

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

### KEY DATES

AI INDEX: ACT 30/023/2008

DATE: 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2008

- 1948** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations
- 1951** The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is adopted
- 1961** Peter Benenson launches an “Appeal for Amnesty” with the publication of “The Forgotten Prisoners” in the Observer newspaper, later published in various newspapers around the world. So begins Amnesty International
- 1963** The International Secretariat, Amnesty International’s headquarters, is established in London
- 1964** The United Nations grants Amnesty International consultative status
- 1965** The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination is adopted
- 1966** The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are adopted
- The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is adopted enabling the Human Rights Committee to receive and consider complaints from individuals
- 1967** The Protocol to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is adopted, ensuring protection for refugees around the world into the future
- 1972** Amnesty International launches its first worldwide campaign to abolish torture
- 1973** The UN General Assembly adopts the first ever resolution (Resolution 3059) denouncing torture, following Amnesty International’s campaign

**1975** The UN General Assembly unanimously adopts the Declaration against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as campaigned for by Amnesty International

- 1977** Amnesty International is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for “having contributed to securing the grounds for freedom, for justice, and thereby also for peace in the world”
- Amnesty International holds a conference which results in the Stockholm Declaration on the death penalty, calling on all governments “to bring about the immediate and total abolition of the death penalty”
- 1978** Amnesty International wins UN Prize in the Field of Human Rights Human Rights award for “outstanding contributions in the field of human rights”
- 1979** The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is adopted
- 1980** The first UN thematic mechanism, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances is created
- Amnesty International launches its first campaign against the death penalty
- 1983** More than one million signatures handed to the UN on Human Rights Day in a global appeal for a universal amnesty for all prisoners of conscience
- 1984** The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is adopted
- The Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty is adopted
- 1988** The Body of Principles for the Protection of All persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment is adopted
- 1989** The Convention on the Rights of the Child is adopted
- The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty is adopted , at the same time Amnesty International launches its second campaign against the death penalty
- 1990** The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families is adopted
- The Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials are adopted
- 1993** The World Conference on Human Rights adopts the Vienna Declaration and Program for Action confirming that “all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated”
- Establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human rights, after persistent campaigning by Amnesty International
- 1995** The Fourth World Conference on Women adopts the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action confirming that “women’s rights are human rights”

- 1997** Amnesty International's Secretary General brings human rights concerns to the attention of the UN Security Council for the first time, under the "Arria Formula"
- 1998** The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is adopted after persistent campaigning by Amnesty International
- 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 (Declaration on Human Rights Defenders) is adopted by the General Assembly
- 1999** The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women is adopted to enable the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women to receive and consider by individuals or groups
- Amnesty International starts global campaign to prevent the proliferation of small arms
- 2000** The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict is adopted
- The Optional Protocol to the convention on the Rights of the child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography is adopted
- UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security is adopted in a landmark decision recognizing women's unique role in conflict-resolution and peace-building, following intense lobbying by Amnesty International and women's groups
- 2002** The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is adopted
- The International Criminal Court is established with its official seat in The Hague
- 2004** Amnesty International launches a global campaign to stop violence against women
- 2005** The Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law are adopted
- 2006** The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance is adopted
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol are adopted
- The UN Human Rights Council is established to replace the Commission on Human Rights
- The General Assembly vote overwhelmingly to start work toward an International Arms Trade Treaty, as promoted by the Control Arms campaign
- 2007** The General Assembly adopts the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The General Assembly adopts the first-ever resolution calling for a global moratorium of the use of the death penalty

**2008** The General Assembly adopts the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, enabling the Committee to receive and consider complaints from groups and individuals

The Optional Protocol introduced by Portugal will be presented for final adoption by the General Assembly in plenary session on 10 December, the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights