



HUMAN RIGHTS

How they came into being
and why we must defend them



DÉCLARATION DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET DU CITOYEN

Décidée par l'Assemblée Nationale dans les séances des 20 et 26 Août 1789. - Approuvée et acceptée par le Roi le 26 Août 1789.

PRÉAMBULE

LES représentants du peuple François constitués en assemblée nationale, considérant que l'ignorance, l'oubli ou le mépris des droits de l'homme sont les seules causes de toutes les misères publiques et de la corruption des gouvernemens, ont résolu de s'exprimer dans une déclaration solennelle les droits naturels, inaliénables et sacrés de l'homme, afin que cette déclaration, constamment présente à tous les membres du corps social, leur rappelle sans cesse leurs droits et leurs devoirs, afin que les actes du pouvoir législatif et ceux du pouvoir exécutif, pouvant être à chaque instant comparés avec le but de tout gouvernement politique, en soient plus respectés, afin que les réclamations des citoyens, fondées désormais sur des principes simples et incontestables, impovent toujours au maintien de la constitution et du bonheur de tous.

EN conséquence, l'Assemblée nationale reconnait et déclare, en présence et sous les auspices de l'Être suprême les droits naturels de l'homme et du citoyen :

ARTICLE PREMIER.

LES hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits, les distinctions sociales ne peuvent être fondées que sur l'utilité commune.

II. Le but de tout association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme, ces droits sont la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté, et la résistance à l'oppression.

III. Le principe de toute souveraineté réside essentiellement dans la nation, nul individu ne peut exercer d'autorité qui n'en émane expressément.

IV. La liberté consiste à pouvoir faire tout ce qui ne nuit pas à autrui. L'usage des droits naturels de chaque homme n'a de bornes que celles qui assurent aux autres membres de la société la jouissance de ces mêmes droits, ces bornes ne peuvent être déterminées que par la loi.

V. La loi n'a le droit de défendre que les actions nuisibles à la société. Tout ce qui n'est pas défendu par la loi ne peut être empêché, et nul ne peut être contraint à faire ce qu'elle n'a ordonné pas.

VI. La loi est l'expression de la volonté générale, tous les citoyens ont droit de concourir personnellement, ou par leurs représentans, à sa formation, elle doit être la même pour tous, soit qu'elle punisse, soit qu'elle punisse, tous les citoyens étant égaux à ses yeux, sont également admissibles à toutes dignités, places et emplois publics, selon leur capacité, et sans autres distinctions que celles de leurs vertus et de leurs talens.

VII. Nul homme ne peut être accusé, arrêté ni détenu que dans les cas déterminés par la loi, et selon les formes qu'elle a prescrites, ceux qui sollicitent d'être jugés, condamnés en leur faveur, des ordonnances, des lettres de grâce, de répit, ou tout autre privilège, ne doivent être punis, mais tout citoyen appelé ou saisi en vertu de la loi, doit obéir à l'instant, il ne peut couvrir par la résistance.

VIII. La loi ne doit établir que des peines strictement et évidemment nécessaires, et nul ne peut être puni qu'en vertu d'une loi établie et promulguée antérieurement au délit, et légalement appliquée.

IX. TOUT homme étant présumé innocent jusqu'à ce qu'il ait été déclaré coupable, s'il est jugé indispensable d'arrêter, toute rigueur qui ne serait pas nécessaire pour s'assurer de sa personne doit être sévèrement réprimée par la loi. NUL ne doit être inquiété pour ses opinions, religieuses pourvu que leur manifestation ne trouble pas l'ordre public établi par la loi.

XI. La libre communication des pensées et des opinions est un des droits les plus précieux de l'homme, tout citoyen peut donc parler, écrire, imprimer librement, sauf à répondre de l'abus de la liberté dans les cas déterminés par la loi.

XII. La garantie des droits de l'homme et du citoyen nécessite une force publique; cette force est donc instituée pour l'avantage de tous et non pour l'utilité particulière de ceux qui s'en sont corrompus.

XIII. Toute contribution de la force publique, et pour les dépenses d'administration, est constituée commune et indivisible, elle doit être également répartie entre les citoyens en raison de leurs facultés.

XIV. LES citoyens ont le droit de constater par eux même ou par leurs représentans, la nécessité de la contribution publique, de la consentir librement, d'en suivre l'emploi, et d'en déterminer la quotité, l'assiette, le recouvrement et la durée.

XV. La société a le droit de demander compte à tout agent public de son administration.

XVI. TOUTE société dans laquelle la garantie des droits n'est pas assurée, ni la séparation des pouvoirs déterminée, n'a point de constitution.

XVII. LES propriétés étant un droit inviolable et sacré, nul ne peut en être privé, si ce n'est lorsque la nécessité publique, légalement constatée, l'exige évidemment, et sous la condition d'une juste et préalable indemnité.

AUX REPRESENTANS DU PEUPLE FRANCOIS

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.

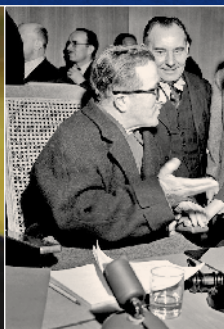
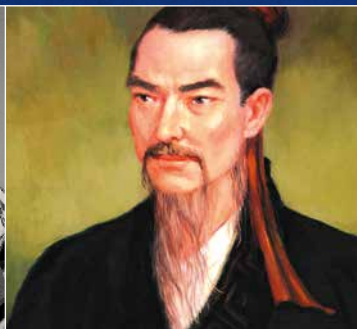
THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTICLE 1

CONTENTS

The World Cultural Heritage of Humanity	p. 4 – 5
Human Rights in the 18th Century	p. 6 – 7
The Science Fiction Author and Human Rights	p. 8 – 9
World Citizen No. 1 in the UN General Assembly	p. 10 – 11
The Current Threat to Human Rights	p. 12 – 13
The Worldwide Assertion of Human Rights	p. 14 – 15
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights	p. 16 – 21
Further Information and Imprint	p. 22 – 23



Human Rights



THE WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

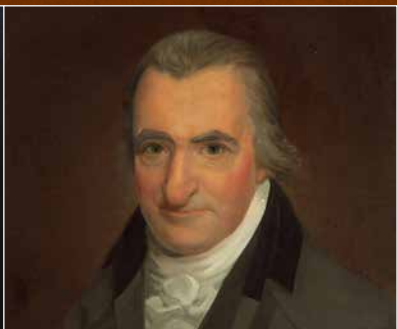
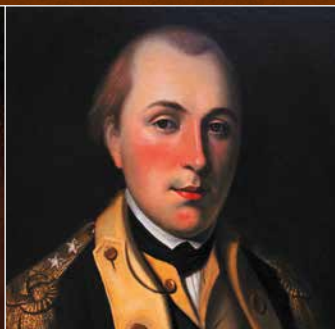
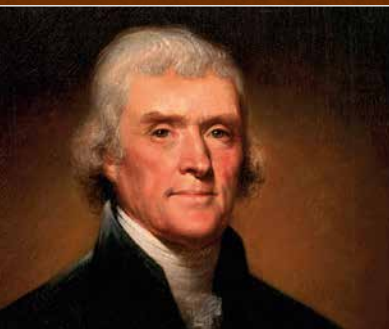
On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in Paris. It made clear that all human beings are “born free and equal in dignity and rights” (Art. 1) – “without distinction of any kind, such as race*, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (Art. 2). This international affirmation of a *humanistic, cosmopolitan perspective* was a *milestone in the history of humanity*, which had previously thought mostly in the limited categories of the own family, tribe, ethnicity, religion or nation.

Yet hundreds, and even thousands of years before the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, there were people who promoted the idea of ONE humanity. For example, the Chinese philosopher Mozi, to whom we owe the first anti-war text in world literature, formulated the commandment of *universal philanthropy* as long as 2500 years ago. He countered the narrow view of the world that is concerned only with the advantage of one's own group with a new *universalism*, a love for human beings that does not stop at the borders of the respective state, the respective class or family:



» *If we look at other states as our own and other families as our own and other people as ourselves, (...) then the strong will not overpower the weak, the masses will not rob the minorities, the rich will not mock the poor, the nobles will not malign the commoners, and the clever will not take advantage of the simple. (...) What is so difficult about that? – Only that the superiors, their government and officials will not act accordingly.* «

As the example of the Chinese philosopher Mozi shows, the idea of equal, universal rights is by no means an “invention of the West”, even if this is repeatedly claimed. In fact, for much of history, the so-called “Western values” were in fact rather “Eastern values” – for instance from the 9th to the 13th century, when the centres of Muslim culture granted much greater freedom to individuals than Christian Europe. We should therefore understand that universal human rights are not “exclusive cultural assets of the West” imposed on the rest of the world in an “act of imperialism”, but rather the fruits of a “world cultural heritage of humanity” produced by men and women of all times, of all cultures and of all continents.



HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE 18TH CENTURY

The Greek philosopher Epicurus had already developed the idea of the *social contract* in the 3rd century before the common era (the values of living together are not predetermined, but are negotiated among people) and declared the *happiness of the individual* as the central measure of a humane policy. Yet it took two millennia for these ideas to have a political impact. *Thomas Jefferson*, who owned several editions of the Epicurean poem "On the Nature of Things", formulated the famous preamble of the *American Declaration of Independence* in 1776 very much in the spirit of this ancient philosophy of happiness and contract:

» *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.* «





In 1789, as American Ambassador in Paris, Jefferson assisted Marquis de La Fayette in formulating the French *Declaration of Human and Civil Rights*, the first article of which almost literally anticipates Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.” The source of inspiration for Jefferson and La Fayette were the writings of their companion *Thomas Paine*, whose 1775 article against slavery had caused a sensation and who also popularized the idea of an independent, democratic, human rights-oriented constitutional state on American soil with his bestseller “*Common Sense*”. The term “United States of America” was coined by Paine – and with his book “*The Rights of Man*” in 1791 he also ensured that the term “human rights” became internationally known.

Despite his undeniable achievements, Paine fell out of favour shortly afterwards, having made powerful enemies through his committed opposition to slavery, his proposals for social justice, and his criticism of institutionalized religions in the book “*Age of Reason*”. Paine died lonely and embittered, but his ideas lived on: His admirer Abraham Lincoln ensured decades later that the liberation of the slaves could be implemented, and Paine’s life motto “*The world is my country and to do good is my religion*” became the leitmotif of the world citizen movement of the 20th century.

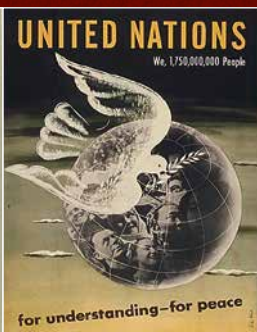
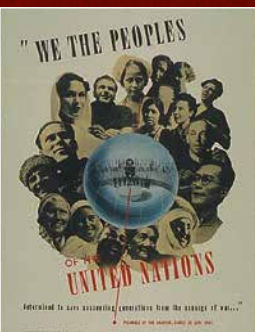


THE SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The fact that the human rights debate was revived in the 20th century – 150 years after the French Revolution – is due to a man whom most people probably only know as the author of famous science fiction novels such as “The Time Machine”, “The Invisible Man” or “The War of the Worlds”: In 1939, *H.G. Wells* triggered a broad international debate when he argued that the goal of the Allies in World War II should not consist solely in the destruction of the Nazi dictatorship, but that the focus should be on establishing an *international federation of states*, declaring *universal human rights*, and enforcing these worldwide.

H.G. Wells’ book “The Rights of Man or What Are We Fighting For?”, published in 1940, was one of the most influential (though today largely forgotten) texts of the 20th century. Indeed, it was Wells’ tireless commitment to human rights that inspired US president Franklin D. Roosevelt to give his famous “Four Freedoms” speech in 1941, the basis upon which the fight for human rights was declared a war target. Wells’ text also had a major influence on the thinking of Eleanor Roosevelt, the president’s wife, who was appointed first chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1947.

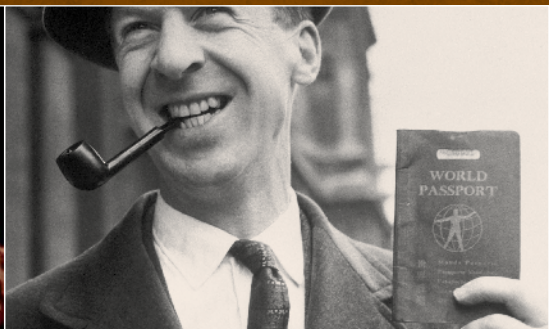




Wells' drafts for a Declaration of Universal Human Rights were available to the commissioners when they began their deliberations. Other major contributions to the text of the subsequent Universal Declaration of Human Rights came from Canadian jurist John Peters Humphrey, Lebanese politician Charles Malik, French jurist René Cassin, Chinese philosopher Peng-chun Chang, and French philosopher Jacques Maritain.

The UN Human Rights Commission received support from the then Director-General of UNESCO, British evolutionary biologist and founder of "evolutionary humanism" *Julian Huxley*, who had published the extensive, multi-volume work "The Science of Life" a few years earlier together with Wells. Huxley contacted intellectuals around the world to facilitate a universalistic foundation of human rights, which was also reflected in the preamble of the Declaration. By mid-1948, the text of the Declaration was largely finalized, but with growing tensions between East and West it seemed increasingly unlikely that the *United Nations* would eventually adopt the Declaration of Human Rights.



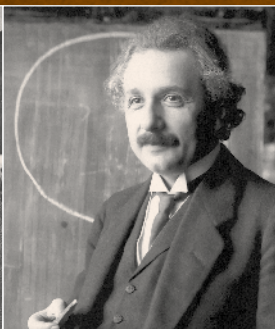


WORLD CITIZEN NO. 1 IN THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In 1948, the conflict between the “capitalist West” and the “communist East” caused the negotiations of the United Nations to falter. Then an unexpected impulse came from civil society: On November 19, 1948, activists of the “World Citizens Movement” occupied the UN General Assembly. After the speech of the Yugoslav UN delegate, the proceedings were interrupted by former Broadway star *Garry Davis*, who had given up his American passport in May 1948 and camped as a *stateless “World Citizen No. 1”* on the grounds of the UN Assembly. Davis began to read the so-called “*ORAN Declaration*” (named after the location from Albert Camus’ novel “The Plague”):

» *We, the people, want the peace which only a world government can give. The sovereign states you represent divide us and lead us to the abyss of total war. I call upon you no longer to deceive us by this illusion of political authority. (...) And if you fail us in this, stand aside, for a People’s World Assembly will arise from our own ranks to create such a government.* «





The campaign made headlines worldwide – partly because Davis was supported locally by France's leading intellectuals (including Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, André Breton) and from afar by Albert Einstein and Albert Schweitzer. Just ten days later, on November 29, 1948, a meeting was held in the *Central Hall* in London, at which two thousand people signed the "ORAN Declaration". In Brussels, the association "Les Amis de Garry Davis" already had 12,000 members by that time.

Support was particularly strong in Paris, the meeting place of the *United Nations*. Six days before the adoption of the Declaration of Human Rights, 3,000 people gathered in the *Salle Pleyel* for the World Citizens Event. On December 9, as many as 12,000 people gathered in the Paris *Vélodrome d'Hiver*. For days, the people of Paris besieged the *Palais de Chaillot*, where the UN Assembly was meeting, putting so much pressure on the delegates that on December 10, they could not help but adopt the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In the months that followed, hundreds of thousands of people around the world registered as "world citizens", thus helping Thomas Paine's old motto "The world is my country" to gain new popularity.

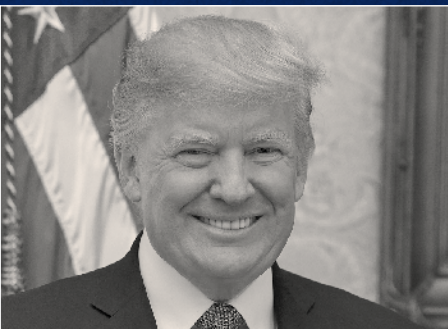


THE CURRENT THREAT TO HUMAN RIGHTS

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was adopted by the United Nations without dissenting votes. Eight countries abstained, however, namely the countries of the former Eastern Bloc (Soviet Union, Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, ČSSR, Yugoslavia) as well as Saudi Arabia and South Africa. The Eastern Bloc countries expressed the criticism that social human rights were underrepresented in the Declaration, but what mainly disturbed them were the *individual rights of freedom*, which contradicted the doctrine of the socialist state. Particularly interesting from today's perspective are the reasons that led South Africa and Saudi Arabia to reject the Declaration in 1948, as they provide information on where the strongest resistance to human rights lies, then as now.

As early as 1943, five years before the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *African National Congress* had passed the resolution "Africans' Claims in South Africa", which called for equal rights for all people in South Africa and the abolition of racial segregation. The apartheid regime of the time did not want to accept this under any circumstances, which is why it did not sign the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Although racial segregation has now been overcome in South Africa, *racist* and *nationalist-chauvinist* reasons still stand in the way of the acceptance of human rights in many countries.





Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, refused to accept the Universal Declaration of Human Rights mainly on *religious grounds*, because the Wahhabi theocracy did not agree with Article 18 of the Declaration, which guarantees *freedom of religion* to every individual. There is a good reason why many *leaders of religious communities* (though by no means *all their members!*) still vehemently oppose human rights today. In order to conceal this fact, in recent years they have even adopted their own “Declarations on Human Rights”, such as the “Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam”, which recognizes rights only if they are in accordance with the *Sharia*, or the “Russian Declaration of Human Rights”, which accepts only those rights that are compatible with the *Christian Orthodox faith*.

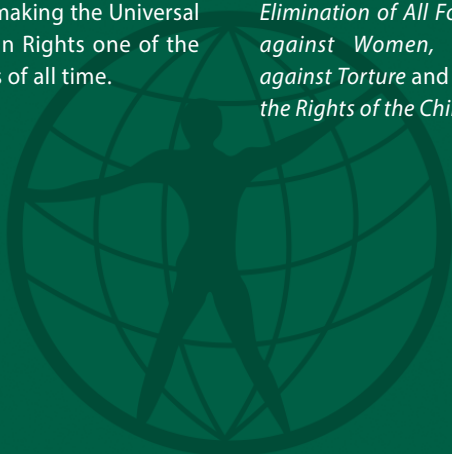
Such *limited human rights declarations* are a contradiction in themselves and not worth the paper on which they are written. Speaking of human rights is only possible if they apply to all people, regardless of their affiliation to a particular religion or nation. This is why the “*international nationalist movement*”, which today spreads a dangerous mixture of national chauvinism and reactionary religious values from Moscow to Washington, is a serious threat to human rights. By emphasizing religious and national identities, Trump, Putin, Erdoğan & Co. are poisoning the fertile soil in which human rights thrive. The idea of ONE humanity presupposes a *cosmopolitan perspective*.



THE WORLDWIDE ASSERTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Due to the political tensions of the time, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was not adopted as a *binding treaty under international law*, but only as a *non-binding declaration of intent*. Yet even with this status it had a great impact. Key contents of the Declaration were incorporated into numerous state constitutions, including the German Basic Law of 1949. The importance of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is also reflected in its many translations: It has now been translated into 460 languages, making the Universal Declaration of Human Rights one of the most translated texts of all time.

In order to render human rights binding under international law, two international treaties were concluded at UN level in 1966: the so-called “Civil Pact” on *civil and political rights (CCPR)* and the “Social Pact” on *economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR)*. In addition, the UN adopted several conventions that regulate the protection of individual human rights in more detail, such as the *Geneva Convention on Refugees*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, the *UN Convention against Torture* and the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.





One might certainly ask what these conventions have achieved. In 1948, when Garry Davis, “World Citizen No. 1”, was asked by the newspaper “Le Monde” to comment on the resolutions of the UN, he said: “Ten million words against zero action”. This answer, however, turned out to be too pessimistic. In fact, the debate on human rights has changed the political culture in many countries – even more so as regional human rights conventions have been created on the basis of the UN Declaration, making individual rights enforceable (e.g. at the *European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg*). The *UN Secretariat* has also launched numerous initiatives to turn words into deeds. For example, it has succeeded in halving the number of people living in absolute poverty pursuant to the “*Millennium Goals*”.

Since 2015, the UN Secretariat has been pursuing even more ambitious goals, known as “*Global Goals*” (including eradication of poverty, protection of biodiversity, ending all military conflicts). Unfortunately, the UN Secretariat has been repeatedly held back by the UN General Assembly, in which the *interests of the nation states* are paramount. Therefore, today as much as ever, an *impetus from civil society* is needed to improve the situation – just as in 1948 when the World Citizens Movement occupied the UN General Assembly in Paris. The worldwide enforcement of human rights will hardly be achieved by politicians who are primarily committed to national interests. The “*world civil society*” must assume responsibility here: It is up to us to overcome the borders in people’s minds.

THE 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 Universal Declaration of Human Rights 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 co-operation 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.

ARTICLE 1

**FREEDOM, EQUALITY,
FRATERNITY**

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.

ARTICLE 2

**PROHIBITION OF
DISCRIMINATION**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, 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.

ARTICLE 3

RIGHT TO LIFE

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

ARTICLE 4

PROHIBITION OF SLAVERY

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

ARTICLE 5

PROHIBITION OF TORTURE

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 6

RECOGNITION AS A LEGAL ENTITY

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

ARTICLE 7

EQUALITY 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.

ARTICLE 8

RIGHT TO LEGAL PROTECTION

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.

ARTICLE 9

**PROTECTION AGAINST
ARBITRARY ARREST AND
DEPORTATION**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

ARTICLE 10

RIGHT TO FAIR COURT PROCEEDINGS

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

ARTICLE 11

PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE AND LEGAL BINDING JUDGEMENTS

1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
2. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

ARTICLE 12

SPHERE OF FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

ARTICLE 13

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND EMIGRATION

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

ARTICLE 14

RIGHT TO ASYLUM

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 15

RIGHT TO CITIZENSHIP

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

ARTICLE 16

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

ARTICLE 17

RIGHT OF OWNERSHIP

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

ARTICLE 18

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE AND RELIGION

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

ARTICLE 19

FREEDOM OF OPINION AND INFORMATION

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

ARTICLE 20

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

ARTICLE 21

UNIVERSAL AND EQUAL SUFFRAGE

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
2. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

ARTICLE 22

RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

ARTICLE 23

RIGHT TO WORK

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

ARTICLE 24

RIGHT TO RECREATION AND LEISURE

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

ARTICLE 25

RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, 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 in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

ARTICLE 26

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

ARTICLE 27

FREEDOM OF CULTURAL LIFE

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

ARTICLE 28

SOCIAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER

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

BASIC DUTIES

1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
3. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 30

INTERPRETATION RULE

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

The captions after each human rights article, indicating their respective content, have been added to allow for quicker navigation.



SOURCE:

UN General Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948, 217 A (III), available at: www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights [accessed 16 April 2020].

*NOTE:

The 1948 Declaration of Human Rights still used the term "race". UNESCO's first Director-General, Julian Huxley, ensured that this use of language has now been largely abandoned. In 1935, Huxley had already pointed out in a much noted text that the biological differences among humans are too small to speak of different "human races".

Instead, he proposed the term "ethnicity" or "ethnic group". At his suggestion, UNESCO published a corresponding document on the "racial issue" in 1950, with the result that later UN documents increasingly spoke of "ethnic groups" instead of "races".

“Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”:

The gbs is a think-tank for humanism and enlightenment to which numerous renowned scientists, philosophers and artists are affiliated. The goals of the foundation, established in 2004, are currently backed by more than 10,000 supporting members.

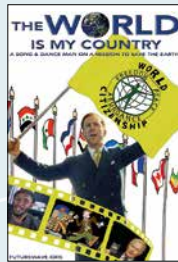


Foundation headquarters “Haus Weitblick” in the UNESCO World Heritage Upper Middle Rhine Valley

Further information:

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The present text picks up formulations from the book
 “*Hoffnung Mensch. Eine bessere Welt ist möglich*” (Piper Verlag 2014).

The adventurous story of “World Citizen No. 1” Garry Davis is told in
 the documentary film “*The World is My Country*” by Arthur Kanegis
 (www.theworldismycountry.com), which was released in 2018.

The question of “digital human rights” is explored in the
 gbs brochure “*How should IT work?*” (gbs 2018).

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The adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* by the General Assembly of the United Nations in Paris on December 10, 1948, was a *milestone in human history*.

This booklet, which contains the full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, explores the often forgotten *background* that led to this Declaration and illustrates that universal human rights are the fruits of a *“world heritage of humanity”* produced by men and women of all times, of all cultures and of all continents.

The *“international nationalist movement”*, which today extends from Moscow to Washington, poses a *serious threat* to this world cultural heritage. The *„world civil society”* can only challenge it by strengthening the cosmopolitan perspective that the leading pioneer of the human rights idea, Thomas Paine, took up more than two centuries ago: *“The World is Our Country”*.