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1.0 United Nations General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly was established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly occupies a central position as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. It is composed of all 193 members of the United Nations, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter. It also plays a central role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law.

Under the UN Charter, the functions and powers of the General Assembly (GA) include:

- To discuss any question relating to international peace and security (except when a dispute or situation is being discussed by the Security Council);
- To make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation which might harm the friendly relations among nations;
- To discuss and make recommendations on the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations;
- To request studies and make recommendations to promote international cooperation, the development of international law, the protection of human rights, and international collaboration on economic, social, cultural, educational and health issues;
- To receive and discuss reports from the Security Council and other UN organs;
- To discuss and approve the UN budget;
- To elect non-permanent members of the Security Council, the members of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and additional members of the Trusteeship Council (when necessary); to elect the judges of the International Court

of Justice (jointly with the Security Council); and on the recommendation of the Security Council, to appoint the Secretary-General.

2.0 History of the United Nations

The United Nations Charter is the treaty that established the United Nations, it was ratified on



24 October 1945. The following series of events led to the writing of the Charter, and the UN's founding:

- Declaration of St. James Palace (June 1941)
- Atlantic Charter (August 1941)
- Declaration by United Nations (1 January 1942)
- Moscow Declaration (October 1943) and Tehran Conference (December 1943)
- Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta Conference (1944-1945)
- San Francisco Conference (1945)

2.1 Declaration of St. James Palace

In June 1941, London was the home of nine exiled governments. The British capital had survived twenty-two months of war and in the bomb-marked city, air-raid sirens wailed frequently. Practically all of Europe had fallen to the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) and ships on the Atlantic, carrying vital supplies, sank with regularity.

On 12 June 1941, the representatives of Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa as well as representatives of the exiled governments from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Yugoslavia and the Free French, met in London to sign the Declaration of St. James Palace.

The purpose of this meeting was to pledge their solidarity in fighting aggression until victory against the Axis powers was won. The Declaration proclaimed that “the only true basis of enduring peace is the willing cooperation of free peoples in a world in which, relieved of the menace of aggression, all may enjoy economic and social security.”¹

2.2 Atlantic Charter

In August 1941, the Axis powers seemed to have the upper hand. Germany had commenced its attack on the USSR and carefully stage-managed meetings between Hitler and Mussolini, which ended in “perfect accord,” sounded grimly foreboding. Although the United States was giving moral and material support to the Allies, it had not yet entered the war. One afternoon, two months after the Declaration of St. James Palace, the news came that President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were in conference “somewhere at sea”(the same seas on which the desperate Battle of the Atlantic was being fought) and on August 14 the two leaders issued a joint declaration destined to be known in history as the Atlantic Charter.

This document was not a treaty between the two powers. Nor was it a final and formal expression of peace aims. It was only an affirmation, as the document declared, “of certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they based their hopes for a better future for the world.”

The sixth clause of the Atlantic Charter declared that “after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.” The seventh clause stated that such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas without hindrance, and the eighth clause concluded by emphasizing the need for nations to abandon the use of force: “They believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent

¹ United Nations, History of the United Nations

system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.”

Other points of the Atlantic Charter also affirmed the basic principles of universal human rights: no territorial changes without the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned; the right of every people to choose their own form of government; and equal access to raw materials for all nations.

Coming from the two great democratic leaders of the day and implying the full moral support of the United States, the Atlantic Charter created a profound impression on the embattled Allies. It came as a message of hope to the occupied countries, and it held out the promise of a world organization based on universal moral principles. That it had little legal validity did not detract from its value. Support for the principles of the Atlantic Charter and a pledge of cooperation came from a meeting of ten governments in London shortly after Mr. Churchill returned from his ocean rendezvous. This declaration was signed on September 24 by the USSR and the nine exiled governments of occupied Europe: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Yugoslavia and by the representatives of General de Gaulle of France.

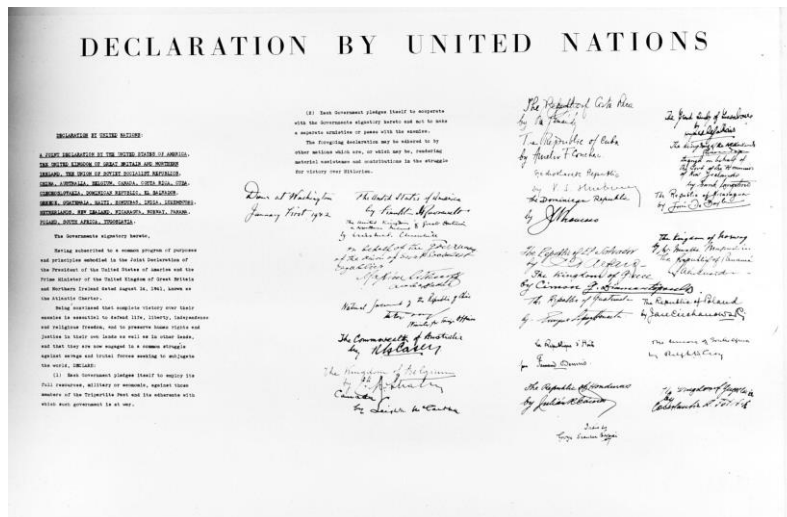
2.3 Declaration by United Nations

On New Year's Day 1942, President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, Maxim Litvinov, of the USSR, and T. V. Soong, of China, signed a short document which later came to be known as the United Nations Declaration. The next day, the representatives of twenty-two other

nations added their signatures. The governments that signed this declaration pledged to accept the Atlantic Charter and agreed not to negotiate a separate peace with any of the Axis powers.²

Declaration by United Nations issued in Washington, DC, on 01 January 1942

Three years later, when preparations were being made for the San Francisco Conference, only those States which had, by March 1945, declared war on Germany and Japan and subscribed



to the United Nations Declaration, were invited to take part. The Declaration by the United Nations marks the first official use of this term. The Allies used it to refer to their alliance.

2.4 Moscow Declaration (October 1943) and Tehran Conference (December 1943)

By 1943, major Allied nations were dedicated to winning World War II and then shaping a world where everyone could live without fear or need. That year, delegates from the US, UK, China, and the Soviet Union met in Moscow and signed the Moscow Declaration. This declaration not only committed to defeating the enemies but also stressed the urgent need for a universal international organization, emphasizing equality among peaceful states to maintain global peace and security.

Two months later, Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill met in Tehran to finalize the Allies' strategy for victory. After the conference, they expressed confidence that their unity would secure lasting peace. They recognized their immense responsibility to create a peace embraced by people worldwide, ensuring an era free from the horrors of war for generations to come

² Ibid

Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta Conference (1944-1945)

In the quest to establish a global organization for peace, the groundwork began with various declarations from 1941 onward. The next crucial step was shaping the structure of this organization. Representatives from China, the UK, the USSR, and the US convened at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., finalizing proposals for this intergovernmental body. These proposals outlined the United Nations' framework, envisioning a General Assembly comprising all members, a Security Council responsible for preventing war, an International Court of Justice, and a Secretariat. They also highlighted the need for member states to contribute armed forces to prevent conflicts, addressing a prior weakness seen in the League of Nations.

These proposals underwent extensive discussions and scrutiny across Allied countries. Notably, the voting method in the Security Council remained a key debate left unresolved at Dumbarton Oaks. However, during the Yalta Conference in early 1945, Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin, along with their officials, settled this issue. They announced an upcoming United Nations Conference in San Francisco to finalize the charter for this organization, aligning with the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. Despite Roosevelt's sudden passing, President Truman proceeded with the arrangements, leading to the significant event on the scheduled date in April 1945.

In 1945, representatives from 50 nations gathered in San Francisco for the United Nations Conference on International Organization. Their mission: to create a charter for a new global body aimed at preserving peace and building a better world. The conference hosted 850 delegates and 3,500 attendees overall, becoming one of history's largest international gatherings.

Over two months, delegates worked on a charter divided into four sections, focusing on the organization's purposes, membership, powers of the General Assembly and Security Council, and the establishment of an International Court of Justice. This extensive process involved debates, discussions, and the resolution of many contentious issues.

One significant point of contention was the right of permanent Security Council members to veto resolutions. Smaller nations worried about the concentration of power but ultimately conceded, prioritizing the establishment of the organization. After much negotiation, the delegates unanimously passed the Charter on June 25, 1945. President Truman lauded this

historic moment, emphasizing that the success of the United Nations relied on the commitment of all nations to work together for peace.

Although the Charter was signed, its effectiveness required ratification by member states. Upon fulfilling this condition on October 24, 1945, the United Nations officially came into existence, marking a monumental step toward ending war and fostering global peace, justice, and prosperity.³

3.0 Human Rights

Human rights are fundamental principles safeguarded by law, innate to all individuals irrespective of differences. They're universally applicable and equal for everyone, necessitating empathy and compliance with legal frameworks. This concept has significantly impacted international law and global policy, forming the common moral language of global society. While widely accepted, debates persist about their specifics and philosophical foundations. Stemming from historical tragedies like the World Wars and the Holocaust, modern human rights arose in response to injustices, aiming to create a fairer society. The advocacy for human rights remains pivotal in pursuing increased economic and political freedoms in the 21st century.⁴

3.1 Background

The concept of human rights has, in some sense, existed for centuries, although peoples have not always thought of universal human rights in the same way humans do today.⁵

Among the oldest evidence of human rights is the Cyrus Cylinder dated from 6th Century BCE, it had rights like no slavery, worship of your own religion, and racial equality.

The true forerunner of human rights discourse was the concept of natural rights which appeared as part of the medieval natural law tradition. This tradition was heavily influenced by the writings of St Paul's early Christian thinkers such as St Hilary of Poitiers, St Ambrose, and St Augustine. Augustine was among the earliest to examine the legitimacy of the laws of man, and attempt to define the boundaries of what laws and rights occur naturally based on wisdom

³ United Nations, San Francisco Conference

⁴ The United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, What are human rights?

⁵ Sutto, Marco (2019). "Human Rights Evolution, A Brief History". The CoESPU Magazine. 2019 (3): 18–21.

and conscience, instead of being arbitrarily imposed by mortals, and if people are obligated to obey laws that are unjust.⁶

This medieval tradition became prominent during the European Enlightenment. From this foundation, the modern human rights arguments emerged over the latter half of the 20th century.

Magna Carta is an English charter originally issued in 1215 which influenced the development of the common law and many later constitutional documents related to human rights, such as the 1689 English Bill of Rights, the 1789 United States Constitution, and the 1791 United States Bill of Rights.⁷

17th century English philosopher John Locke discussed natural rights in his work, identifying them as being "life, liberty, and estate (property)", and argued that such fundamental rights could not be surrendered in the social contract. In Britain in 1689, the English Bill of Rights and the Scottish Claim of Right each made a range of oppressive governmental actions, illegal.⁸ Two major revolutions occurred during the 18th century, in the United States (1776) and in France (1789), leading to the United States Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen respectively, both of which articulated certain human rights. Additionally, the Virginia Declaration of Rights of 1776 encoded into law a number of fundamental civil rights and civil freedoms.

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.

—United States Declaration of Independence, 1776

3.1.1 1800-World War I

⁶ "Augustine on Law and Order — Lawexplores.com"

⁷ Hazeltine, H. D. (1917). "The Influence of Magna Carta on American Constitutional Development". In Malden, Henry Elliot (ed.). Magna Carta commemoration essays. BiblioBazaar. ISBN 978-1116447477.

⁸ Moyn, Samuel (2010). The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History

During the 18th and 19th centuries, philosophers like Thomas Paine, John Stuart Mill, and Hegel contributed to the concept of universality. The term "human rights"⁹ likely emerged between Paine's work "The Rights of Man" and William Lloyd Garrison's writings in his newspaper "The Liberator" in 1831. Henry David Thoreau further discussed human rights in his 1849 treatise "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience," which later influenced thinkers in the realms of human and civil rights. In the mid-1800s, United States Supreme Court Justice David Davis emphasized the critical role of the law in securing human rights, highlighting the vulnerability of these rights without legal protection.¹⁰

Throughout the 20th century, various social movements achieved significant transformations in the name of human rights. In Western Europe and North America, labor unions fought for and secured rights like the ability to strike, improved work conditions, and regulations against child labor. Women's rights movements successfully advocated for women's suffrage, granting them the right to vote.

National liberation movements around the world ousted colonial powers, with Mahatma Gandhi's leadership notably influential in India's independence movement. Racial and religious minorities also made strides through movements like the civil rights movement in the United States and contemporary identity politics movements advocating for women and minorities.

The establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Lieber Code of 1864, and the initial Geneva Conventions formed the groundwork for international humanitarian law. These efforts were further developed after the two World Wars to protect individuals during armed conflicts.

3.1.2 World War I- World War II

The League of Nations was established in 1919 at the negotiations over the Treaty of Versailles following the end of World War I.

The League's goals included disarmament, preventing war through collective security, settling disputes between countries through negotiation, diplomacy and improving global welfare. Enshrined in its Charter was a mandate to promote many of the rights which were later included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The League of Nations had mandates to support

⁹ Mayer, Henry (2000). *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery*. St Martin's Press. ISBN 0312253672.

¹⁰ "Ex Parte Milligan, 71 U.S. 2, 119. (full text)"

many of the former colonies of the Western European colonial powers during their transition from colony to independent state.

Established as an agency of the League of Nations, and now part of United Nations, the International Labour Organization also had a mandate to promote and safeguard certain of the rights later included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):

the primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. — Report by the Director General for the International Labour Conference 87th Session

3.1.3 Consequences of the Second World War on Human Rights Laws

In the 1930s and 1940s, around six million Jews and millions of others, including Romanis, homosexuals and disabled people, perished at the hands of the Nazis.

Germany was governed by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party as a fascist dictatorship. After the Nazis came to power they persecuted the Jews and other groups: intimidating them, taking their money and property, and encouraging them to leave the country. The outbreak of WWII led to far more savage persecution, including mass killings.

As part of Hitler's 'Final Solution,' the Nazis gathered Jews and other persecuted groups in concentration camps. Camp prisoners endured systematic cruelty; beating, starvation and torture were normal. Doctors, including the notorious Dr Mengele, performed brutal experiments. The Nazi government depended on slave labour. Conditions in camps were brutal and degrading, and often resulted in deaths. Many camps contained gas chambers, where prisoners were exterminated.

This policy of cruel treatment and deliberate, systematic genocide across German-occupied Europe shocked the world. After the Nazis were defeated by the Allied Forces in WWII, the world united to agree on minimum standards of dignity to be afforded to all human beings. These minimum standards became known as human rights. They were recorded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and made enforceable in Europe under the Human Rights Convention. The Convention articles prohibiting torture, slavery and forced labour clearly sought to confine such barbaric treatment to history.

Discrimination motivated many of the Nazi's human rights breaches. The Nazi's anti-Semitic Nuremberg laws limited what jobs could be done by Jews, as well as their rights of citizenship. Jewish people's movement was restricted and they were forced to wear a yellow star on their clothes.

In response to these injustices, the Human Rights Convention specifically includes a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Plus, the Human Rights Convention states that everyone must be able to enjoy their Convention rights without discrimination on grounds such as sex, race, religion, political or other opinion and national or social origin.

Originally, concentration camps were intended to imprison Nazi opponents without trial. Puppet courts, packed with Nazi judges, distorted the laws to enforce the Nazi's decrees. Poles and Jews received different punishment from non-Jewish Germans for the same crimes, and their rights to a fair hearing were severely restricted. Nazi courts could impose death sentences, even where such a sentence was not provided for by law.

The right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial, and the requirement that there can be no punishment without law, aim to prevent such injustices from ever being repeated.¹¹

3.2 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948, was the result of the experience of the Second World War. With the end of that war, and the creation of the United Nations, the international community dedicated itself to never again allow savageries like those of that conflict to happen again.

World leaders decided to complement the UN Charter with a road map to guarantee the rights of every individual everywhere. The document they considered, and which would later become the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, was taken up at the first session of the General Assembly in 1946.

A foundational text in the history of human and civil rights, the Declaration consists of 30 articles detailing an individual's "basic rights and fundamental freedoms" and affirming their universal character as inherent, inalienable, and applicable to all human beings.¹² Adopted as

¹¹ How World War II led to Human Rights Laws - RightsInfo.pdf

¹² "Human Rights Law". www.un.org

a "common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations", the UDHR commits nations to recognize all humans as being "born free and equal in dignity and rights" regardless of "nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status".

The Declaration stands as a significant document due to its universal language, avoiding specific cultural, political, or religious references. It served as a direct catalyst for international human rights law and laid the groundwork for the International Bill of Human Rights, finalized in 1966 and enforced in 1976. While not legally binding itself, its principles have been expanded upon and integrated into subsequent international agreements, regional human rights laws, and national legal systems.

All 193 United Nations member states have ratified at least one of the nine binding treaties shaped by the Declaration, with the majority ratifying four or more. Although the Declaration is generally regarded as non-binding and not forming customary international law entirely, many of its provisions are recognized as binding and have become customary in social law. However, interpretations of its legal impact vary among different national courts.

Nonetheless, the UDHR's profound influence is evident in its translation into 530 languages, marking it as the most translated document in history.

3.2.1 The Drafting Committee

In June 1946, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), a key part of the newly formed United Nations, created the Commission on Human Rights (CHR). This commission, composed of 18 members from diverse national, religious, and political backgrounds, was tasked with developing what was initially conceived as an International Bill of Rights.¹³¹⁴

In February 1947, the Commission established a special Drafting Committee for a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This committee, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt of the United States, was instrumental in crafting the articles of the Declaration.

¹³ Morsink, Johannes (1999). *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: origins, drafting, and intent*. University of Pennsylvania Press. ISBN 978-0812217476.

¹⁴ "Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations". Bill of Rights Institute.

Roosevelt played a crucial role in the U.S. efforts to rally support for the adoption of a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Over two years, the Committee met in two sessions to work on the drafting of the Declaration, aiming to create a document that would encompass fundamental rights and principles applicable to all individuals worldwide.

3.2.2 Creation

The creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) involved significant contributions from various members of the Drafting Committee, each bringing diverse professional and ideological perspectives. John Humphrey is credited with devising the blueprint for the Declaration, while René Cassin composed the initial draft. Both received input from other members, reflecting a range of backgrounds.

The inclusion of pro-family phrases in the Declaration was influenced by Cassin and Charles Malik, who were associated with the Christian Democracy movement. Malik, a Christian theologian known for reaching across religious lines, drew on Christian doctrines like the Summa Theologica and studied various Christian sects.

On the contrary, Chang advocated for the removal of religious references to make the document more universally applicable, drawing on aspects of Confucianism to resolve negotiation standstills.

Hernán Santa Cruz of Chile, an educator and judge, strongly advocated for including socioeconomic rights, despite opposition from some Western nations. The philosophical debate largely revolved around the contrasting opinions of Chang and Malik, with Malik acknowledging Chang's influence on his own ideas during the drafting process.

The Drafting Committee held its second and final session in May 1948, considering feedback from member states, international bodies like the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Ninth International Conference of American States in Bogota. Delegates, consultants from various UN bodies, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations provided suggestions.¹⁵

The Committee submitted a redrafted text of the "International Declaration of Human Rights" and the "International Covenant of Human Rights" to the Commission on Human Rights at the

¹⁵ "E/CN.4/95 – E – E/CN.4/95". undocs.org

conclusion of its session on May 21, 1948.¹⁶ This combined text aimed to establish an International Bill of Rights.

During the Commission's third session in Geneva, held from May 21 to June 18, 1948, the revised Declaration, referred to as the "Geneva text," underwent further examination and discussions. Member states proposed amendments to the document. For instance, Hansa Mehta of India advocated for the assertion that "all human beings are created equal" instead of "all men are created equal," emphasizing gender equality.¹⁷

Charles Theodore Te Water of South Africa strongly opposed the inclusion of the word "dignity" in the declaration, arguing that dignity lacked a universal standard and shouldn't be considered a 'right'.

He foresaw that this inclusion might lead to criticisms of the newly introduced apartheid system in South Africa. However, it was noted that Prime Minister Jan Smuts of South Africa had actually played a significant role in incorporating the word "dignity" as a universal human right into the United Nations Charter in 1945. Despite Te Water's efforts, the word "dignity" remained included in the declaration as a universal human right.¹⁸

¹⁶ Voinea, Nicoleta. "Drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". research.un.org. Retrieved 13 September 2020.

¹⁷ Jain, Devaki (2005). *Women, Development and the UN*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. p. 20

¹⁸ Holkebeer, Mieke (2004). "Out of the Crooked Timber of Humanity: Humanising Rights in South Africa". In Erik Doxtader; Charles Villa-Vicencio (eds.). *To Repair the Irreparable Reparation and Reconstruction in South Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers. pp. 149–165. ISBN 978-0864866189.



Eleanor Roosevelt, US representative and Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights welcomes Professor Vladimir M. Koretsky, representative of the USSR, to the Commission's third session on 9 June 1947. UN Photo

3.2.3

Approval

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) approved the proposed Declaration with a vote of 12 in favor, none opposed, and four abstentions. However, they were unable to fully examine the contents and implementation of the proposed Covenant. The Commission forwarded both the approved Declaration and the Covenant to the Economic and Social Council for review and approval during its seventh session in July and August 1948.¹⁹

The Council, through Resolution 151(VII) on August 26, 1948, transmitted the draft International Declaration of Human Rights to the UN General Assembly.

During the third session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Third Committee held 81 meetings from September 30 to December 7, 1948, specifically discussing the draft

¹⁹ "Drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". Research Guides. United Nations. Dag Hammarskjöld Library.

Declaration. This extensive discussion included the consideration and resolution of 168 proposed amendments from member states.

On December 6, during its 178th meeting, the Third Committee adopted the Declaration with 29 votes in favor, none opposed, and seven abstentions. The finalized document was then presented to the broader General Assembly for its consideration on December 9 and 10, 1948.

Adoption

The Universal Declaration was indeed adopted by the General Assembly as UN Resolution A/RES/217(III) on December 10, 1948, at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris. Among the 58 United Nations members at the time, 48 voted in favor, none opposed, and eight abstained. Honduras and Yemen did not vote or abstain.²⁰

Eleanor Roosevelt's pivotal role in garnering support for the Declaration's adoption is widely recognized, both within the U.S. and internationally. Her ability to appeal to diverse and often opposing political groups was instrumental in the adoption process.

Records from the meeting shed light on the debate surrounding the Declaration's adoption. South Africa's stance aimed to protect its apartheid system, despite the system conflicting with several articles in the Declaration. Saudi Arabia abstained due to concerns over Article 18 (freedom of religion) and Article 16 (equal marriage rights). The abstentions by the six communist nations were justified by their belief that the Declaration didn't strongly condemn fascism and national-socialism.

However, Eleanor Roosevelt believed their reason for abstention centered on Article 13, which granted the right to leave one's country. Some observers attributed the Soviet bloc's opposition to the Declaration's emphasis on "negative rights," prohibiting governments from violating specific civil and political rights.

While the British delegation voted in favor of the Declaration, they expressed frustration over its lack of legal force despite moral obligations. It wasn't until 1976 that the International

²⁰ UNAC. "Questions and answers about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". United Nations Association in Canada (UNAC). p. Who are the signatories of the Declaration?

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provided legal status to most aspects of the Declaration.²¹

4.0 Questions to be Considered During the Drafting Process

We will process the drafting, discussion and voting processes of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in our Historical General Assembly Committee. Here are questions that may give you insight into the issues you need to talk about in your discussions throughout the committee:

Scope of Rights: What should be the scope and extent of the rights outlined in the declaration? Should they cover civil, political, economic, social, and cultural aspects comprehensively?

Enforceability: How do we ensure the enforceability of these rights without compromising the sovereignty of individual nations?

Cultural and Regional Sensitivity: How can the declaration accommodate diverse cultural values and regional specificities while maintaining its universal applicability?

Women's Rights: Should the declaration explicitly emphasize and protect the rights of women, considering historical discrimination and inequalities?

Rights of Minorities: How should the declaration safeguard the rights of minority groups within nations, particularly in regions where they face systematic discrimination?

Responsibilities of Member States: What responsibilities should member states have in upholding and promoting these rights within their territories?

Education and Awareness: How can the declaration promote education and awareness to ensure that these rights are recognized and respected by all individuals and governments?

Freedom of Expression: Should the declaration set limits on freedom of expression to prevent hate speech or ensure social harmony?

Economic Rights: To what extent should the declaration address economic rights, such as the right to work, fair wages, and social security?

²¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Final authorized text. The British Library. September 1952.

Role of International Bodies: What role should international organizations, like the United Nations, play in monitoring and enforcing the principles outlined in the UDHR?

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