

# **Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples**

**Algiers, 4 July 1976**

## **Preamble**

We live at a time of great hopes and deep despair; a time of conflicts and contradictions; a time when liberation struggle have succeeded in arousing the peoples of the world against the domestic and international structures of imperialism and in overturning colonial systems; a time of struggle and victory in which new ideals of justice among and within nations have been adopted; a time when the General Assembly of the United Nations has given increasing expression, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the Charter on the Economic and Social Rights and Duties of States, to the quest for a new international, political and economic order.

But this is also a time of frustration and defeat, as new forms of imperialism evolve to oppress and exploit the peoples of the world. Imperialism, using vicious methods, with the complicity of governments that it has itself often installed, continues to dominate a part of the world. Through direct or indirect intervention, through multinational enterprises, through manipulation of corrupt local politicians, with the assistance of military regimes based on police repression, torture and physical extermination of opponents, through a set of practices that has become known as neo-colonialism, imperialism extends its stranglehold over many peoples.

Aware of expressing the aspirations of our era, we met in Algiers to proclaim that all the peoples of the world have an equal right to liberty, the right to free themselves from any foreign interference and to choose their own government, the right if they are under subjection, to fight for their liberation and the right to benefit from other peoples' assistance in their struggle.

Convinced that the effective respect for human rights necessarily implies respect for the rights of the peoples, we have adopted the Universal Declaration for the Rights of Peoples.

May all those who, throughout the world, are fighting the great battle, at times through armed struggle, for the freedom of all peoples, find in this Declaration the assurance of the legitimacy of their struggle.

## **Section I. Right to Existence**

### **Article 1**

Every people has the right to existence.

### **Article 2**

Every people has the right to the respect of its national and cultural identity.

### **Article 3**

Every people has the right to retain peaceful possession of its territory and to return to it if it is expelled.

### **Article 4**

None shall be subjected, because of his national or cultural identity, to massacre, torture, persecution, deportation, expulsion or living conditions such as may compromise the identity or integrity of the people to which belongs.

## **Section II. Right to Political Self-determination**

### **Article 5**

Every people has an imprescriptible and unalienable right to self-determination. It shall determine its political status freely and without any foreign interference.

#### **Article 6**

Every people has the right to break free from any colonial or foreign domination, whether direct or indirect, and from any racist regime.

#### **Article 7**

Every people has the right to have democratic government representing all the citizens without distinction as race, sex, belief or colour, and capable of ensuring effective respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

### **Section III: Economic Rights of Peoples**

#### **Article 8**

Every people has an exclusive right over its natural wealth and resources. It has the right to recover them if they have been despoiled, as well as any unjustly paid indemnities.

#### **Article 9**

Scientific and technical progress being part of the common heritage of mankind, every people has the right to participate in it.

#### **Article 10**

Every people has the right to a fair evaluation of its labour and to equal and just terms in international trade.

#### **Article 11**

Every people has the right to choose its own economic and social system and pursue its own path to economic development freely and without any foreign interference.

#### **Article 12**

The economic rights set forth shall be exercised in a spirit of solidarity amongst the peoples of the world and with due regard for their respective interests.

### **Section IV. Right to Culture**

#### **Article 13**

Every people has the right to speak its own language and preserve and develop its own culture, thereby contributing to the enrichment of the culture of mankind.

#### **Article 14**

Every people has the right to its artistic, historical and cultural wealth.

#### **Article 15**

Every people has the right not to have an alien culture imposed upon it.

### **Section V. Right to Environment and Common Resources**

#### **Article 16**

Every people has the right to the conservation, protection and improvement of its environment.

#### **Article 17**

Every people has the right to make use of the common heritage of mankind, such as the high seas, the sea-bed, and outer space.

#### **Article 18**

In the exercise of the preceding rights every people shall take account of the necessity for coordinating the requirements of its economic development with solidarity amongst all the peoples of the world.

### **Section VI. Rights of Minorities**

#### **Article 19**

When a people constitutes a minority within a State it has the right to respect for its identity, traditions, language and cultural heritage.

#### **Article 20**

The members of a minority shall enjoy without discrimination the same rights as the other citizens of the State and shall participate on an equal footing with them in public life.

#### **Article 21**

These rights shall be exercised with due respect for the legitimate interests of the community as a whole and cannot authorise impairing the territorial integrity and political unity of State, provided the State acts in accordance with all the principles set forth in this Declaration.

### **Section VII. Guarantees and Sanctions**

#### **Article 22**

Any disregard for the provisions of this Declaration constitutes a breach of obligations towards the international community as a whole.

#### **Article 23**

Any prejudice resulting from disregard for this Declaration must be totally compensated by whoever caused it.

#### **Article 24**

Any enrichment to the detriment of the people in violation of the provision of this Declaration shall give rise to the restitution of profits thus obtained. The same shall be applied to all excessive profits on investments of foreign origin.

#### **Article 25**

Any equal treaties, agreements or contracts concluded in disregard of the fundamental rights of peoples shall have no effect.

#### **Article 26**

External financial charges which become excessive and unbearable for people shall cease to be due.

#### **Article 27**

The gravest violations of the fundamental rights of the peoples, especially of their right to existence, constitute international crimes for which their perpetrators shall carry personal penal liability.

#### **Article 28**

Any people whose fundamental rights are seriously disregarded has the right to enforce them, specially by political or trade union struggle and even, in the last resort by the use of force.

#### **Article 29**

Liberation movements shall have access to international organisations and their combatants are entitled to the protection of the humanitarian law of war.

#### **Article 30**

The re-establishment of the fundamental rights of peoples, when they are seriously disregarded, is a duty incumbent upon all members of the international community.