

Sixty Years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: The Defenders Take The Floor

Brussels, October 7-8, 2008

Sixty years ago on December 10, 1948, in the aftermath of the devastations and horrors of World War II, the General Assembly of the United Nations solemnly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its 30 articles stand today as the pillars of the aspiration of mankind for a universal ethics based, as one of its drafters, French philosopher René Cassin, stated, on "dignity, liberty, equality and brotherhood".

On October 7-8, 2008, in a major inter-institutional initiative the European Commission, the European Parliament and the United Nations will mark this anniversary and show their continuing commitment to the founding text by convening a high-level conference in Brussels.

The conference aims to reaffirm and illustrate the scope of the Universal Declaration through the work of human rights defenders across the globe. "The destiny of human rights is in the hands of all our citizens and all our communities", Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the drafters of the Universal Declaration, famously declared. The Brussels conference will acknowledge that it is particularly in the hands of human rights defenders, an extraordinary and very diverse group of courageous and non-violent people (community leaders, lawyers, journalists, trade unionists, women's or children's rights activists, etc.) who advocate, mobilize and often put their life at risk to defend the most fundamental freedoms of their fellow citizens.

Human rights defenders and leading representatives of international human rights organizations have been invited to the conference to testify and discuss new ways of advancing human rights. Many of them will come from countries that have ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and yet consider the persons that fight for the respect of these core rights as enemies of the state. This event will provide an opportunity to explore and understand more of the reality on the ground for human rights defenders.

Ten years ago, on December 9, 1998, the General Assembly recognized the importance and the legitimacy of their role by adopting a "Declaration on human rights defenders". In 2004, concerned by the increasing number of attacks against these key "agents of change" the EU adopted a guideline on the protection of human rights defenders in third countries within the framework of its Common foreign and security policy. In February 2008



the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE) approved a Declaration on human rights defenders, putting their protection at the core of the mandate of the CoE commissioner for human rights. The Brussels conference will be an occasion to review these support mechanisms.

High officials of these institutions will take part in the conference: Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU commissioner for external relations, Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament, Navanethem Pillay, the newly appointed UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Margaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for human rights of the Council of Europe. By convening this conference they want to express not only their recognition that human rights are fundamental values per se but also their conviction that the respect of human rights is a necessary condition to attain other key objectives : build democracy, promote sustainable development and prevent armed conflicts.

After the official opening a first panel will focus on the mechanisms of protection, looking in particular into the implementation of the 1998 UN declaration on human rights defenders and of the EU guidelines on human rights defenders. A second panel will underline the importance of freedom of expression as a pillar of the human rights system and highlight the crucial contribution of journalists to the defence of human rights.

The Brussels October 7-8 conference will be an opportunity to assess the state of human rights around the world. It will highlight the essential role played by civil society in that struggle and the commitment of the EU, the UN and the CoE. Its major challenge will be to open new perspectives in order to enhance the protection of human rights defenders around the world.

Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on Council of Europe action to improve the protection of human rights defenders and promote their activities

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 February 2008 at the 1017th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe,

Noting the commitment made by Heads of State and Government meeting at their Third Summit in Warsaw 2005 that the Council of Europe "shall – through its various mechanisms and institutions – play a dynamic role in protecting the right of individuals and promoting the invaluable engagement of non-governmental organisations, to actively defend human rights";

Recalling the United Nations Declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms of 9 December 1998, and reiterating the importance of the declaration for individuals, groups and associations to promote and strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international level;

Taking account of the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders of 2004 and the first review of their implementation in 2006, which contain suggestions for practical measures by EU member states and other states willing to implement them, to support and protect human rights defenders;

Deploring that human rights defenders, including journalists, are all too often victims of violations of their rights, threats and attacks, despite efforts at both national and international levels, and considering that human rights defenders merit special attention, as such violations may indicate the general situation of human rights in the state concerned or a deterioration thereof;

Paying tribute to their invaluable contribution in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms;

Mindful that restrictions placed on the exercise of the freedom of expression, assembly and association, which affect the work of human rights defenders in Europe, must not extend beyond those authorised by paragraphs 2 of Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms ("European Convention on Human Rights" or "ECHR");

Taking account of the report of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) on Council of Europe action to improve the protection of human rights defenders and promote their activities;¹

Recalling Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)14 on the legal status of non-governmental organisations in Europe which stipulates that NGOs should enjoy the right to freedom of expression and all other universally and regionally guaranteed rights and freedoms applicable to them;

Acknowledging that whereas the prime responsibility and duty to promote and protect human rights defenders lie with the state, the Council of Europe shall also contribute to creating an enabling environment for human rights defenders and protect them and their work in defending human rights;

Welcoming the activities that the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights has already undertaken in support of human rights defenders, in particular during his country visits, and mindful that protection of human rights defenders as well as the development of an enabling environment for their activities fall within the scope of his mandate, as defined in Committee of Ministers' Resolution (99) 50 of 7 May 1999,

1. Condemns all attacks on and violations of the rights of human rights defenders in Council of Europe member states or elsewhere, whether carried out by state agents or non-state actors;

2. Calls on member states to:

i) create an environment conducive to the work of human rights defenders, enabling individuals, groups and associations to freely carry out activities, on a legal basis, consistent with international standards, to promote and strive for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms without any restrictions other than those authorised by the European Convention on Human Rights;

ii) take effective measures to protect, promote and respect human rights defenders and ensure respect for their activities;

iii) strengthen their judicial systems and ensure the existence of effective remedies for those whose rights and freedoms are violated;

iv) take effective measures to prevent attacks on or harassment of human rights defenders, ensure independent and effective investigation of such acts and to hold those responsible accountable through administrative measures and/or criminal proceedings;

v) consider giving or, where appropriate, strengthening competence and capacity to independent commissions, ombudspersons, or national human rights institutions to receive, consider and make recommendations for the resolution of complaints by human rights defenders about violations of their rights;

vi) ensure that their legislation, in particular on freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression, is in conformity with internationally recognised human rights standards and, where appropriate, seek advice from the Council of Europe in this respect;

vii) ensure the effective access of human rights defenders to the European Court of Human Rights, the European Committee of Social Rights and other human rights protection mechanisms in accordance with applicable procedures;

viii) co-operate with the Council of Europe human rights mechanisms and in particular with the European Court of Human Rights in accordance with the ECHR, as well as with the Commissioner for Human Rights by facilitating his/her visits, providing adequate responses and entering into dialogue with him/her about the situation of human rights defenders when so requested;

ix) consider signing and ratifying the European Convention on the Recognition of the Legal Personality of International Non-Governmental Organisations (ETS No. 124);

x) consider signing and ratifying the 1995 Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter and to consider recognising the right of national NGOs fulfilling the criteria mentioned therein to lodge collective complaints before the European Committee of Social Rights;

xi) provide measures for swift assistance and protection to human rights defenders in danger in third countries, such as, where appropriate, attendance at and observation of trials and/or, if feasible, the issuing of emergency visas;

3. Calls on all Council of Europe bodies and institutions, to pay special attention to issues concerning human rights defenders in their respective work. This shall include providing information and documentation, including on relevant case law and other European standards, as well as encouraging co-operation and awareness-raising activities with civil society organisations and encouraging human rights defenders' participation in Council of Europe activities;

4. Invites the Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen the role and capacity of his Office in order to provide strong and effective protection for human rights defenders by:

i) continuing to act upon information received from human rights defenders and other relevant sources, including ombudsmen or national human rights institutions;

ii) continuing to meet with a broad range of defenders during his country visits and to report publicly on the situation of human rights defenders;

iii) intervening, in the manner the Commissioner deems appropriate, with the competent authorities, in order to assist them in looking for solutions, in accordance with their obligations, to the problems which human rights defenders may face, especially in serious situations where there is a need for urgent action;

iv) working in close co-operation with other intergovernmental organisations and institutions, in particular the OSCE/ODHIR focal point for human rights defenders, the European Union, the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders and other existing mechanisms;

5. Agrees to keep under review the question of further Council of Europe action in this field.

ENSURING PROTECTION - EUROPEAN UNION GUIDELINES ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

I. PURPOSE

1. Support for human rights defenders is already a long established element of the European Union's human rights external relations policy. The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide practical suggestions for enhancing EU action in relation to this issue. The Guidelines can be used in contacts with third countries at all levels as well as in multilateral human rights fora, in order to support and strengthen ongoing efforts by the Union to promote and encourage respect for the right to defend human rights. The Guidelines also provide for interventions by the Union for human rights defenders at risk and suggest practical means to support and assist human rights defenders. An important element of the Guidelines is support for the Special Procedures of the UN Commission on Human Rights, including the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders and appropriate regional mechanisms to protect human rights defenders. The Guidelines will assist EU Missions (Embassies and Consulates of EU Member States and European Commission Delegations) in their approach to human rights defenders. While addressing specific concerns regarding human rights defenders is their primary purpose, the Guidelines also contribute to reinforcing the EU's human rights policy in general.

II. DEFINITION

2. For the purpose of defining human rights defenders for these Guidelines operative paragraph 1 of the "UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" (see Annexe I), which states that "Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels" is drawn upon.

3. Human rights defenders are those individuals, groups and organs of society that promote and protect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights defenders seek the promotion and protection of civil and political rights as well as the promotion, protection and realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. Human rights defenders also promote and protect the rights of members of groups such as indigenous communities. The definition does not include those individuals or groups who commit or propagate violence.

III. INTRODUCTION

4. The EU supports the principles contained in the Declaration on the Right and responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Although the primary responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights lies with states, the EU

recognises that individuals, groups and organs of society all play important parts in furthering the cause of human rights. The activities of human rights defenders include:

- documenting violations;
- seeking remedies for victims of such violations through the provision of legal, psychological, medical or other support; and
- combating cultures of impunity which serve to cloak systematic and repeated breaches of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

5. The work of human rights defenders often involves criticism of government's policies and actions. However, governments should not see this as a negative. The principle of allowing room for independence of mind and free debate on a government's policies and actions is fundamental, and is a tried and tested way of establishing a better level of protection of human rights. Human rights defenders can assist governments in promoting and protecting human rights. As part of consultation processes they can play a key role in helping to draft appropriate legislation, and in helping to draw up national plans and strategies on human rights. This role too should be recognised and supported.

6. The EU acknowledges that the activities of Human Rights Defenders have over the years become more recognised. They have increasingly come to ensure greater protection for the victims of violations. However, this progress has been achieved at a high price: the defenders themselves have increasingly become targets of attacks and their rights are violated in many countries. The EU believes it is important to ensure the safety and protect the rights of human rights defenders. In this regard it is important to apply a gender perspective when approaching the issue of human rights defenders.

IV. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

7. The operational part of the Guideline is meant to identify ways and means to effectively work towards the promotion and protection of human rights defenders in third countries, within the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Monitoring, reporting and assessment

8. EU Heads of Mission are already requested to provide periodic reports on the human rights situation in their countries of accreditation. The Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) has recently approved the outline of fact sheets to facilitate this task. In line with these fact sheets Missions should address the situation of human rights defenders in their reporting, noting in particular the occurrence of any threats or attacks against human rights defenders. In this contexts HoMs should be aware that the institutional framework can have a major impact on the ability of human rights defenders to undertake their work in safety. Issues such as legislative, judicial, administrative or other appropriate measures, undertaken by States to protect persons against any violence, threats retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate

exercise of any of the rights referred to the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders are all relevant in this regard. Where it is called for, HoMs should make recommendations to COHOM for possible EU actions, including condemnation of threats and attacks against human rights defenders, as well as for demarches and public statements where human rights defenders are at immediate or serious risk. HoMs should also report on the effectiveness of EU actions in their reports.

9. The HoMs reports and other relevant information, such as reports and recommendations from the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Human Rights Defenders, UN Special Rapporteurs and Treaty Bodies as well as non-governmental organisations, will enable COHOM and other relevant working parties, to identify situations where EU actions are called upon and decide actions to be taken or, where appropriate, make recommendations for such action to PSC / Council.

Role of EU Missions in supporting and protecting human rights defenders

10. In many third countries EU Missions (Embassies of EU Member States and European Commission Delegations) are the primary interface between the Union and its Member States and human rights defenders on the ground. They therefore have an important role to play in putting into practice the EU's policy towards human rights defenders. EU Missions should therefore seek to adopt a proactive policy towards human rights defenders. They should at the same time be aware that in certain cases EU action could lead to threats or attacks against human rights defenders. They should therefore where appropriate consult with human rights defenders in relation to actions which might be contemplated. Measures that EU Missions could take include:

- co-ordinating closely and sharing information on human rights defenders, including those at risk;
- maintaining, suitable contacts with human rights defenders, including by receiving them in Missions and visiting their areas of work, consideration could be given to appointing specific liaison officers, where necessary on a burden sharing basis, for this purpose;
- providing, as and where appropriate, visible recognition to human rights defenders, through the use of appropriate publicity, visits or invitations;
- attending and observing, where appropriate, trials of human rights defenders.

Promotion of respect for human rights defenders in relations with third countries and in multilateral fora

11. The EU's objective is to influence third countries to carry out their obligations to respect the rights of human rights defenders and to protect them from attacks and threats from non-state actors. In its contacts with third countries, the EU will, when deemed necessary, express the need for all countries to adhere to and comply with the relevant international norms and standards, in particular the UN Declaration. The overall objective should be to bring about an environment where human rights defenders

can operate freely. The EU will make its objectives known as an integral part of its human rights policy and will stress the importance it attaches to the protection of human rights defenders. Actions in support of these objectives will include:

- where the Presidency, or the High Representative for the CFSP or EU Special Representatives and Envoys, or European Commission are making country visits they will, where appropriate, include meetings with, and raising individual cases of, human rights defenders as an integral and part of their visits to third countries;
- the human rights component of political dialogues between the EU and third countries and regional organisations, will, where relevant, include the situation of human rights defenders. The EU will underline its support for human rights defenders and their work, and raise individual cases of concern whenever necessary;
- working closely with other like minded countries with similar views notably in the UN Commission on Human Rights and the UN General Assembly;
- promoting the strengthening of existing regional mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders, such as the focal point on human rights defenders of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the special Human Rights Defenders Unit within the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the creation of appropriate mechanisms in regions where they do not exist.

Support for Special Procedures of the UN Commission on Human Rights, including the Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders

12. The EU recognises that the Special Procedures of the UN Commission on Human Rights (Special Rapporteurs, Special Representatives, Independent Experts and Working Groups) are vital to international efforts to protect human rights defenders because of their independence and impartiality; their ability to act and speak out on violations against human rights defenders worldwide and undertake country visits. While the Special Representative for Human Rights Defenders has a particular role in this regard the mandates of other Special Procedures are also of relevance to human rights defenders. The EU's actions in support of the Special Procedures will include:

- encouraging states to accept as a matter of principle requests for country visits by UN Special Procedures;
- promoting via EU Missions, the use of UN thematic mechanisms by local human rights communities and human rights defenders including, but not limited to facilitating the establishment of contacts with, and exchange information between, thematic mechanisms and human rights defenders;
- since the Special Procedures are unable to carry out their mandate in the absence of adequate resources, EU Member States will support the allocation of sufficient funds from the general budget to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Practical supports for Human Rights Defenders including through Development Policy

13. Programmes of the European Community and Member States aimed at assisting in the development of democratic processes and institutions, and the promotion and protection of human rights in developing countries are among a wide range of practical supports for assisting human rights defenders. These can include but are not necessarily limited to the development co-operation programmes of Member States. Practical supports can include the following:

- bi-lateral human rights and democratisation programmes of the European Community and Member States should take further account of the need to assist the development of democratic processes and institutions, and the promotion and protection of human rights in developing countries by, inter alia, supporting human rights defenders through such activities as capacity building and public awareness campaigns;
- by encouraging and supporting the establishment, and work, of national bodies for the promotion and protection of human rights, established in accordance with the Paris Principles, including, National Human Rights Institutions, Ombudsman's Offices and Human Rights Commissions.
- assisting in the establishment of networks of human rights defenders at an international level, including by facilitating meetings of human rights defenders;
- seeking to ensure that human rights defenders in third countries can access resources, including financial, from abroad;
- by ensuring that human rights education programmes promote, inter alia, the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Role of Council Working Parties

14. In accordance with its mandate COHOM will keep under review the implementation and follow-up to the Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders in close co-ordination and co-operation with other relevant Council Working Parties. This will include:

- promoting the integration of the issue of human rights defenders into relevant EU policies and actions;
- undertaking reviews of the implementation of the Guidelines at appropriate intervals;
- continuing to examine, as appropriate, further ways of co-operating with UN and other international and regional mechanisms in support of human rights defenders.
- Reporting to Council, via PSC and COREPER, as appropriate on an annual basis on progress made towards implementing the Guidelines.



A/RES/53/144
8 March 1999

Fifty-third session
Agenda item 110 (b)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
[on the report of the Third Committee (A/53/625/Add.2)]

53/144. Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance of the observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations for the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons in all countries of the world,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/7 of 3 April 1998,¹ in which the Commission approved the text of the draft declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Taking note also of Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/33 of 30 July 1998, in which the Council recommended the draft declaration to the General Assembly for adoption,

Conscious of the importance of the adoption of the draft declaration in the context of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,²

1. Adopts the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, annexed to the present resolution;
2. Invites Governments, agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to intensify their efforts to disseminate the Declaration and to promote universal respect and understanding thereof, and requests the Secretary-General to include the text of the Declaration in the next edition of Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments.

85th plenary meeting
9 December 1998

ANNEX

Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance of the observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations for the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons in all countries of the world,

Reaffirming also the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights² and the International Covenants on Human Rights³ as basic elements of international efforts to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the importance of other human rights instruments adopted within the United Nations system, as well as those at the regional level,

Stressing that all members of the international community shall fulfil, jointly and separately, their solemn obligation to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind, including distinctions based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and reaffirming the particular importance of achieving international cooperation to fulfil this obligation according to the Charter,

Acknowledging the important role of international cooperation for, and the valuable work of individuals, groups and associations in contributing to, the effective elimination of all violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of peoples and individuals, including in relation to mass, flagrant or systematic violations such as those resulting from apartheid, all forms of racial discrimination, colonialism, foreign domination or occupation, aggression or threats to national sovereignty, national unity or territorial integrity and from the refusal to recognize the right of peoples to self-determination and the right of every people to exercise full sovereignty over its wealth and natural resources,

Recognizing the relationship between international peace and security and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and mindful that the absence of international peace and security does not excuse non-compliance,

Reiterating that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and should be promoted and implemented in a fair and equitable manner, without prejudice to the implementation of each of those rights and freedoms,

Stressing that the prime responsibility and duty to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms lie with the State,

Recognizing the right and the responsibility of individuals, groups and associations to promote respect for and foster knowledge of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels,

Declares:

Article 1

Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels.

Article 2

1. Each State has a prime responsibility and duty to protect, promote and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms, *inter alia*, by adopting such steps as may be necessary to create all conditions necessary in the social, economic, political and other fields, as well as the legal guarantees required to ensure that all persons under its jurisdiction, individually and in association with others, are able to enjoy all those rights and freedoms in practice.

2. Each State shall adopt such legislative, administrative and other steps as may be necessary to ensure that the rights and freedoms referred to in the present Declaration are effectively guaranteed.

Article 3

Domestic law consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and other international obligations of the State in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms is the juridical framework within which human rights and fundamental freedoms should be implemented and enjoyed and within which all activities referred to in the present Declaration for the promotion, protection and effective realization of those rights and freedoms should be conducted.

Article 4

Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as impairing or contradicting the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations or as restricting or derogating from the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International 2 Covenants on Human Rights³ and other international instruments and commitments applicable in this field.

Article 5

For the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, at the national and international levels:

- (a) To meet or assemble peacefully;
- (b) To form, join and participate in non-governmental organizations, associations or groups;
- (c) To communicate with non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations.

Article 6

Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others:

- (a) To know, seek, obtain, receive and hold information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including having access to information as to how those rights and freedoms are given effect in domestic legislative, judicial or administrative systems;
- (b) As provided for in human rights and other applicable international instruments, freely to publish, impart or disseminate to others views, information and knowledge on all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- (c) To study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and, through these and other appropriate means, to draw public attention to those matters.

Article 7

Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to develop and discuss new human rights ideas and principles and to advocate their acceptance.

Article 8

1. Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to have effective access, on a nondiscriminatory basis, to participation in the government of his or her country and in the conduct of public affairs.

2. This includes, inter alia, the right, individually and in association with others, to submit to governmental bodies and agencies and organizations concerned with public affairs criticism and proposals for improving their functioning and to draw attention to any aspect of their work that may hinder or impede the promotion, protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 9

1. In the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the promotion and protection of human rights as referred to in the present Declaration, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to benefit from an effective remedy and to be protected in the event of the violation of those rights.

2. To this end, everyone whose rights or freedoms are allegedly violated has the right, either in person or through legally authorized representation, to complain to and have that complaint promptly reviewed in a public hearing before an independent, impartial and competent judicial or other authority established by

law and to obtain from such an authority a decision, in accordance with law, providing redress, including any compensation due, where there has been a violation of that person's rights or freedoms, as well as enforcement of the eventual decision and award, all without undue delay.

3. To the same end, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, inter alia:

(a) To complain about the policies and actions of individual officials and governmental bodies with regard to violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, by petition or other appropriate means, to competent domestic judicial, administrative or legislative authorities or any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, which should render their decision on the complaint without undue delay;

(b) To attend public hearings, proceedings and trials so as to form an opinion on their compliance with national law and applicable international obligations and commitments;

(c) To offer and provide professionally qualified legal assistance or other relevant advice and assistance in defending human rights and fundamental freedoms.

4. To the same end, and in accordance with applicable international instruments and procedures, everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to unhindered access to and communication with international bodies with general or special competence to receive and consider communications on matters of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

5. The State shall conduct a prompt and impartial investigation or ensure that an inquiry takes place whenever there is reasonable ground to believe that a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms has occurred in any territory under its jurisdiction.

Article 10

No one shall participate, by act or by failure to act where required, in violating human rights and fundamental freedoms and no one shall be subjected to punishment or adverse action of any kind for refusing to do so.

Article 11

Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to the lawful exercise of his or her occupation or profession. Everyone who, as a result of his or her profession, can affect the human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms of others should respect those rights and freedoms and comply with relevant national and international standards of occupational and professional conduct or ethics.

Article 12

1. Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration.

3. In this connection, everyone is entitled, individually and in association with others, to be protected effectively under national law in reacting against or opposing, through peaceful means, activities and acts, including those by omission, attributable to States that result in violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as acts of violence perpetrated by groups or individuals that affect the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 13

Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to solicit, receive and utilize resources for the express purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms through peaceful means, in accordance with article 3 of the present Declaration.

Article 14

1. The State has the responsibility to take legislative, judicial, administrative or other appropriate measures to promote the understanding by all persons under its jurisdiction of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

2. Such measures shall include, inter alia:

(a) The publication and widespread availability of national laws and regulations and of applicable basic international human rights instruments;

(b) Full and equal access to international documents in the field of human rights, including the periodic reports by the State to the bodies established by the international human rights treaties to which it is a party, as well as the summary records of discussions and the official reports of these bodies.

3. The State shall ensure and support, where appropriate, the creation and development of further independent national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all territory under its jurisdiction, whether they be ombudsmen, human rights commissions or any other form of national institution.

Article 15

The State has the responsibility to promote and facilitate the teaching of human rights and fundamental freedoms at all levels of education and to ensure that all those responsible for training lawyers, law enforcement officers, the personnel of the armed forces and public officials include appropriate elements of human rights teaching in their training programme.

Article 16

Individuals, non-governmental organizations and relevant institutions have an important role to play in contributing to making the public more aware of questions relating to all human rights and fundamental freedoms through activities such as education, training and research in these areas to strengthen further, inter alia, understanding, tolerance, peace and friendly relations among nations and among all racial and religious groups, bearing in mind the various backgrounds of the societies and communities in which they carry out their activities.

Article 17

In the exercise of the rights and freedoms referred to in the present Declaration, everyone, acting individually and in association with others, shall be subject only to such limitations as are in accordance with applicable international obligations and are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

Article 18

1. Everyone has duties towards and within the community, in which alone the free and full development of his or her personality is possible.

2. Individuals, groups, institutions and non-governmental organizations have an important role to play and a responsibility in safeguarding democracy, promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms and contributing to the promotion and advancement of democratic societies, institutions and processes.

3. Individuals, groups, institutions and non-governmental organizations also have an important role and a responsibility in contributing, as appropriate, to the promotion of the right of everyone to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments can be fully realized.

Article 19

Nothing in the present Declaration shall be interpreted as implying for any individual, group or organ of society or any State the right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of the rights and freedoms referred to in the present Declaration.

Article 20

Nothing in the present Declaration shall be interpreted as permitting States to support and promote activities of individuals, groups of individuals, institutions or non-governmental organizations contrary to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

1 o. 3 (E/1998/23), chap. II, sect. A.

2 Resolution 217 A (III).

3 Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

15 SECONDS

Event on the occasion of the European Day against Death Penalty

Tuesday, 7 October 2008, 18.30

room ASP 3C50

Presentation

On the occasion of the European Day against Death Penalty, which is celebrated on 10 October, the European Parliament will host on October 7 a special event to stress its commitment on the issue of the implementation of the world moratorium against death penalty, which was approved by the General Assembly on the United Nations on 18 December 2007.

During the event, it will be screened "15 seconds", a short movie featuring one of the best known Italian actors, Raoul Bova. "15 seconds" is the duration of the electric shock used to cause death during executions.

This short movie is not just a popular media tool, but it's also part of a wider project aimed at raising awareness, including in schools and cinemas, on the implementation of the world moratorium.

The project, thanks to its importance, already received the High Patronage of the Italian President of the Republic and of the European Parliament, as well as of the Italian Ministry for Justice, the Ministry for External Affairs and the Ministry for Education. It is composed of two different parts:

- The short movie "15 seconds" written and directed by Gianluca Petrazzi. Raoul Bova is the main character, but other well known Italian actors such as Ricky Memphis, Enrico Lo Verso, and Claudia Pandolfi are also playing in the film. All actors and other staff involved in the creation of the short movie worked as volunteers.
- The Reflections and Backstage documenting the genesis and development of the short; the thoughts, reflections and operational think-tanks that have led to the production of this work in all its phases. There are also interviews, whose protagonists are those taking part in the short as well as prominent representatives from a variety of communities: parliamentarians, intellectuals and philosophers, writers and journalists

The event will be chaired by Luisa Morgantini, Vice-President of the European Parliament responsible for Human Rights. Speakers will include Gianluca Petrazzi, director and author, and Raoul Bova, actor and producer of the short movie "15 seconds".

Programme

- h. 18.30:** Welcome and introduction by Luisa Morgantini, Vice President of the European Parliament
- h. 18.45:** Screening of the short movie "**15 seconds**"
- h. 19.00:** Speeches by:
- Raoul Bova**, protagonist and producer of the short movie "15 seconds"
Gianluca Petrazzi, author and director of the short movie "15 seconds"
Hélène Flautre, Chair of the Sub Committee on Human Rights, European Parliament
- h. 19.30:** Open floor for questions/answers
- h. 20.00:** Screening of "**The Reflections**"



STORIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS by Filmmakers, Artists and Writers

Internationally recognized filmmakers, artists and writers, have joined forces to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by contributing to a unique film project promoted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and produced by ART for The World, an NGO based in Geneva and Milan.

The film will be accompanied by a book, published by Electa, and will contain interviews of the film makes and the artists, still frames of the short movies and making-of photographs as well as contributions by twelve authors, including five Nobel prize winners, with reference to six themes of the Declaration. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Khaled Hosseini, Roberto Saviano, Naguib Mafuz, Elfriede Jelinek, Ruth Ozeki, José Saramago, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Assia Djebar, Nuruddin Farah, Toni Morrison are amongst the authors.

This initiative is under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and was made possible thanks to the support of the European Commission, the Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. SESC in Sao Paulo, Brazil. KEA European Affairs and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe in Brussels (UNRIC) also collaborated with the project.

Stories on Human Rights, curated by Adelina von Fürstenberg, together with the ART for The World team have been awarded the label of Cultural Event 2008 of the European Council recognizing a handful of exceptional and innovative artistic project organised in Europe.

Amongst ART for The World's most recent projects are the large neon installation The Language of Equilibrium by Joseph Kosuth in the premises of San Lazzaro Island during the 52nd Venice Biennale, and in Milan, at Hangar Bicocca, the large video exhibition Collateral analysing artists working on the content of cinema, and in 2007-2008 the unique Indian art exhibition Urban Manners. (www.artfortheworld.net)

The 3 minutes long, 23 short movies are inspired by the six themes of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – culture, development, dignity and justice, environment, gender and participation – and have been directed by well known independent film makers and international video artists. Participants have been selected for their renowned artistic qualities and their deep interest in the promotion of Human Rights. Their work is clearly underlines the fundamental themes of Existence and Humanity. Often awarded, they have taken part in major film festivals and art biennale.

Stories on Human Rights is the first large film project binding together artists and film makers in a single project on cinema.

Participating directors and artists are: Marina Abramovic (Serbia/The Netherlands), Hany Abu-Assad (Palestine), Armagan Ballantyne (New Zeland), Sergei Bodrov (Russia), Charles De Meaux (France), Dominique



Gonzalez-Foerster&Ange Leccia (France), Runa Islam (UK/Bangladesh), Francesco Jodice (Italy), Etgar Keret e Shira Geffen (Israel), Zhan Gke Jia (China), Murali Nair (India), Idrissa Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso), Pipilotti Rist (Switzerland), Walter Salles e Daniela Thomas (Brazil), Saman Salour (Iran), Sarkis (France), Bram Schouw (The Netherlands), Teresa Serrano (Mexico), Abderrahmane Sissako (Mauritania), Pablo Trapero (Argentina), Apichatpong Weerasethakul (Thailand), Robert Wilson (USA) e Jasmila Zbanic (Bosnia).

The movies have been shot in more than 15 countries around the world and in different languages. They will exist as a single short movie and will also be presented as a long feature film of 1h and 20 min, subtitled in the six official languages of the UN (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) and in Portuguese.

Five of the short movies will be presented in Brussels at a major inter-institucional conference called "The Defenders take the Floor" on 7 and 8 October, followed by a presentation on 18-24 October at the 21st Tokyo International Film Festival. The long feature, will be seen in avant-premiere in Brazil on November 13 at SESC Pineros in Sao Paulo, and on 10 December, the 60th Anniversary of the Declaration in various cities around the world, in particular:

- Paris at Palais de Chaillot, where the Declaration was signed on 10 December, 1948
- New York at the United Nations building
- Geneva in collaboration with the International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights and the United Nations Department of Public Information

During the following weeks and months, both the short movies and the long-feature film will be screened across the world, especially in film festival, movie houses, schools, museum and cultural institutions, airplanes, mobile cinemas as well as broadcasted on the major TV channels.

ART for The World, together with NABA (Nuova Accademia delle Belle Arti Milano), has also set up a contest to design a poster linked to the project by art students from all over the world. The 6 winning posters (one for each theme) will be adopted as the graphic images for the project and will also be available for download from

www.shakeyourrights.org

In the distance. I saw something moving.
I approached.
I saw an animal.
I came even closer.
I saw a man.
I came even closer.
And I saw he was my brother.

Little Tibetan Tale

6 milliards d'Autres

un projet de Yann Arthus-Bertrand

'6 billion Others', an exhibition in Paris (Grand Palais) from January 16th to February 12th

More than 5 000 interviews, subtitled in English and in French : a sensitive portrait of the Humanity

For over ten years, Yann Arthus-Bertrand has flown over the planet to draw a portrait of the Earth through aerial photographs taken in over one hundred countries.

Flying over the planet gave him a global vision of the world and its frontiers. And yet, very early on, Yann Arthus-Bertrand felt that something was missing from this testimony: the word and insight of Man. To be a true testimony, the picture needed more depth.

Gathering the life experience and philosophy of earth dwellers, their vision of their world through filmed interviews was thus the next step.

The aim of the project '6 billion Others' is to draw a sensitive and human portrait of the Earth, to highlight the universal and the particular in each individual. Teams of cameramen were sent to meet and interview the inhabitants of our Earth.

The questions we posed the individuals are those common to all humanity since the dawn of times. Some comments on mankind's great interrogations have such truth and depth that they elicit immediate response.

Each individual portrait bears some resemblance to each of us. Thought provoking and moving, they induce self-questioning. Through their very diversity, such encounters enrich our scope by opening new perspectives. Do we all aspire to the same happiness? Do we all face the same problems?

Over 5.000 interviews have been filmed in more than 70 countries and will be shown in Paris at the Grand Palais.

During the exhibition, visitors will be able to meet 6 billion Others by listening to their testimonies, with a scenography designed by Guy Claude François. The heart of the exhibition will be composed of interviews which will be screened in an intimate way, in spaces suitable for sharing of secrets.

Visitors will discover testimonies of the people interviewed: their convictions, beliefs, wisdom, moving anecdotes or simply laughter and singing. During the exhibition, visitors will be able to broaden their horizons in an enriching experience, by rubbing shoulders with people whom they would probably never have had the opportunity to meet and by sharing the emotions expressed by them, ranging from more light-hearted comments to their innermost thoughts.

A debate area will welcome visitors to encourage them to talk about the testimonies they saw.

More importantly visitors will also be able to become an integral part of this project; a space will be set aside where anyone who so wishes will be able to answer these key questions and enrich the project by adding their own views.

The Journey of the Blue Cape of Human Rights "Know Your Rights" "Dignity & Justice for all of us"

By Nicola L.



The Blue Cape of Human Rights will be performed at the Place du Luxembourg in Brussels on 7 October around 9 am and inside the European Parliament at the end of the conference on 8 October around noon.



The journey of
THE BLUE CAPE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
around the world

The Blue Cape is an ephemeral and living mobile monument dedicated to each individual in every part of the world...

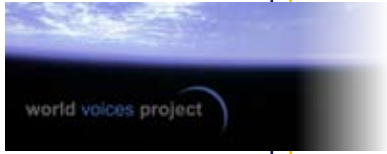
As opposed to existing monuments made of stone or of bronze that are immobile, eternally fastened to the ground, this one is a monument to the journey. It is immense, as twelve people can inhabit it; light, because it is made of cloth

and fits into a large bag that will travel with the artist and a camera crew to meet people around the world and deliver a message to them: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! CONNAISSEZ VOS DROITS!

Universal Human rights have existed for sixty years, we celebrate their 60th anniversary on 10 December 2008, and yet the 30 articles of the Declaration remain largely unknown.

Through out 2008 and 2009, the Blue Cape will be performed and filmed in many countries of Europe and around the world, from Brussels to Dublin, Strasbourg, Berlin, Warsaw, Rome, Barcelona – to Africa, the Middle East, India, Japan, China, Russia, North America, South America, Australia, ending in Antarctica... where the 30 articles will be projected on a giant ice screen.

We propose that the cape become the THE BLUE CAPE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, where in war torn countries it can be used as a monument of peace and a reminder that the Universal Declaration represents Dignity and Justice for all of us.



WORLD VOICES PROJECT

THE SOUND OF NEARLY 50 VOICES FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES FEATURING THE READING OF EXCERPTS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

An engaging and poetic sound installation created by artist Brenda Ray, this project is a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights www.worldvoicesproject.com.

Brenda Ray began the World Voices Project two years ago, and the project continues to evolve. She has interviewed friends, colleagues and artists from different countries, covering nearly 50 nations and different languages. Among the many voice recordings are languages such as Tigrinya of Eritrea, Amharic of Ethiopia, Mongolian, Zulu and Shona of Zimbabwe.

Letting each voice speak for itself, Ray taped the readings with little treatment.

"Voices move me. To me, hearing a language I do not speak is like looking at a painting; it takes me on an unexpected journey," states Ray. "I've recorded these voices to alert people that despite the signing of the Declaration of Human Rights 60 years ago, numerous countries continue to violate the tenets of the Declaration," she says. "The World Voices Project is an effort to remind anyone who cares to listen that these rights are for us all; no matter what religion, language, gender, race, social class or income level; when it comes to human rights, we speak with one voice."

Ray continues to work on this project, with the goal to include every spoken language. Volunteers who would like to be recorded for this project may contact the artist at: 212.477.0961.

Brenda Ray is a film sound recordist and has worked on countless commercial and documentary films since 1982, including most recently,

Glass: A Portrait of Philip in Twelve Parts, a film about the life of composer Philip Glass, directed by Scott Hicks;

Taxi to the Dark Side, the Academy Award Winner/Best Documentary '08, directed by Alex Gibney;

Julian Schnabel: An HBO Portrait, directed by Karen Goodman and Kirk Simon, among other films. Previous audio art work includes Our Dreams (2006), a musical audio track incorporating ten voices that describe their favorite memories, dreams, loves, and what makes them laugh.

Warsaw-Dakar (2007) is a techno-trance piece incorporating French, Polish, English and Walof.

la Paix

« Dessins pour la Paix » est une initiative née à New York le 16 octobre 2006 au Siège des Nations Unies à la suite de plusieurs rencontres entre le dessinateur français Plantu et le Secrétaire général des Nations Unies, Kofi Annan.

Ce jour-là, douze des plus célèbres dessinateurs de presse du monde entier se sont réunis pour débattre du rôle du dessin de presse et de la caricature comme moyen d'expression et de communication immédiat, sans barrière linguistique, au service de la tolérance et de la paix.

Les artistes de « Dessins pour la Paix » se sont engagés à promouvoir la paix et la tolérance à travers leurs travaux.

Ainsi, depuis le lancement de cette initiative, de nombreuses expositions et débats ont eu lieu notamment au Siège des Nations Unies à New York puis à Genève, au Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication à Paris, au Centre Belge de la Bande dessinée à Bruxelles, à Saint-Just-Le-Martel (France) lors du Salon annuel du dessin de presse, à Antibes (France), puis en novembre et décembre à Atlanta (États-Unis) et Rome (Italie).

Le succès rencontré par cette initiative a donné lieu à la création de la Fondation « Dessins pour la Paix - Cartooning for Peace ».

Comme le précise le dessinateur français Plantu, à l'origine du projet, « le dessin de presse est un véritable baromètre de la liberté d'expression en général et permet de faire passer au public des messages de tolérance et de paix dans différentes cultures ».

La Fondation « Dessins pour la Paix » permettra la rencontre de caricaturistes de toutes les nationalités afin de favoriser les échanges sur la liberté d'expression ainsi que la reconnaissance du travail journalistique des dessinateurs de presse.

L'emblème de la colombe dessiné par Plantu a été adopté par l'ensemble des dessinateurs pour illustrer ce projet.

Dans un second temps, la Fondation offrira protection et assistance juridique aux dessinateurs de presse travaillant dans des contextes difficiles et leur apportera soutien et conseils dans l'exercice de leur métier.



LES PAYS ARABES DECOUVRENT LES SIMPSON



www.knowyourrights2008.org

Join the Campaign

2008 is the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Join the UN's yearlong campaign to mark this anniversary. You can do so by downloading the 60th anniversary logo, or by signing the Declaration. Post your projects and initiatives on this website and see what other are planning. Work in partnership with us and initiate one of the projects already posted on KYR in your country.

The French government has joined the campaign and has announced many related events, to see the events planned in France, go to: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr

As of July 2008, the Know your Rights website was launched in eight European languages and in the user-friendly html version.

Meet the UN's Special Rapporteurs and hear their messages by clicking on Facts. Watch testimonies from people around the world on 6 billion Others, or listen to the Declaration in different languages or in rap music.

KYR is a market place of ideas, we are looking forward to seeing yours.

Le Petit Prince of of the Antoine de St. Exupery's world famous novel is the SpokesPrince for the KnowYourRights2008 campaign

The screenshot shows the homepage of the KnowYourRights2008 website. The layout is clean and user-friendly, with a central focus on the Earth. The top navigation bar includes links for 'UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS', 'SPREAD THE WORD', 'PARTNERS & LINKS', 'WALL OF EVENTS', 'CHILDREN'S CORNER', 'NEWS', and 'FACTS'. A large '60' logo is prominently displayed. The main content area includes a 'Join the Campaign' section on the left, a 'WALL OF EVENTS' section on the right, and a 'NEWS' section at the bottom. A 'Le Petit Prince' character is visible in the bottom right corner of the page.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Simplified version)

1. All Human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.
2. All people are entitled to rights without distinction based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, property, birth or residency.
3. Right to life liberty and security of person
4. Freedom from slavery.
5. Freedom from torture.
6. Right to be treated equally by the law.
7. Right to equal protection by the law.
8. Right for all to effective remedy by competent tribunal.
9. Freedom from arbitrary arrest.
10. Right to fair public hearing by Independent tribunal.
11. Right to presumption of innocence until proven guilty at public trial with all guarantees necessary for defence.
12. Right to privacy in home, family and correspondence.
13. Freedom of movement in your own country and the right to leave and return to any countries.
14. Right to political asylum in other countries.
15. Right to nationality.
16. Right to marriage and family and to equal right of men and women during and after marriage.
17. Right to own property.
18. Freedom of thought and conscience and religion.
19. Freedom of opinion and expression and to seek, receive and impart information.
20. Freedom of Association and assembly.
21. Right to take part in and select government.
22. Right to social security and realisation of economic, social and cultural rights.
23. Right to work, to equal pay for equal work and to form and join trade unions.
24. Right to reasonable hours of work and paid holidays.
25. Right to adequate living standard for self and family, including food, housing, clothing, medical care and social security.
26. Right to education.
27. Right to participate in cultural life and to protect intellectual property rights.
28. Right to social and international order permitting these freedoms to be realized.
29. Each person has responsibilities to the community and others as essential for a democratic society.
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.

Disclaimer: Your rights made simple is given only as a guide. For an exact rendering of each principle please refer to www.unric.org. Due to difficulties in Translation, the original Article 30 was used in all simplified versions.