacked.

## **ARTICLE 13**

You have the right to movement within your own country and the right to leave and return to your country.

## **ARTICLE 14**

If you are persecuted at home, you have the right to seek the protection of asylum in another country.

## **ARTICLE 15**

You have the right to a nationality – to belong to a country.

## **ARTICLE 16**

Everyone has the right to marry when they are legally able to do so. Everyone has equal rights within a marriage, which must be entered into with the consent of both spouses.

## **ARTICLE 17**

You have the right to own property. No one has the right to take your property away from you.

## **ARTICLE 18**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes the freedom to change religions.

## **ARTICLE 19**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to receive and impart information and ideas.

## **ARTICLE 20**

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association and no one can be forced to join an organization.

# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLAIN LANGUAGE VERSION

## **ARTICLE 21**

Everyone has the right to vote in fair elections and to take part in their country's political life.

## **ARTICLE 22**

Every society, according to its resources, should help individuals to develop their potential.

## **ARTICLE 23**

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, and to protection against unemployment. Everyone has the right to equal pay for equal work and to form and join unions.

## **ARTICLE 24**

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including a reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

## **ARTICLE 25**

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood because of outside circumstances.

## **ARTICLE 26**

Everyone has the right to education. Education should be free and compulsory at the elementary level. Technical and professional education should be generally available and higher education should be accessible.

## **ARTICLE 27**

Everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancements and their benefits.

# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PLAIN LANGUAGE VERSION

## **ARTICLE 28**

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

## **ARTICLE 29**

Everyone has duties toward the community so that each individual can fully develop. The law should guarantee human rights and allow everyone to respect others and to be respected.

## **ARTICLE 30**

No institution nor individual should act in any way to destroy the rights enshrined in the UDHR.