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## HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2010

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DECEMBER 13, 2010

*"Human rights are the foundation of freedom, peace, development and justice -- and the heart of the work of the United Nations around the world."*

-- [Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Message on Human Rights Day 2010](#)



HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2010

Every year on 10 December, Human Rights Day marks the anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Over the years, a whole network of human rights instruments and mechanisms has been developed to ensure the primacy of human rights and to confront human rights violations wherever they occur.

This year's commemoration highlights and promotes the achievements of human rights defenders who fight to end discrimination. Human rights defenders protest abuses of human rights, advocate for justice and seek to protect the victims of human rights violations. They demand accountability for perpetrators and transparency in government action. In so doing, they are often putting at risk their own safety, and that of their families.

### SPECIAL MESSAGES ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT

[Presidential Proclamation on Human Rights Day, Bill of Rights Day, and Human Rights Week](#)  
(December 10, 2010)

*"Freedom, justice, and peace for the world must begin with basic security and liberty in the lives of individual human beings. Today, we continue the fight to make universal human rights a reality for every person, regardless of race, gender, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or circumstance."* Read the full transcript [here](#).

[Statement by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Human Rights Day 2010](#)  
(December 9, 2010)

*"A vibrant civil society is an essential component of free nations, yet many governments continue to employ intimidation, questionable legal practices, restrictions, detention, and willful ignorance to silence the voices of those who defend human rights. The United States is committed to promoting and defending civil society around the world. And we will continue to remind leaders of*

their responsibilities to their citizens under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." Read the full statement [here](#).

[Remarks by U.S Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton at the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award Ceremony](#) (December 10, 2010)

*"Eleanor Roosevelt and the other drafters understood that human rights means much more than just political freedom. She wanted to honor the inherent dignity and value of the human being, which to her meant equal rights for every man, woman and child; freedom from want and fear; the opportunity for every person to develop his or her full God-given potential. And it is up to us to harness these ideas to meet the challenges that we now face. So therefore, we must speak out when people are not free to vote or practice their religion; when girls are trafficked or married against their will; when boys are forced to become child soldiers."* Read the full remarks [here](#).

[Statement by Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on Human Rights Day 2010](#) (December 9, 2010)

*"On Human Rights Day, the United States celebrates deep truths we hold to be self-evident and honors a stirring Declaration signed by 58 nations — a universal affirmation that human beings have equal worth, equal dignity, equal consequence, and equal rights. And we continue to work for the day when no one will endure discrimination or suffer persecution."* Read the full statement [here](#).

## **DEFENDING THE DEFENDERS**

[Stories about Human Rights Defenders](#) - Human rights defenders speak out against abuse and violations including discrimination, exclusion, oppression and violence. They advocate justice and seek to protect the victims of human rights violations. They demand accountability of perpetrators and transparency in government action. In so doing, they are often putting at risk their own safety, and that of their families. Read their inspirational stories about human rights defenders, their lives and their work [here](#).

[The Situation of Human Rights Defenders](#) (August 4, 2010) - The report focuses on responsibility for human rights violations against defenders by non-State actors.

[The Declaration on Human Rights Defenders](#) - The Declaration recognizes that the implementation of international human rights standards is to a great extent dependent on the activities of human rights defenders and that defenders, precisely because of their work, often require additional protection.

## **U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITMENTS AND PLEDGES**

[United States Marks Human Rights Day](#) (December 10, 2010) - U.S. officials from the President on down marked International Human Rights Day on December 10, which commemorates the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

[An End to Human Trafficking](#) (November 9, 2010) - "It is especially important for governments to protect the most vulnerable – women and children – who are more likely to be victims of trafficking. They are not just the targets of sex traffickers, but also labor traffickers, and they make up a majority of those trapped in forced labor: picking cotton, mining rare earth minerals, dancing in nightclubs.



Relatives of Cuban political prisoners march on Human Rights Day 2010.

The numbers may keep growing, as the global economic crisis has exposed even more women to unscrupulous recruiters." Read the full Op-Ed from Secretary Clinton [here](#).

[United States Steps Up Efforts to End Modern-Day Slavery](#) (October 29, 2010) - Streamlined interagency cooperation and improved collaboration among prosecutors in the field are part of an intensified drive to combat human trafficking.

[U.S. Lawmakers, Officials Focus on Human Trafficking](#) (October 1, 2010) - Participants in a U.S. House of Representatives committee hearing say progress is being made in the fight against human trafficking, a global problem known as modern-day slavery that affects an estimated 12 million people worldwide

## **Speak Up... Stop Discrimination!**

[Yes, you can do something to end human rights abuses](#): Commemorate International Human Rights Day on December 10 by taking part in Write for Rights, Amnesty International's annual letter-writing marathon. Learn more [here](#).

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