

The Rights of all Human Rights Defenders

The Declaration on Human Rights Defenders*, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998, sets out the rights of human rights defenders and the role of states and non-state actors in relation to these rights.

*The Declaration on the Rights and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (A/RES/53/144)

When?

When was the Declaration adopted?

1998

December 1998

20+ Years

These rights have existed for over 20 years

UN



Discussed on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the UDHR (1948)

Who?

Who does the declaration affect and protect?



Individual Defenders

The Declaration protects individual defenders - those promoting and protecting rights individually.



Groups of Defenders

As well as those who do so collectively, such as in groups, communities, and organisations.



All UN member States

Adopted the Declaration.



Non-State Actors

Such as corporations, the media, and armed groups must respect human rights.



Everyone!

Has the right to promote and protect human rights.



States

Have a duty to protect the rights of human rights defenders.

How?

How are Human Rights defenders protected?



The State

(Article 2, 9, 12, 14, 15)
Every state is legally obligated to enact laws, create safeguards, and investigate violations.



Non-state Actors

(Article 10, 11 & 18-20)
Actors such as Non-Governmental Organisations's, the media, and corporations have a duty to respect rights.



Communication, information, and redress

(Article 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9)
Networking can be important for defender protection.



The world!

(Article 10, 11 & 18-20)
Everyone has a duty to promote and enable and not violate defender rights.

What?

What are some of the rights contained in the Declaration?



The Right to be Protected
(Article 2, 9)



The Right to Freedom of Assembly and Association
(Article 5, 12)
including the right to protest and strike.



The Right to an Effective Remedy
(Article 9)
including prompt and impartial investigation, the prosecution of perpetrators, and the provision of redress.



The Right to Freedom of Information, Opinion, and Expression
(Article 6)



The Right to Develop, Discuss, and Advocate for New Human Rights Ideas
(Article 7)



The Right to Access and Communicate with International Bodies
(Article 5c, 9.4)
Such as the Human Rights Council, its special procedures, the treaty bodies, and regional human rights mechanisms.



The Right to Access Funding
(Article 13)
including to seek, receive and utilise it.

Where?

Where can we find more information?



Resolution 68/181
Stresses the need to promote the Declaration of Human Rights Defenders.



Resolution 22/6
Stresses the extreme importance of defender protections.



The UN OHCHR Website
Provides more in depth resources on human rights defenders.



OpenDemocracy
An independant media platform providing insight on the global human rights movement.