

## **PEACE and HUMAN RIGHTS**

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While some dictionaries define the word right as “a privilege,” when used in the context of “human rights,” we are talking about something more basic. Every person is entitled to certain fundamental rights, simply by the fact of being human. These are called “human rights,” rather than a privilege, which can be taken away at someone’s whim. Every person is entitled to certain rights—simply by the fact that they are a human being.

They are “rights” because they are things you are allowed to be, to do or to have. These rights are there for your protection against people who might want to harm or hurt you. They are also there to help us get along with each other and live in peace.

Many people know something about their rights. Generally they know they have the right to food and a safe place to stay. They know they have a right to be paid for the work they do. But there are many other rights.

When human rights are not well known by people, abuses such as discrimination, intolerance, injustice, oppression and slavery can arise.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Human rights are a special sort of inalienable moral entitlement. They attach to all persons equally, by virtue of their humanity, irrespective of race, nationality, or membership of

any particular social group. They specify the minimum conditions for human dignity and a tolerable life. "The individual and his rights and freedom are the highest value. The recognition, observance and defense of the human rights and freedoms of the individual and the citizen are the obligation of the state." The Constitution proclaims a broad range of civil, political, social, and economic rights. Contrasting realities under overbearing and corrupt state administrations infringed on freedom of expression, religion, fair and humane justice, freedom of movement, and freedom from racial, ethnic, and homophobic bigotry, and hate crimes. Inequality, poverty, and homelessness haunted the land while the new rich lived high. Women experienced inequality and exploitation in employment, widespread divorce, abandonment, and domestic violence, and trafficking into prostitution. Life expectancy fell to third-world levels, especially among men, owing to stress, accidents, alcoholism, and the pervasive inadequacy of health care.

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

Universal human rights are often expressed and guaranteed by law, in the forms of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law. International human rights law lays down obligations of Governments to act in certain ways or to refrain from certain acts, in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals or groups.

Human rights are inalienable. They should not be taken away, except in specific situations and according to due process. For example, the right to liberty may be restricted if a person is found guilty of a crime by a court of law.

All human rights are indivisible, whether they are civil and political rights, such as the right to life, equality before the law and freedom of expression; economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to work, social security and education, or collective rights, such as the rights to development and self-determination, are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent. The improvement of one right facilitates advancement of the others. Likewise, the deprivation of one right adversely affects the others.

Human rights entail both rights and obligations. States assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect and to fulfill human rights. The obligation to respect means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. The obligation to protect requires States to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. The obligation to fulfill means that States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights. At the individual level, while we are entitled our human rights, we should also respect the human rights of others. At the individual level, while we are entitled our human rights, we should also respect the human rights of others.