THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

70TH ANNIVERSARY

WHAT IS IT?
- In 2018, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will celebrate its 70th anniversary. It remains as relevant today as it was in 1948. To highlight what the Universal Declaration means for people in their everyday lives, UN Human Rights has launched a year-long campaign building on the existing Stand Up for Human Rights campaign. It will culminate on 10 December 2018.

PURPOSE OF CAMPAIGN:
- To celebrate the unique Universal Declaration, and to highlight and reaffirm the importance of its enduring human rights principles and standards worldwide.

ABOUT THE DECLARATION AND ITS DRAFTERS. (For more information, see: http://research.un.org/en/undhr)
- Proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948, the Declaration was designed to prevent the repetition of the horrific human rights violations that had been committed during World War II.
- Did you know? It was drafted by a diverse group of people from Australia, Canada, Chile, China, France, Lebanon, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States, including:
  - Eleanor Roosevelt was the first chair of the fledgling United Nation’s Commission on Human Rights;
  - Chang Peng-Chun, the Chinese playwright, philosopher and diplomat was vice-chair of the commission;
  - Dr Charles Malik, the Lebanese academic, philosopher, and ethicist who, as rapporteur, played a vital role in shaping the ethical contents of the UDHR.
  - Rene Cassin, a jurist, judge, and legal advisor to Charles de Gaulle, played a major drafting role.
- The Declaration holds the Guinness World Record as the world’s most translated document, in over 500 languages.

THE WORLD’S INVISIBLE HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK:

The UDHR’s principles are now embedded in the Constitutions and laws of over 90 countries.

STILL EXPANDING: The UDHR has also spawned many other important international treaties, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (179 states); the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (189); the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (196); and the United Nations Convention Against Torture (162). Furthermore, the UDHR continues to inspire new treaties. One of the most recent, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, is also one of the most rapidly ratified, with 175 states signing onto it in its first decade, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which entered into force in 2010, has so far been ratified by 58.
WHY DOES THE UDHR MATTER IN 2018?

TO CELEBRATE:

- **500 languages**: UDHR holds the Guinness Book of World Records as the most translated document in the world, with translations ranging from Abkhaz to Zulu.
- **18 treaties and optional protocols** advancing human rights have been agreed since 1948.
- **198 countries** now allow women the right to vote, compared to 91 countries in 1948.
- **104 countries** have now outlawed capital punishment, compared to only 9 in 1948.
- **57%** of countries have a national human rights institution today.
- **111 countries** have adopted freedom of information laws & policies, at least 15 of them in the past 4 years.

CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES:

- **Global multilateral frameworks** for peace and human rights are increasingly under threat.
- **Rights to privacy, data, and consent** are facing new challenges in the internet age.
- **Climate change**: a threat to right to life, food, water & housing.
- **Right to work**: emerging problems of automation and challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- **Inequality**: global, national, and urban inequalities.
- **Women and gender**: issues such as sexual assault, rape, exploitation, violence against women, and pay gaps.
- **Freedom of Expression**: complications in internet age.
- **Migrants and refugees**: growing global migrant crises.
- **Democracy**: under threat around the world.

ONGOING CHALLENGES

- **880 million** people today live in urban slums.
- **1 in 10 children** worldwide are still engaged in child labour.
- **65 million** men, women and children were forced from their homes by war and persecution in 2015, which is **1 in every 113 people**.
- **101 journalists** were killed in 2016: **1 death every 4 days**.
- **Almost 1 in 3** people in detention are held without being tried or sentenced for a crime.
- **59 million children** were not in primary school in 2014. **52%** of these were girls.
- **Women represent only 24% of national parliaments**.
- **700 million** women today were married before age 18; **250 million** were married before age 15.

INTERESTING TOPICS:

- **UDHR Drafting Committee**: Contrary to common perception, a deeply diverse committee.
- **Hidden histories**: the crucial role of non-Western female delegates (from India, Pakistan and the Dominican Republic) such as Hansa Mehta, Shaista Begum Ikramullah, and Minerva Bernardino in drafting the Declaration.
- **UDHR in literature, art, film and poetry**.
- **World Record Breaker**: From 298 languages in 2000, to 370 in 2010, to over 500 languages today.
- **Human rights for the 21st century**: for example, rights to work and choice of employment, rights to privacy, rights to social security, rights of older persons, freedom of movement, emergence of potential “Human Rights Cities.”

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HISTORICAL UN PHOTOS related to the UDHR: see [https://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/sets/72157677599327615](https://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/sets/72157677599327615). High-resolution files can be downloaded from [www.unmultimedia.org/photo](http://www.unmultimedia.org/photo). Contact: photolibrary@un.org