



## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Abbreviated	
Article 1	Right to Equality
Article 2	Freedom from Discrimination
Article 3	Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
Article 4	Freedom from Slavery
Article 5	Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
Article 6	Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
Article 7	Right to Equality before the Law
Article 8	Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal
Article 9	Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
Article 10	Right to Fair Public Hearing
Article 11	Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
Article 12	Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
Article 13	Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
Article 14	Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution
Article 15	Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It
Article 16	Right to Marriage and Family
Article 17	Right to Own Property
Article 18	Freedom of Belief and Religion
Article 19	Freedom of Opinion and Information
Article 20	Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
Article 21	Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
Article 22	Right to Social Security
Article 23	Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
Article 24	Right to Rest and Leisure
Article 25	Right to Adequate Living Standard
Article 26	Right to Education
Article 27	Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community
Article 28	Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document
Article 29	Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development
Article 30	Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

Source: The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ([www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org))

Adopted on 10 December 1948 in Paris by the United Nations General Assembly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed as a “common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.” A milestone document, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has since inspired more than 60 human rights instruments,

which together constitute an international standard of human rights. For the first time in history, a single document was able to incorporate a set of basic civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all human beings should enjoy. In today’s globalised and interconnected world, companies are some of the most powerful actors

on the global stage. Operating a multinational business has become a complicated matrix. On the one hand, companies have to balance national customs with international regulations. On the other hand, they also have to manage complex supply chains, respond to environmental risks and societal changes, and cater to the wellbeing of an increasingly multicultural workforce. As calls for greater accountability and transparency are shaping 21st century business norms, all companies are faced with human rights responsibilities given that companies have the ability to either positively or negatively affect the entire range of human rights standards, including discrimination, sexual harassment, health and safety, freedom of association, torture, freedom of expression, privacy, poverty, access to food and water, education and housing.

While most companies are responding positively to contemporary changes in our society, some still manage to inflict harm through their conduct and their (un) intentional disregard for human rights. In order to minimise such breaches, it is important that everyday business practices blend together with respect for their workers, communities, and the environment as part of a holistic approach to corporate social responsibility. Today, companies can be both profitable and ethical. Although the primary duty to protect human rights remains with national governments, an increasing number of businesses are taking positive steps to promote and protect human rights. In the past decade we have seen a proliferation of voluntary initiatives that bring together companies, NGOs and governments to address different aspects of human rights issues; however, the daily reports of human rights breaches on behalf of companies demonstrates that much remains to be done.

In response to ongoing violations, the United Nations launched the UN Global Compact in 2000, which is a voluntary "policy initiative for businesses that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with [ten] universally

accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour and environment." As a result, thousands of companies participate in the Global Compact and report publicly on the steps they are taking to comply with these principles. Furthermore, in 2011 the UN Human Rights Council endorsed the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights thereby reaffirming that "business enterprises should avoid infringing on the human rights of others and should address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved." The objective of these principles was to operationalise the United Nations Protect – Respect – Remedy policy framework, which stresses:

- the state duty to protect human rights;
- the corporate responsibility to respect human rights; and
- the need for more effective access to remedies.

As companies that want to behave responsibly can potentially use these principles as a useful and practical guide, their introduction marks a significant step forward. From this platform of 'shared understanding,' companies are becoming more aware of their core human rights responsibilities and the public is becoming more aware of the corporate social responsibility.

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## Additional resources Further Reading

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**Step 1** Please refer back to Our Code of Conduct.

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**Step 2** If you would like to know more about Human Rights & Business, the following external links have been selected for your reference:

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### **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

It is a milestone document in the history of human rights. The Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/udhr/pages/introduction.aspx>

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### **International Labour Organization (ILO)**

The ILO promotes rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues.

<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/lang--en/index.htm>

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### **Equality and Human Rights Commission (UK)**

EHRC have a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights; and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine "protected" grounds - age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership, sexual orientation & gender reassignment

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

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### **The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**

OHCHR represents the world's commitment to universal ideals of human dignity. It has a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>

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### **Business & Human Rights Resource Centre**

It is a non-profit organization drawing attention to the human rights impacts (positive & negative) of over 5100 companies, operating in over 180 countries.

<http://www.business-humanrights.org/Home>

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### **Amnesty International**

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 3 million supporters, members & activists in over 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights

<https://www.amnesty.org/>

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### **United Nations Global Compact**

United Nations Global Compact is a voluntary policy initiative for businesses that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour and environment

<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

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**Step 3** Do your own research on the Internet

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