

Proclamation

BY

YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL
ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Over the millennia and through the ebb and flow of civilizations, the human family has held to the determined hope of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Time and again that promise of human nobility has been seemingly crushed only to rise again.

Thus, from the ashes of World War II came the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first document in history to establish international political, moral and cultural accord on the meaning of human integrity and social justice.

Now embraced by 193 nations, the Universal Declaration's 30 articles confirm Humanity's inherent entitlements, including the "freedoms from ..." (freedom from discrimination, from slavery, from torture) and the "freedoms to ..." (freedom to peaceable assembly; to democratic, representative government; to creative self-expression).

Yet, in the end, declarations are just that. No one could or would ever make human rights a fact but resolute individuals and groups of unshakable courage, vision and goodwill.

Moreover, a populace unaware of its human rights is a population exposed to impunity and injustice. Human rights education is thus the key to fulfilling the Universal Declaration's pledge.

Accordingly, from its January, 2001 founding and with each succeeding year, Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) has devoted its whole energies to universal human rights education, specifically the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to the young people of the world and to inspire them to become advocates for tolerance and peace.

Similar dedicated initiatives by many other like organizations and educators have forged further such educational progress with the youth of the world.

Yet, more than 70 years since its creation, the promise of the United Nations Universal Declaration is very far from fulfilled.

As our world comes ever closer together through instant communications and a growing awareness of the breadth of Humankind's culture and traditions, another hallmark of our

civilizations since 1948 is the seemingly unending stream of corruption, exploitation, cultural conflicts, outright wars, hunger, and illiteracy.

Universal human rights attainment is only possible when individuals adhere to and are accountable to the ideal of personal responsibility—responsibility for one's own condition, for family, for community and for the human race.

While YHRI, United for Human Rights and their many partners, allied organizations, and supporters can be proud of the work and progress to date, there is so much more that must be done.

Accordingly, on this 20th anniversary of its founding, YHRI calls upon all governments, heads of state, policy- and law-makers, and educators worldwide:

1. To recognize that unless effective and enlightened leadership prevails through the emerging generation and those to follow, the continuing worldwide trends of ignorance, global war, genocide—and the accompanying decay and destruction of human rights and civil liberties—herald this emerging 21st Century as more anguished and inhumane than the one that has just passed;
2. From this urgency, to renew their full commitment to the United Nations Universal Declaration and the ideals for which it stands, not just in name but in action;
3. To acknowledge and confirm that the Universal Declaration's fulfillment depends utterly on the effective education of human rights to the youth of the world;
4. To thus adopt and direct as paramount national, regional and local policy the inclusion of human rights education as embraced by the Universal Declaration as a permanent element of all primary, elementary, and secondary teacher training and educational curricula; and
5. To work with YHRI and like organizations of goodwill to develop, adopt and apply effective teacher and student curricula to attain and consistently achieve high standards of such human rights education and thus youth human rights leadership inspiration for all generations to come.

To the governments of Earth and to all educators, organizations and people of goodwill on this 20-year commemoration of YHRI's creation:

MAY THIS BE THE CALL TO EMBRACE TOGETHER AND ACHIEVE THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION'S NOBLE, ESSENTIAL AIMS;

and

MAY THE GENERATIONS PREVAILING 20 YEARS-ON BE ABLE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HUMANKIND HAS AT LAST RISEN TO MAKE HUMAN RIGHTS A REALITY FOR ALL TIME TO COME.



The Proclamation is endorsed by:

Jose Ramos-Horta

Nobel Peace Laureate

Tawakkol Karman

Nobel Peace Laureate

Shirin Ebadi

Nobel Peace Laureate

Oscar Arias Sanchez

Nobel Peace Laureate

FW de Klerk Foundation

Nobel Peace Laureate

H.E. Bertrand G. Ramcharan

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2003-2004)

Ambassador Salah S. Hammad

Head African Governance Architecture, African Union

H.E. Ireneo Omositson Namboka

UN Human Rights Education and Protection Adviser

Jorge L. Fonseca Fonseca

Congressman, General Assembly of Costa Rica

Platon

Photographer, Founder of *People's Portfolio*

Laura Guercio

President, *Legal Aid Worldwide – L.A.W.*

Ricky S. Veerappan

Ontario Provincial Police, Director, Canada

Wafik Moustafa

Chairman, *British Arab Network*, UK

Agrippa Ezofo

President, *The African Diaspora Foundation*, USA

About Youth for Human Rights International:

Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization headquartered in Los Angeles, with over 150 groups and chapters around the world. YHRI carry out programs to raise popular awareness of human rights, reaching more than 100 million each year. Its educational materials are translated to 27 languages, including a full curriculum of lessons for use by educators, human rights organizations and anyone teaching human rights in schools and communities.

YHRI has conducted programs under the guidance of Nobel Peace Prize laureates José Ramos-Horta in Timor-Leste, Oscar Arias Sanchez in Costa Rica and Archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa, and many other locations around the world.

Youth for Human Rights International and its President, Dr. Mary Shuttleworth, received the *2019 Peace Summit Medal for Social Activism* from the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates in recognition of their work to educate the youth of the world on the importance of human rights, through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.