



## Human Rights December 2007

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Human Rights are worldwide standards that help to defend all persons from severe political, legal, and social maltreatment. When human rights are not well known by people, abuses such as discrimination, intolerance, injustice, oppression and slavery can arise. **Some** examples of human rights are having the right to freedom of religion, freedom of speech, the right to fair trial when charged with a crime, the right not to be tortured, and the right to engage in all political activity. These rights exist in the law and in moral codes at both the national and international levels. The main source of the present-day idea of human rights comes from the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and the many human rights documents and treaties which followed (such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, and the African Union).

UN Millennium Goals

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/goals.html>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/udhr.html>

### HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

In the 1950's the United Nations General Assembly adopted December 10 of each year as Human Rights Day, inviting all states and organizations interested to adopt it as well. Human Rights Day commemorates the day in 1948 the UNGA adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### HUMAN RIGHTS ESTABLISHMENTS

Organizations in Human Rights address issues such as, preserving the broad constitutional rights and civil liberties of individuals and those suffering from neglect, ill-treatment, and exploitation; promoting the interests of specific groups, such as children, women, senior citizens, or those with disabilities; improving relations between racial, ethnic, and cultural groups; and stressing voter education and registration.

Human Rights Organizations

<http://www.hrweb.org/orgs.html>

Amnesty International

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

<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/aboutai-index-eng>

<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/aboutai-recs-eng>

Electronic Frontier Foundation

<http://www.eff.org/about>

<http://www.eff.org/work>

Youth for Human Rights

<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/introduction/index.html>

<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/about/faq.html>

Youth for Human Rights asked 19 year old, Taron Lexton, to create a human rights music video (UNITED). This music video depicts an inner-city kid with a heart for basketball who is confronted by a gang of bullies and their leader, and has to fight for his right to play. What makes UNITED a great human rights video is how the main character accomplishes this, without violence. UNITED is an emotionally charged human rights music video unlike any other. Its production included a 45,000-mile

world tour covering four continents and 13 countries. Two thousand volunteers, including 150 actors, contributed their time to this global endeavor.

The link below is the link to the UNITED music video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCJB5B4meQQ>

Not only did Taron create a music video, but he made 30 Public Service Announcements, each one depicting a different article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These PSA's aired on over 1,000 TV stations around the world, as well as on screens at gas stations in Johannesburg, South Africa; in 64 theatres in Buffalo, New York State, and on two dozen screens in the largest bookstore chain in Rome. They are being played in city store front windows in London and on a bus line in Frankfurt, Germany. The 30 PSA's premiered last August as part of an international human rights summit held at United Nations headquarters, where they received a standing ovation from UN officials and human rights delegates representing 49 nations. The uses for these messages are limitless.

These PSAs are part of a package of the audio visual and written materials produced by Youth for Human Rights International.

Watch the PSA's

<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/watchads/index.html>

**Institute for Global Communications**

<http://www.igc.org/index.html>

**US Department of State – The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor**

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/>

**Human Rights Campaign**

[http://www.hrc.org/about\\_us/what\\_we\\_do.asp](http://www.hrc.org/about_us/what_we_do.asp)

**Human Rights First**

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

**Human Rights Watch**

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

<http://www.hrwatch.org/about/>

Below are some specific issues that are of concern to Human Rights Watch. These issues have been presented to encourage advocacy efforts, and are updated to reflect current developments.

For a complete list go to:

<http://www.hrwatch.org/advocacy/index.htm>

## **AIDS**

“40 million people are living with HIV. Its destructive force is fueled by a wide range of human rights violations. Such violations include sexual violence and coercion faced by women and girls, stigmatization of men who have sex with men, abuses against sex workers and injecting drug users, and violations of the right of young persons to information on HIV transmission. Human rights violations only add to the stigmatization of persons at highest risk of infection and thus marginalize and drive underground those most in need of information, preventive services, and treatment.”

[http://hrw.org/doc/?t=hivaid&document\\_limit=0,2](http://hrw.org/doc/?t=hivaid&document_limit=0,2)

**AIDS awareness Day/Month info**

**Month:** December

**Day:** December 1, 2007

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

## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

"Human Rights Watch investigates many kinds of human rights abuses against children: the use of children as soldiers; different forms of child labor; torture of children by police; police violence against street children; conditions in correctional institutions and orphanages; corporal punishment in schools; mistreatment of refugee and migrant children; trafficking of children for labor and prostitution; discrimination in education because of race, gender, sexual orientation, or HIV/AIDS; and physical and sexual violence against girls and boys. Children's physical and intellectual immaturity makes them particularly vulnerable to human rights violations. Their ill-treatment calls for special attention because, for the most part, children cannot speak for themselves, their opinions are seldom taken into account and they can only rarely form their own organizations to work for change."

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=children>

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

"Millions of women throughout the world live in conditions of abject deprivation of, and attacks against, their fundamental human rights for no other reason than that they are women... The Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch fights against the dehumanization and marginalization of women. HRW promotes women's equal rights and human dignity. The realization of women's rights is a global struggle based on universal human rights and the rule of law. It requires all of us to unite in solidarity to end traditions, practices, and laws that harm women. It is a fight for freedom to be fully and completely human and equal without apology or permission. Ultimately, the struggle for women's human rights must be about making women's lives matter everywhere all the time. In practice, this means taking action to stop discrimination and violence against women."

<http://www.hrw.org/women/>

## REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

"A refugee is someone with a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, who is outside of his or her country of nationality and unable or unwilling to return. Refugees are forced from their countries by war, civil conflict, political strife or gross human rights abuses. There were an estimated 14.9 million refugees in the world in 2001 - people who had crossed an international border to seek safety - and at least 22 million internally displaced persons (IDP's) who had been uprooted within their own countries... Human Rights Watch believes that the right to asylum is a matter of life and death and cannot be compromised. In their work to stop human rights abuses in countries around the world, they seek to address the root causes that force people to flee. We also advocate for greater protection for refugees and IDP's and for an end to the abuses they suffer when they reach supposed safety. Human Rights Watch calls on the United Nations and on governments everywhere to uphold their obligations to protect refugees and to respect their rights - regardless of where they are from or where they seek refuge."

[http://hrw.org/doc/?t=refugees&document\\_limit=0,2](http://hrw.org/doc/?t=refugees&document_limit=0,2)

## ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

"International human rights law requires governments to respect individuals' civil and political rights - such as their rights to free speech, fair trial, and political participation - and to promote their economic, social, and cultural rights - such as their rights to health care and education. Since its formation in 1978, Human Rights Watch has focused mainly on upholding civil and political rights, but in recent years they have increasingly addressed economic, social and cultural rights as well. They focus particularly on situations in which their methodology of investigation and reporting is most effective, such as when arbitrary or discriminatory governmental conduct lies behind an economic, social and cultural rights violation."

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=esc>

## LESBIAN. GAY. BISEXUAL. AND TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

“Sexual orientation and gender identity are integral aspects of our selves and should never lead to discrimination or abuse. Human Rights Watch works for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people’s rights, with activists representing a multiplicity of identities and issues. They document and expose abuses based on sexual orientation and gender identity worldwide – including torture, killing and executions, arrests under unjust laws, unequal treatment, censorship, medical abuses, discrimination in health and jobs and housing, domestic violence, abuses against children, and denial of family rights and recognition. They advocate for laws and policies that protect everyone’s dignity. They work for a world where all people can enjoy their rights fully.”

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=lgbt>

**Have a safe and happy holiday from everyone at the Leadership and Service Center!**

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