

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**

**10 December 2023**

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

The iconic opening sentence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is as important today as it was when it was adopted 75 years ago.

The Universal Declaration is a roadmap, helping to end wars, heal divisions and promote lives of peace and dignity for all.

But the world is losing its way. Conflicts are raging. Poverty and hunger are increasing. Inequalities are deepening. The climate crisis is a human rights crisis that is hitting the most vulnerable hardest.

Authoritarianism is on the rise.

Civic space is shrinking and the media is under attack from all sides.

Gender equality remains a distant dream and women’s reproductive rights are being rolled back.

Today, it is more important than ever to promote and respect all human rights – social, cultural, economic, civil and political – which protect us all.

The Universal Declaration shows the way to common values and approaches that can help resolve tensions and create the security and stability our world craves.

As we work to update global frameworks and make them more effective in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, human rights must have a unique and central role.

I call on Member States to use this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and the Summit of the Future next year, to strengthen their commitment to the timeless values of the Universal Declaration.

And on Human Rights Day, I urge people around the world to promote and respect human rights, every day, for everyone, everywhere.

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