

THE
UNITED NATIONS'

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION

of
HUMAN RIGHTS

MAY PEACE PREVAIL ON EARTH



WHERE, AFTER ALL, DO UNIVERSAL RIGHTS BEGIN?

In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

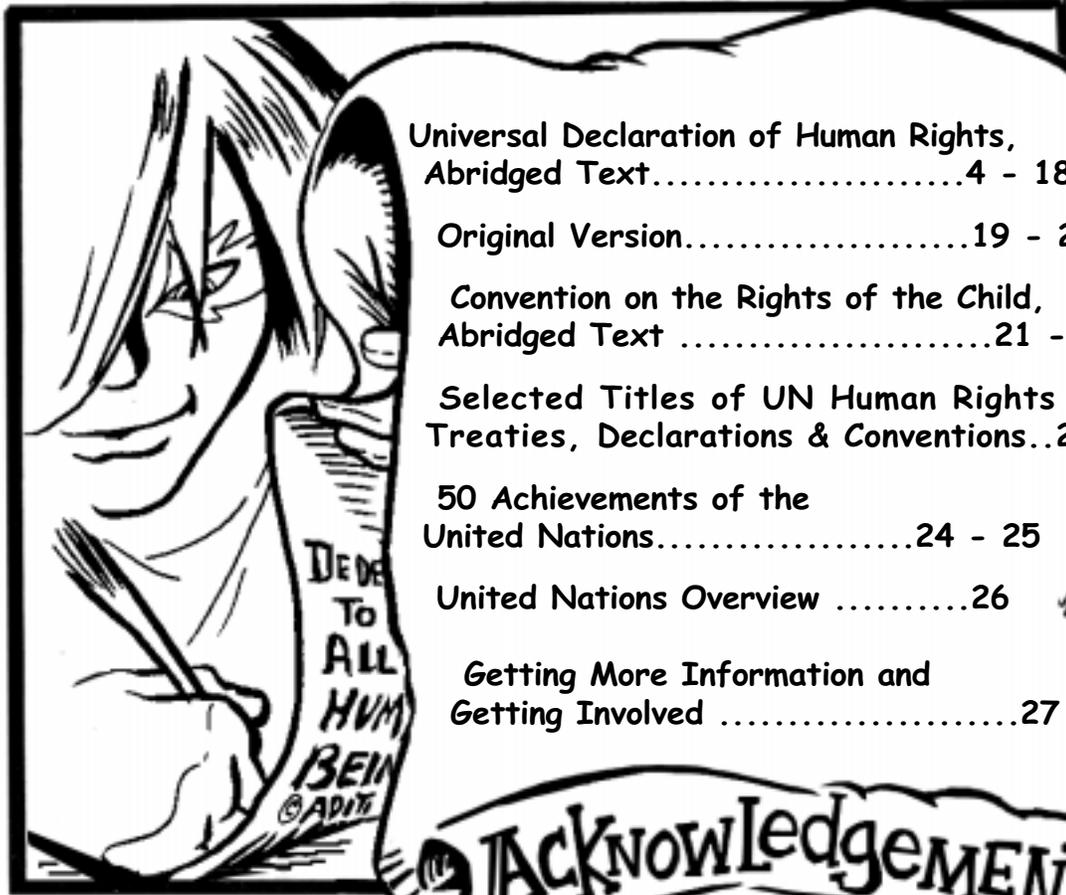
— **Eleanor Roosevelt, 1884 - 1962**

Widow of the former USA President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Chair of the United Nations Commission that wrote the Universal Declaration in 1948



UN PHOTO 23783

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AN INITIATIVE OF FRIENDS OF THE UNITED NATIONS
IN COOPERATION WITH EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL



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The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights fully supports Friends of the United Nations in your most worthy endeavor to distribute to teachers world-wide, copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I applaud your project to enhance the promotion of human rights to coincide with the UN Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004.

Mary Robinson
U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights

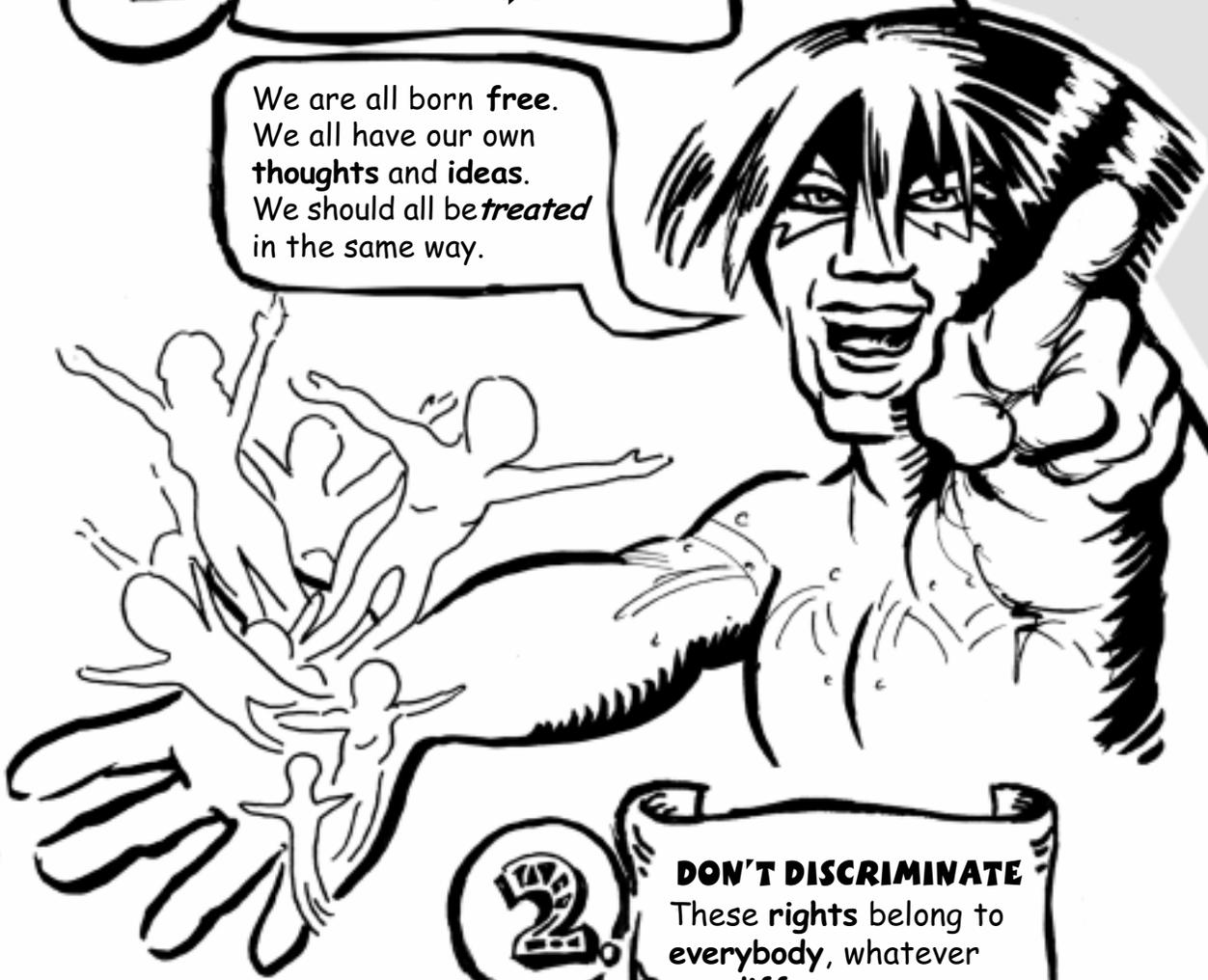
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1.

**WE ARE ALL FREE
AND EQUAL**

We are all born free.
We all have our own
thoughts and ideas.
We should all be *treated*
in the same way.



2.

DON'T DISCRIMINATE

These rights belong to
everybody, whatever
our differences.



THE RIGHT TO LIFE

3

We all have the *right* to life, and to live in freedom and safety.

SLAVERY - PAST & PRESENT

Nobody has any right to make us a slave. We cannot make anyone our slave.

4

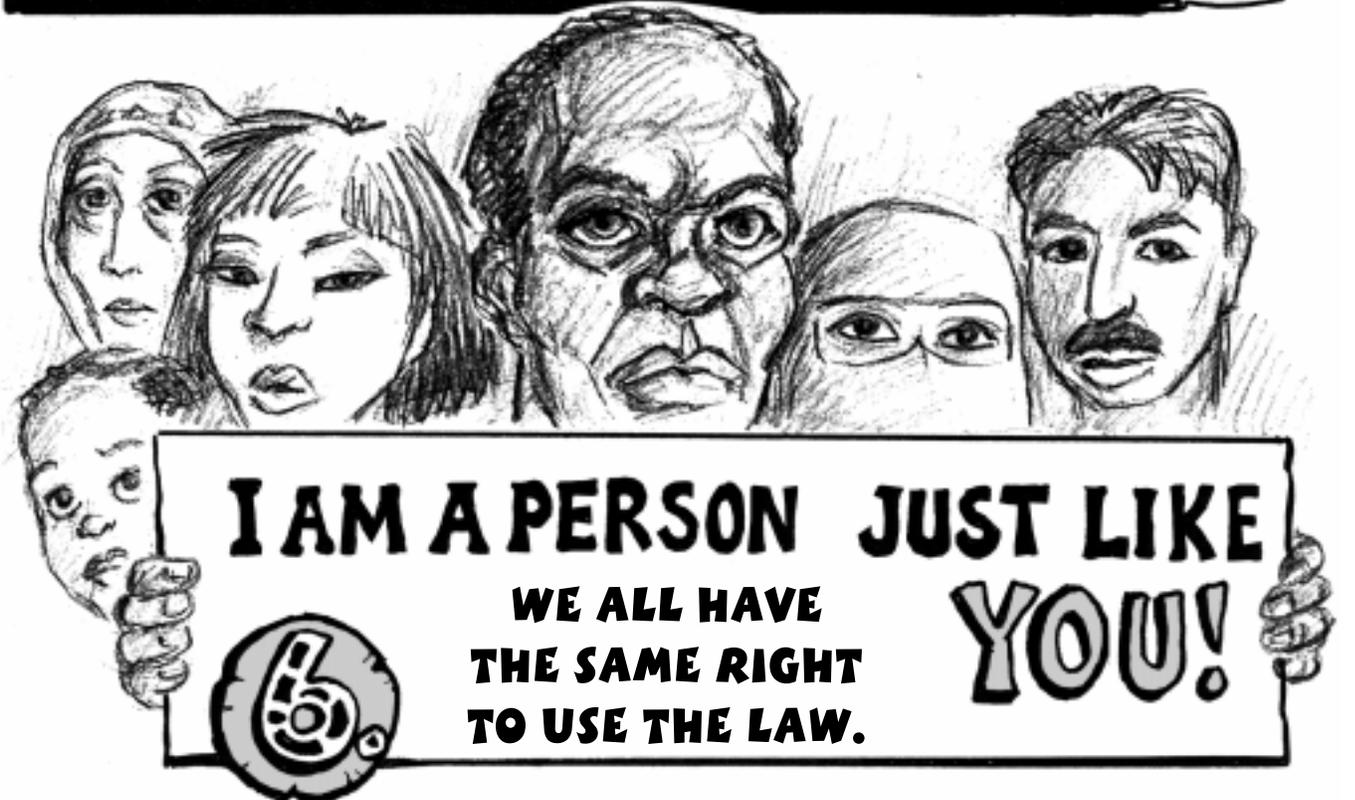


5 TORTURE



**A
LIVING
HELL**

**NOBODY HAS ANY
RIGHT TO HURT US
OR TO TORTURE US.**





WE ARE ALL PROTECTED BY THE **LAW**

The law is the *same*
for *everyone*.
It must *treat* us all fairly.



NOT GUILTY



We can all ask for
the law to *help us*
when we are *not*
treated fairly.



FAIR TREATMENT BY FAIR COURTS

COVERY

Nobody has the *right* to put us in prison without a good reason, to keep us there, or to *send* us away from our country.

I'VE DONE NO WRONG



If we are put on trial this should be in public. The people who try us *should* not let anyone *tell* them *what* to do.

11

INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY

Nobody should be *blamed* for doing something until it is *proved*. When people say we did a *bad thing* we have the *right* to *show* it is not true.



12

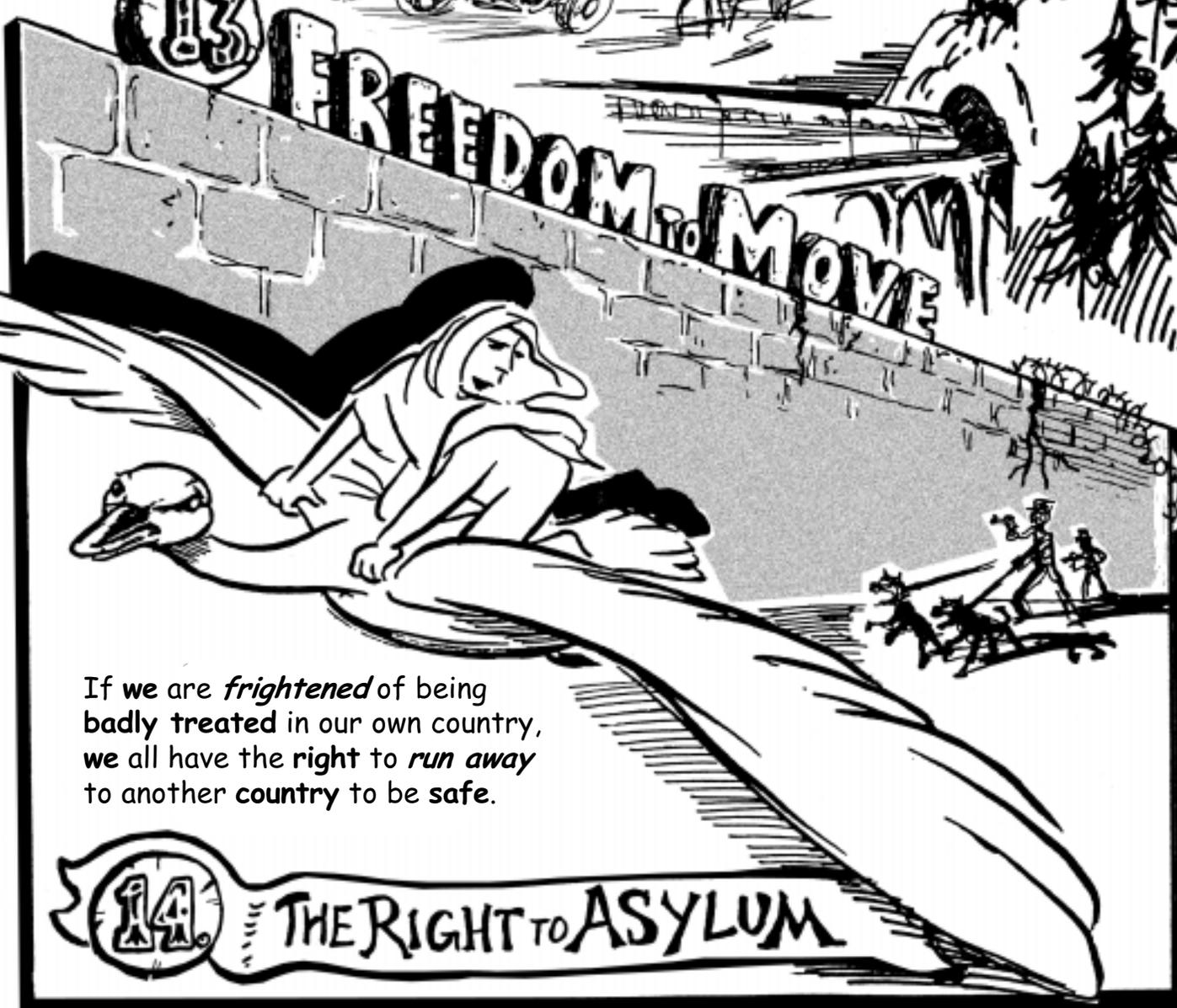
THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Nobody should try to *harm* our good name. Nobody has the *right* to come into our home, open our letters, or *bother* us or our family without a good reason.





We all have the *right*
to go *where* we want in
our own *country* and to
travel as we wish.



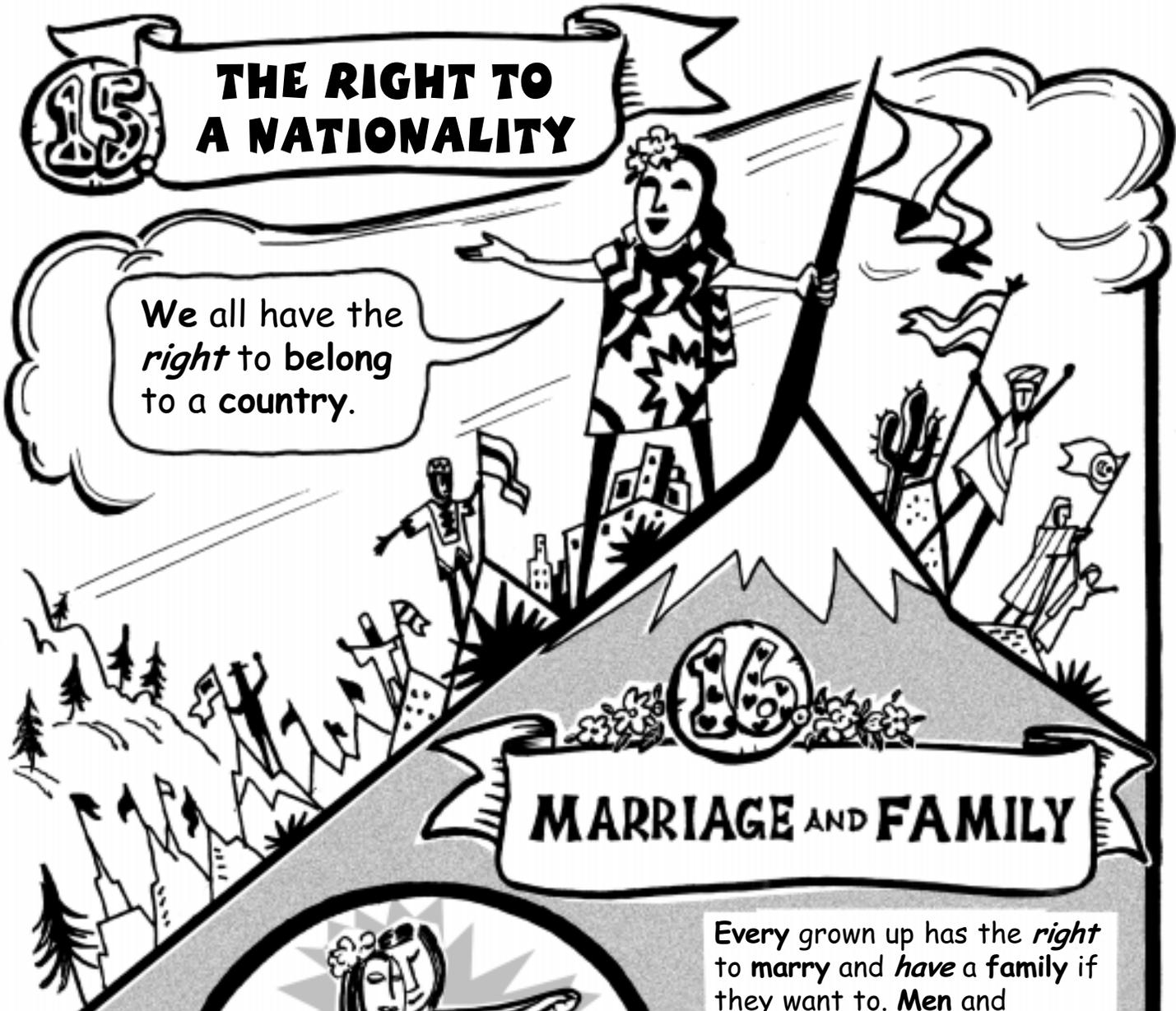
13 FREEDOM TO MOVE

If we are *frightened* of being
badly *treated* in our own
country, we all have the *right*
to *run away* to another
country to be *safe*.

14 THE RIGHT TO ASYLUM

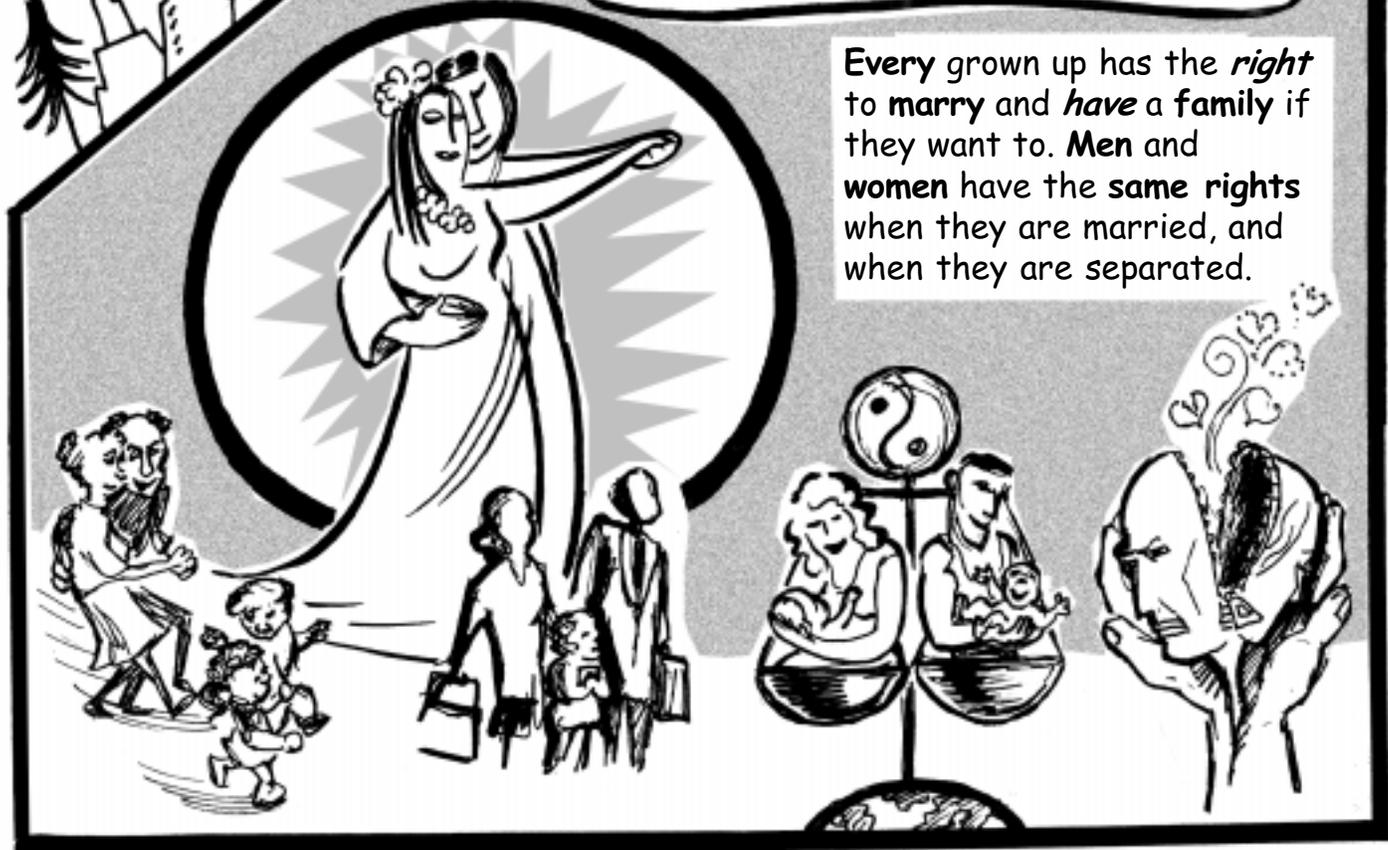
15 THE RIGHT TO A NATIONALITY

We all have the *right* to belong to a country.



16 MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Every grown up has the *right* to marry and *have* a family if they want to. **Men** and **women** have the **same** rights when they are married, and when they are separated.



17.

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY HOME?

Everyone has the *right* to own things or share them. Nobody should *take* our things from us *without* a good reason.



We all have the *right* to *believe* in what we want to believe, to *have* a religion, or to *change* it if we want.



18.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

19

**FREE TO SAY
WHAT YOU WANT**



We all have the *right* to make up our own *minds*, to *think* what we like, to *say* what we think, and to *share* our ideas with other people.



We all have the *right* to meet our friends and to *work* together in *peace* to defend our rights. Nobody can *make* us join a group if we *don't* want to.

20

**MEET WHERE
YOU LIKE**

21.

THE RIGHT TO DEMOCRACY

We all have the *right* to take part in the *government* of our country. Every grown up should be allowed to *choose* their own leaders.



22.

THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

We ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING, MEDICINE, EDUCATION, AND CHILD CARE, ENOUGH TO LIVE ON AND MEDICAL HELP IF WE ARE ILL OR OLD.



WORKERS' RIGHTS

23.

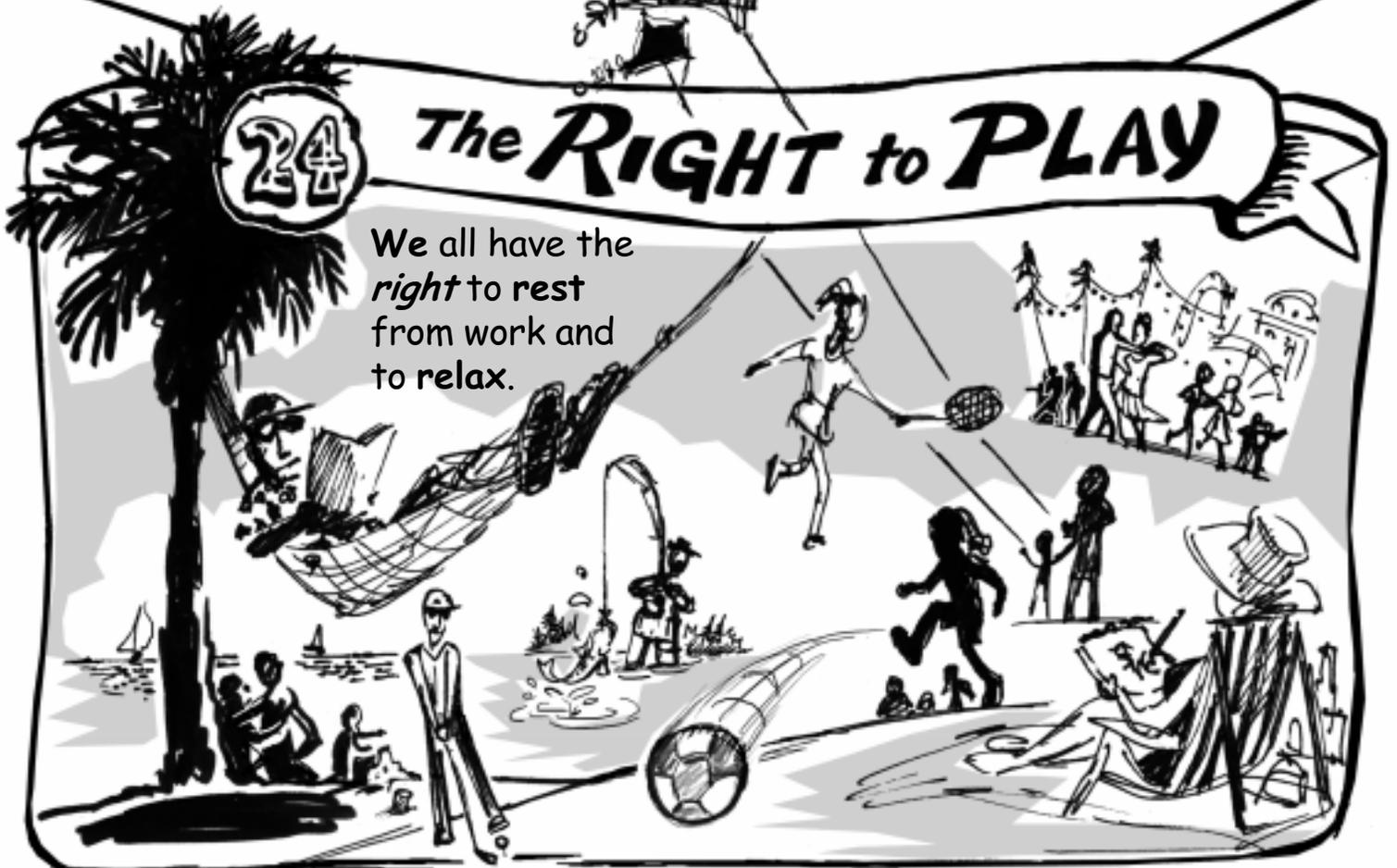


Every grown up has the *right* to a job, to a fair wage for their work, and to *join* a trade union.

24

The RIGHT to PLAY

We all have the *right* to rest from work and to relax.



25. A BED AND SOME FOOD



WE ALL HAVE A RIGHT TO A GOOD LIFE



Mothers and children
People who are old,
unemployed or disabled



ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE CARED FOR

26. THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Education is a right. Primary school should be free. We should *learn* about the UN and how to get on with others. Our parents can *choose* what we learn.



29.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

We have a *duty* to other people, and we should *protect* their rights and freedoms.

BALANCE OF POWERS



WE ARE WATCHING

30.

**DON'T GET
ME WRONG!**

Nobody can *take away* these rights and freedoms from us.

The United Nations

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the full text of which appears in the following pages. Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."

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

ARTICLE 4... No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

ARTICLE 5... No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 6... Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

ARTICLE 7... 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... 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... No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

ARTICLE 10... 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... (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.

The United Nations

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (continued)

ARTICLE 12... 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... (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... (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... (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... (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... (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... 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... 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... (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... (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... 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... (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... Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

ARTICLE 25... (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... (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... (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... 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... (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... 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.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Abridged Version

It is important that you know your rights. The more people understand that children have rights, the more likely they are to help children get what they need to grow up healthy, safe and free.

(Irish National Committee for UNICEF)

1. A child is usually anyone under the age of 18.
2. Not only do you have all the rights in this Convention but as far as possible your country has to protect you from being unfairly treated.
3. Your best interests are very important. Your country should make laws and appoint people to look after your interests.
4. Your country has agreed to see that you do not miss out on any of your rights. You have a right to know what your rights are. (Article 42)
5. Your country will respect the right of your parents and your family to care for you.
6. You have the right to live. Your country has a responsibility to see that you survive, and develop as you grow up.
7. You have the right to a name, a nationality, and to know and be cared for by your parents.
8. Sometimes when children have to flee their homes or their homeland because their safety is at risk, or for other reasons, they may lose their identity, or it may be wrongly taken from them. If this happens, the country where you live must help you get back to normal.
9. You have the right not to be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good. If you are living with one (or both) your separated parents you are still allowed to keep contact with the other parent unless it would be harmful to you.
10. If you ask to leave or enter a country to be reunited with your family your needs should be listened to and acted on. Usually you have the right to keep in touch with both parents when they live in different countries.
11. The country where you live will protect you from being kidnapped and taken abroad by a parent or some other person.
12. Whenever adults make a decision that will affect you in any way, you have the right to say what you think and be listened to.
13. You have the right to find out things and say what you think by speaking, writing, or in other ways, such as making art. What you say and do must not affect the rights of others.
14. You have the right to think what you want and to follow whatever religion you choose. Your parents have legal rights to guide you. The State will respect the rights and duties of your parents to give you guidance as you grow from childhood to adulthood.
15. You have the right to make friends, and mix with people you like. You have the right to go to meetings and to join clubs as long as you do not break the rights of others.
16. Without a good reason under the law, nobody should open your mail or come into your family home uninvited.
17. You have the right to collect information from all over the world. The information may be from radio, newspapers, television, books, the Internet, or other sources. Adults should make sure that you get information that you can understand.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Abridged Version (continued)

18. You have the right to have both of your parents involved in your life when you are growing up. Even if both parents do not live together with you, they should still be involved in your life.

19. You have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse. If you suffer abuse or neglect special services must be put in place to help you recover.

20. If, for any reason, your parents are not able to care for you your country will have to make sure you are taken care of. They will take into account your religion, culture, language, and ethnic background.

21. Adoption services should be approved by the State. Going to another country for adoption should be considered only when all else fails in your own country.

22. If you ever become a refugee, you have the right to be protected. If you have been separated from your parents you have the right to be helped to find them.

23. If you have a disability, you have the right to special care and education to help you grow up in the same way as other children.

24. You have the right to be healthy and feel well. If you are sick you should have the best health care available.

25. If you are placed in care, protection or treatment you have the right to have that care reviewed from time to time.

26. You have the right to have your basic needs met by the community and your country.

27. You have the right to a home that is safe, with enough food and clothes.

28. You have the right to an education.

29. Education should allow you to develop your skills to the full. School prepares you for life and to respect people from different cultures.

30. If you belong to a minority or an indigenous group you have the right to enjoy your own culture, practice your religious beliefs and to use your own language.

31. It is your right to rest and play and be involved in cultural and artistic activities.

32. You have a right to be protected from work that might threaten your education, your health, or your development.

33. You have the right to be protected from the use of drugs.

34. You have the right to be protected from all forms of sexual abuse.

35/36. No one has the right to kidnap you, sell you, or treat you unfairly.

37. You should never be put in prison, except as a last resort. If you are put in prison, you have the right to special care and regular visits from your family.

38. You have the right to protection in times of war.

39. If you have been hurt or neglected in any way, for instance in a war, you have the right to special care and treatment.

40. If you are old enough, under the law, and you are accused of doing something wrong you have the right to be treated fairly. If you are found guilty you should be punished in a way that takes account your age. You should also be given special care and guidance.

For the full, unabridged text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other information about the UN's work on behalf of children:

UNICEF

3 United Nations Plaza

New York, NY 10017

<http://www.unicef.org>

e-mail: pubdoc@unicef.org

Selected International

HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS AND DECLARATIONS

When a government becomes party to an international Convention, usually by ratification, it takes responsibility for upholding obligations set forth in that Convention. After the United Nations adopts a convention/treaty and a specified number of nations ratify it, the convention/treaty becomes international law.

An international human rights declaration proclaims agreement on a set of standards for measuring each nation's actions or inaction. Although declarations are not treaties or conventions, they often lead to the development of new international laws.

The following conventions and declarations are among the most important protecting individual human rights.

- Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
- Convention Relating to Status of Refugees
- Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Political Rights
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (permits individual citizens to lodge complaints of human rights violations)
- Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (on abolition of the death penalty)
- Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief
- Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Declaration on the Right to Development
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.
- Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women

50 ACHIEVEMENTS of



- Making peace
- Eradicating smallpox
- Promoting democracy
- Promoting development
- Promoting human rights
- Promoting women's rights
- Fighting parasitic diseases
- Protecting the environment
- Aiding Palestinian Refugees
- Providing safe drinking water
- Reducing child mortality rates
- Maintaining peace and security
- Preventing nuclear proliferation
- Strengthening international law
- Focusing on African development
- Ending apartheid in South Africa
- Pressing for universal immunization
- Providing food to victims of emergency
- Reducing the effect of natural disasters
- Promoting investment in developing countries
- Orienting economic policy toward social need
- Promoting self-determination and independence
- Handing down judicial settlements of major international disputes
- Alleviating chronic hunger and rural poverty in developing countries
- Limiting deforestation and promoting sustainable forest development





- Clearing land mines
- Fighting drug abuse
- Clearing up pollution.
- Curbing global warming
- Promoting worker rights
- Preventing over - fishing
- Empowering the voiceless
- Protecting the ozone layer
- Promoting economic reform
- Improving air and sea travel
- Improving literacy for women
- Protecting consumers' health
- Protecting intellectual property
- Improving global trade relations
- Improving global communications
- Addressing overpopulation issues
- Promoting the free flow of information
- Establishing "children as a zone of peace"
- Improving education in developing countries
- Facilitating academic and cultural exchanges
- Providing humanitarian aid to victims of conflict
- Promoting stability and order in the world's oceans
- Introducing improved agricultural techniques and reducing costs
- Generating worldwide commitment in support of the needs of children
- Safeguarding and preserving historic, cultural, and architectural sites

THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations came into being on October 24, 1945, shortly after the end of World War II. It was an initiative of the 5 major powers that won the war: China, England, France, the Soviet Union and the United States. Together with 47 other nations, they decided to create an organization to “save future generations from the scourge of war.” There are now 189 Member Nations of the United Nations, each with a vote in the General Assembly.

The United Nations Charter spells out the UN’s purposes:

- Maintain international peace and security.
- Develop friendly relations among nations.
- Cooperate internationally in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.
- Promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these common goals.

The UN is an organization of independent, sovereign nations. It is NOT a world government and does not have its own military force. It cannot interfere in the internal affairs of its Member Nations unless there is a threat to international peace and security. The UN is a place where Member States meet to discuss mutual concerns and to provide tools for cooperating to solve common problems.

About 50,000 people work in the UN System, about the same number of people who work at Disney World and Disneyland worldwide. The UN spends a billion dollars per year LESS than the Tokyo Fire Department. In 1994, the UN spent the equivalent of 80 cents per human being for its humanitarian work, while the world’s governments spent \$134 per human being on military expenditures.

DPI/1753/Rev. 10 Nov. 1996

The United Nations & Human Rights

The U.N. is the world’s institution working to protect Human Rights through the following bodies:

- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, presently under the leadership of Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland
- United Nations Commission on Human Rights composed of 53 Member States
- Sub-Commission on the Promotion & Protection of Human Rights
- Commission on the Status of Women

Six committees monitor Human Rights treaties: Human Rights; Economic, Social & Cultural Rights; Torture, Elimination of Racial Discrimination; Elimination of Discrimination Against Women; and Rights of the Child.

The Office of the High Commissioner services: working groups, special rapporteurs and experts on religious intolerance, mercenaries, arbitrary executions, education and prostitution. Also poverty, xenophobia, arbitrary detention, torture, involuntary disappearances and environment. The Office has representatives and rapporteurs in 15 countries investigating human rights issues. There is a special body to protect the rights of indigenous people.

Learn More About The United Nations

www.un.org — The UN Web Site
www.unsystem.org — The official Web Site locator for the UN System of Organizations
www.un.org/rights — Information on Human Rights
<http://www.unhchr.ch> — Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ecu@un.org — E-mail your question, and comments on the role and work of the UN
www.un.org/pubs/cyberschoolbus — UN Cyber Bus offers information, resources, activities etc.

Though the United Nations is an inter-governmental body and relies primarily on Member States, it welcomes initiatives by local organizations and individuals to promote its work and ideas.

<http://un.org/MoreInfo/ngollnk/welcome.htm>

Additional information about the UN can be obtained from:

United Nations Information Centres

Usually located in the capital cities of Member Nations.
<http://www.un.org/aroundworld/unics> for more information.

Public Inquiries Unit

United Nations

New York, NY 10017

Phone: 212.963.4475 — Fax: 212.963.0071 E-mail: inquires@un.org

Human Rights Action is About Getting Out the Word!

Whether you sign a human rights petition or talk about human rights issues with your friends and classmates, you are letting people know that you, personally, are watching out for human rights. You are also showing clearly that you are willing to use your power to protect human rights.

Never doubt that human rights are your business. Human rights are everybody's business. You have the right to protect human rights in your own home and community and on every continent.

Know something else about human rights activities, they're enormously satisfying to those who engage in them. You are helping yourself when you help others.

UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION 1995 - 2004

A message to young people:

“Today we mark the beginning of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In every part of the world men, women and children of every colour and creed will gather to embrace our common human rights.

Human rights are the foundation of human existence and co-existence. Human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent. Human rights are what makes us human. They are the principle by which we create the sacred home for human dignity.

When we speak of the right to life, or development, or to dissent and diversity, we are speaking of tolerance. Tolerance promoted, protected and enshrined will ensure all freedoms. Without it we can be certain of none.

Human rights are the expression of those traditions of tolerance in all religions and cultures that are the basis of peace and progress. Human rights are foreign to no culture and native to all nations. Tolerance and mercy have always and in all cultures been ideals of government rule and human behavior. Today, we call these ideals human rights.

It is the universality of human rights that gives them their strength. It endows them with the power to cross any border, climb any wall, defy any force.

The struggle for universal human rights has always and everywhere been the struggle against all forms of tyranny and injustice: against slavery, against colonialism, against apartheid. It is nothing less and nothing different today.

Young friends all over the world, you are the ones who must realize these rights, now and for all time. Their fate and future is in your hands. Human rights are your rights. Seize them. Defend them. Pronounce them. Understand and insist on them. Nourish and enrich them. They are the best in us. Give them life.”



UN/DPI Photo by John Isaac

From:

Kofi Annan,

Secretary General of the United Nations