

"It is our duty to ensure that these rights are a living reality -- that they are known, understood and enjoyed by everyone, everywhere. It is often those who most need their human rights protected, who also need to be informed that the Declaration exists -- and that it exists for them." - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is not a luxury or a wish-list. It's core values, inherent human dignity, non-discrimination, equality, fairness and universality, apply to everyone, everywhere, and always. The Declaration is universal, enduring and vibrant, and it concerns us all. Since its adoption in 1948, the Declaration has been and continues to be a source of inspiration for national and international efforts to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.



Dignity and justice for all of us



BRAHMA KUMARIS
WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY

UPHOLDING THE HIGHEST ASPIRATIONS OF ALL PEOPLE

humanrights
spiritualrights

In celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

INTRODUCTION

The spiritual principles that operate in the world are extremely subtle and quiet but they have a continuous influence and a powerful and lasting impact on our lives. The discussion of Human Rights gains a new dimension when we recognize that all human beings are fundamentally spiritual beings and that human rights and spiritual rights are closely related.

To uphold the highest aspiration of a human being is to see that person with innate dignity and divinity. Policies do not give this to a person, but it allows for its unfettered expression.

For rights to be respected, they have to be integrated and assimilated into our lives at all levels, political, social, and spiritual.

Let us celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration by witnessing acts of human greatness and recommitting ourselves to appreciating all dimensions of a human life and protecting each one's right to full expression and contribution to the world's families, communities, and societies.

BRAHMA KUMARIS

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University is an international non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. It has 8,500 centers in 105 countries.

The Brahma Kumaris are celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration in three ways:

- First, creating a booklet featuring “Human Rights and Spiritual Rights,” to foster a greater understanding of the human soul and its innate dignity and worth.
- Second, inviting people to participate in a public conversation project called ‘Witnessing Acts of Human Greatness’ and featuring the stories that emerge in this conversation on a BK Human Rights Blog.
- Third, creating an art exhibition featuring the 30 articles of the Human Rights Declaration.

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.

brotherhood

The original, real, nonphysical form of every being is of light. Each being is a soul, and each is naturally endowed with dignity and worth. The recognition of the relationship of brotherhood lies in the realization that we are all souls, entitled to the same rights.

Article 2

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.

entitled

Every soul is entitled to the experience of its spiritual rights of love, happiness, peace, and belonging regardless of caste, color, creed or gender, and regardless of the political or social circumstance in which he or she is living.

Article 3

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

life

Every soul is unique and its life is immortal. The soul's security and ultimate liberty is inherent in its immortality.

Article 4

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

master

**Every soul is a master.
It is the master when
it rules over its mind,
intellect, characteristics,
and senses and a
slave when it becomes
subservient to these.**

Article 5

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

respect

**Every soul's strength is
its seat of self-respect.
To treat others with
respect is to become
worthy of receiving
respect.**

Article 6

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

law

**Every soul recognizes
the universal law of love.
To see the person as a
legitimate other is the
spirit of the universal law
of love.**

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.

In the universal spiritual law each soul is equally protected. When the soul discerns right from wrong, good from bad, justice from injustice and truth from falsehood and acts accordingly, it receives natural protection. There is no discrimination in the law of karma.

protection

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.

remedy

Every soul is accountable for the effects of its action, and for every action there is a consequence and a remedy.

Article 9

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

dealing
with others

Every soul who follows the path of law wants to finish falsehood and to replace it with truth. The sign of truth is respect and regard for all and humility in dealing with others.

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.

fair & equal

**Every soul is valued
as a human being and
deserves goodwill and
compassion in conformity
with its intrinsic traits of
purity, peace, and love.**

Article 11

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 defense.

innocent

**Every soul's
conscience is
the ultimate
judge of his or
her innocence.**

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

The greatest right of a soul is self-sovereignty. A Self-sovereign soul is stable in its own honor and reputation. It is a master in the private domain of thoughts, words, actions, and relationships, and does not claim the right to someone else's sovereignty.

honor & reputation

Every soul has the freedom of movement in their thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

Article

13

Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within

the borders of each state.

freedom of

movement

Article 14

Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

asylum

**Every soul takes
asylum in its
relationship with the
Supreme Soul, God.**

Article 15

Everyone has the right to a nationality.

nationality

Every soul comes with a blueprint of the part it has to play and its identity gets formed by its gender, nationality, and faith.

Article 16

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

family

**Every soul's
sustenance
comes from
living in a natural
and pure family
environment.**

Article 17

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

property

Every soul is a trustee of the property and all the resources of its natural environment. Every soul has a right to the spiritual property of knowledge, virtues, and powers.

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.

freedom of
thought,
conscience
and religion

Every soul has a right to self-realization – a mind that is free to think in a domain of benevolent thoughts, a voice of conscience that speaks of fairness, and a nature that embodies the true religion of peace.

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.

freedom of
opinion

& *expression*

**Every soul is a unique
observer and contributor
to the community in
which it lives. The
communities of the
world can only benefit
when an elevated and
aware soul expresses
itself from the depth of
its inner experience.**

Article 20

Everyone has the right
to freedom of peaceful
assembly and association.

**Every soul will
naturally connect
with those who are
like-minded and
will have a feeling
of belonging.**

peaceful assembly

Article 21

Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

equal
access

**Every soul
responds to
the right of
equal access
as being
seen and
appreciated.**

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.

Every soul in a society will be a more valuable contributor when it is allowed to live in dignity and develop its personality in a caring environment.

development

Article 23

Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

Every soul will experience the fruits of its action according to universal laws. When the soul is allowed to live with human dignity and security, it can engage in decent work and enrich the community in which it lives.

humandignity

Article 24

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

**Every soul refreshes
itself in silent retreat
- to rest, reflect,
recharge and renew.**

rest and

leisure

Article 25

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.

specialcare

**Every soul comes
into the world
trusting that it
will be loved and
cared for.**

Article 26

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Every soul is able to build capacity when provided with a learning process that facilitates its overall development and helps him/her to grow with respect, confidence, and enthusiasm.

education

Article 27

Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

cultural life

**Every soul is
endowed with the
highest spiritual
arts of life that are
manifested in the
creation of culture.**

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.

rights

Every soul's rights are to aspire to a world of peace, happiness, and prosperity and to realize that these are also spiritual rights.

Article 29

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

Every soul gives and takes from the community in which it lives and so the quality of the community is shaped by the quality of the soul's personality.

Personality

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.

freedom

Every soul must now reclaim its lost awareness and enjoy its highest aspirations to be completely peaceful, loving, and happy. When all souls are endowed with these qualities, there will be freedom for each soul and for the family of souls we know as the human race.

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