



UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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Abstract

A wide spectrum of universally recognized rights, such as civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights, have been defined by the United Nations. Additionally, it has put in place systems to support and safeguard these rights and help governments fulfil their obligations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Charter, both ratified by the General Assembly in 1945 and 1948, serve as the cornerstones of this corpus of law. Since that time, the UN has gradually broadened the definition of human rights law to include specific requirements for women, children, people with disabilities, minorities, and other vulnerable groups. As a result, these groups now have rights that shield them from the discrimination that was once pervasive in many societies.

All people have the same basic legal rights, regardless of their gender, color, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other distinction. Human rights cover a wide range of rights, such as the freedom from slavery and torture, the right to life and liberty, the freedom of speech, the right to a job and an education, among many more. These rights apply to everyone without exception. The article focused on role of United Nations with respect to Human Rights.

Keywords: Human Rights, Cultural, Economic, Political, Social rights, Disabilities, Minorities.

Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an ideal norm that all countries adhere to, but it has no legal standing. Therefore, from 1948 to 1966, the primary responsibility of the UN Human Rights Commission was to develop an international body of human rights law based on the Declaration and to set up the enforcement mechanisms required to ensure its application and execution. Mertus, J. A., & Mertus, J. (2010).

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights are two significant texts produced by the Human Rights Commission (ICESCR). In 1976, both were made international law. These two pacts make up what is known as the "International Bill of Human Rights," along with the



Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to life, freedom of speech, religion, and the right to vote are among the topics covered by the ICCPR. ICESCR prioritizes housing, food, health, and education. Both covenants state that everyone has these rights and prevent discrimination. Freedman, R. (2013).

Furthermore, the UN Human Rights Committee was established by Article 26 of the ICCPR. The Committee, which is made up of eighteen human rights specialists, is in charge of making sure that the ICCPR's rules are followed by every signatory. Every five years, the committee reviews the reports that nations submit (to make sure they are following the ICCPR) and gives findings based on how each nation performed.

The Human Rights Committee may look into claims made by people and organizations that the State has violated human rights, according to several nations that ratified the ICCPR. The complaint must use up all available legal options before making an appeal to the Committee. The Committee makes the findings public following an investigation. These conclusions hold a lot of weight. The State is required to take action to stop the abuse if the Committee upholds the charges. Forsythe, D. P. (1985).

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a statement that safeguards the rights of every person, wherever. It serves as a global road map for equality and freedom. It was the first time that nations came to an understanding regarding the freedoms and rights that need to be universally protected in order for each person to live their life in freedom, equality, and dignity.

Thirty rights and freedoms are listed in the Declaration as being universal and unalienable. The included rights still serve as the cornerstone of international human rights law. The Declaration is still in effect today. It is the text that has been translated the most globally. Kedzia, Z. (2009).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) applies to all individuals, in all nations around the world, as its name implies. The preservation of the rights and liberties outlined in the Declaration has been integrated into numerous national constitutions and domestic legal frameworks, despite the fact that it is not legally binding.

The Declaration has also served as the cornerstone upon which a plethora of other legally binding human rights agreements have been created, and it has evolved into a clear standard for the universal human rights principles that must be advocated and safeguarded in every nation. National and international legislation and standards continue to be built upon the



UDHR. It serves as a source of motivation for groups like Amnesty that are dedicated to defending and advancing human rights. Pritchard, S. (Ed.). (1998).

A key document in the development of human rights is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The Declaration, which was written by representatives from all over the world with diverse legal and cultural backgrounds, was adopted as a universal benchmark of success for all peoples and all countries by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948, through General Assembly resolution 217 A (III). It lays out fundamental human rights that must be universally guaranteed for the first time. Heyns, C., & Viljoen, F. (Eds.). (2021).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the most translated document in history since its adoption in 1948, has served as the model for the constitutions of numerous newly independent States and numerous new democracies. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, along with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and their respective Optional Protocols, constitute the so-called International Bill of Human Rights. Hopgood, S. (2013).

Civil and political rights

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its First Optional Protocol entered into force in 1976. The Second Optional Protocol was adopted in 1989.

The Covenant addresses rights like freedom of movement, equality before the law, the right to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence, freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly, freedom of association, involvement in public affairs, and election protection. It forbids the arbitrary taking of life, torture, harsh or inhumane treatment, or punishment, forced labor, slavery, arbitrary detention or arrest, invasion of privacy, war propaganda, discrimination, and the promotion of racial or religious hatred. Bueno de Mesquita, J., & Kismödi, E. (2012).

Human Rights Conventions

The implementation of the main international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, is overseen by ten human rights treaty bodies, which are committees of impartial experts. The Universal Periodic Review, conducted by the United Nations Human Rights Council, examines each Member State's record on human rights. Each State has the chance to announce the steps they have done to better the human rights situation



in their nation and to uphold their human rights duties through this State-driven procedure. Knox, J. H. (2009).

Since 1945, a number of international human rights treaties and other laws have been passed, adding to the body of international human rights law. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) are a few of them.

Human Rights Council

The 60-year-old UN Commission on Human Rights was replaced as the primary UN intergovernmental body in charge of human rights on March 15, 2006, when the General Assembly formed the Human Rights Council and gave it direct reporting responsibility. The Council, which is composed of 47 State representatives, has the responsibility of addressing instances of human rights violations and making recommendations on them, including responding to human rights emergencies, in order to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights all over the world. Mégret, F., & Alston, P. (Eds.). (2020).

The Universal Periodic Review is the Human Rights Council's most novel feature. The 193 UN member states' human rights records are examined every four years as part of this special procedure. Under the direction of the Council, the Review is a cooperative, state-driven process that gives each state the chance to present the steps they have taken and obstacles they still need to overcome in order to better the human rights situation in their nation and uphold their international obligations. The Review aims to guarantee inclusivity and fair treatment for all nations. Therien, J. P., & Joly, P. (2014).

Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council (UPR)

Every 4.5 years, all 193 UN Member States are subject to a review of their human rights records as part of the Human Rights Council's (HRC) Universal Periodic Review (UPR). States that are being evaluated can outline the steps they have done to advance the state of human rights in their nation as well as the difficulties and limitations they are currently dealing with. The other Member States then get the chance to congratulate the State on its accomplishments, voice their concerns, and eventually make suggestions for continued development. 42 States are examined annually, with each receiving an average of 180 suggestions. Three documents serve as the foundation for the review: The State's Report, A



summary of Stakeholder reports and, A compilation of UN information. Darrow, M., & Arbour, L. (2009).

UNHCR frequently publishes public comments on the States under evaluation. These submissions assist in gathering information for the UN. A Final Report of the Working Group is adopted following a State's review (or "Working Group" session), and it contains all of the recommendations the State has received. Then, states may "note" these recommendations or "support" them and pledge to put them into practice. Rodley, N. S. (2016).

Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council

The Special Procedures mandate holders are constituted of five people designated by the Council to serve in their individual capacities as special rapporteurs, independent experts, or working groups. They could be given mandates that are either country- or theme-specific. They travel to other countries, act/intervene with States on specific issues and/or more general human rights conditions, conduct thematic research and publish yearly reports, educate the public, and offer guidance for technical collaboration. The experts give a report on their conclusions and suggestions to the Council and the UN General Assembly at least once a year. Alston, P. (1991).

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The primary authority for UN human rights initiatives rests with the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The High Commissioner is tasked with both responding to grave human rights abuses and taking preventative measures.

The focal point for all UN human rights initiatives is the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It serves as the secretariat for the UN's Human Rights Council, treaty bodies, and other human rights organisations. It also engages in practical human rights actions.

The majority of the fundamental human rights treaties have oversight bodies tasked with monitoring how the ratifying nations are carrying out their obligations under the treaty. People who believe their rights have been violated can report directly to the committees in charge of monitoring human rights treaties. De Zayas, A. (2010).

Human Rights and the UN System

All UN programmes and initiatives in the crucial fields of peace and security, development, humanitarian aid, and economic and social concerns all include human rights as a central element. As a result, almost all UN organisations and specialised agencies have some involvement in defending human rights. Examples include the right to development, which



forms the basis of the Sustainable Development Goals, the right to food, which is promoted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the right to labour, which is outlined and upheld by the International Labour Organization, the right to gender equality, which is promoted by UN Women, and the rights of children, indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities. The 10th of December is designated as Human Rights Day each year. Katayanagi, M. (2002).

Conclusion

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights serves as the "universal benchmark for success for all peoples and all states." The family is referred to as "the natural and essential group unit of society" in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which also declares that "motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and aid." Human rights today plays an undeniable role in preserving regional, national, and international stability, peace, and security. Human rights must be upheld across the entire educational system and in all learning situations in order for education to be of high quality. At the national level, the coordinating department or unit designated by each country's ministry of education would collaborate closely with pertinent national organizations in charge of drafting country reports to United Nations treaty bodies to make sure that advancements in human rights education are reflected in those reports. Human rights education is necessary for the United Nations' efforts at the international level to maintain peace.

The United Nations and human rights have a crucial position. One of the goals of the UN is to promote and encourage respect for human rights for everyone without regard to race, sex, language, or religion. Another goal is to solve global issues of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian nature through international cooperation. Nearly all of the measures of implementation for the protection and enforcement of human rights are provided by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

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