



Indian Diaspora Council

## Indian Diaspora Council International

*Shared heritage, aspirations and interests*

[www.IndianDiasporaCouncil.org](http://www.IndianDiasporaCouncil.org)

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### PRESS RELEASE

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### Observance of World Human Rights Day 2021

The **Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC)**, in collaboration with its global membership and affiliates, is pleased to join with other organizations, associations, agencies and individuals in observance of the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of World Human Rights Day on December 10, 2021 stipulating universal values and a shared standard of achievement for everyone in every country.



**Human Rights Day** “commemorates the day the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UDHR is one of UN’s major achievements as well as the first enunciation of human rights across the world. Adopted on 10th December 1948, the Declaration stipulates universal values and a shared standard of achievement for everyone in every country”.

“The Declaration of Human Rights has inspired over 60 human rights instruments making it a common standard of human rights, and is the most translated document around the globe in over 500 languages.

“The year 2021 of **Human Rights Day** marked the beginning of a year-long celebration of 73 years since the international community adopted the Declaration – celebrating all our inalienable rights and freedoms including a right to education, a decent living, health care and a right to live free from any form of discrimination among others. Despite the efforts to protect human rights, the hostility toward human rights and those who defend them continues to rise.

“As a result, this year’s **Human Rights Day** advocates for everyone to stand up for their rights and those of others – civil, economic, political and cultural rights. Additionally, the day aims to enlighten us about how our rights are a foundation of sustainable development and peaceful societies. The day also acknowledges the advocates and defenders of human rights around the world.

#### **2021 Theme: EQUALITY - Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights**

This year’s Human Rights Day theme relates to 'Equality' and Article 1 of the UDHR – “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. “The principles of equality and non-discrimination are at the heart of human rights. Equality is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and with the UN approach set out in the document **Shared Framework on Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development**. This includes addressing and finding solutions for deep-rooted forms of discrimination that have affected the most vulnerable people in societies, including women and girls, indigenous peoples, people of African descent, LGBTI people, migrants and people with disabilities, among others. Equality, inclusion and non-discrimination, in other words - a human rights-based approach to development - is the best way to reduce inequalities and resume our path towards realising the 2030 Agenda”.

- **A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED ECONOMY CAN BREAK CYCLES OF POVERTY**
- **REBUILDING FAIRER: A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT**
- **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH**
- **REVERSING VACCINE INEQUALITY AND INJUSTICE**
- **ADVANCING THE RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE JUSTICE**
- **PREVENTING CONFLICT AND BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Dr. Sharla Madho-Khargi** (New York, USA)

“All men are created equal.” This sentence is one of the core beliefs America was founded on; inequality. For hundreds of years after this, inequality is still at the forefront of American society. It has divided people who choose to remain ignorant to the struggles of the minority - those who aren't considered “equal.” In the last 2 decades, the fight for human rights have made significant strides in normalizing the “abnormal” and accepting the “unaccepted.” Even the few rights marginalized groups posse are constantly juggled based on what the overwhelming majority decides we can have. It should be enough that we are human. Those who say “I don't see color” are blind to the truth. Those who say they avoid being political are blind to the truth. Being human should always be the only thing that qualifies us for inalienable, irrevocable, and equal rights.

*Credit to J. Tyler Khargi and Matthew N. Sirju*

**Rita Abraham** (Durban, South Africa)

The Right to Participate in your community: All citizens have right to participate in their life of the community but more often than not, this right means nothing when the democratic process breaks down because of favouritism or corruption. This obstructs the legitimate sharing of power but also prevents people of the community from benefitting equally to services, empowerment or even assets, to which everyone has a right. At times when elections are being manipulated to ensure victory to certain persons or organization, there should be a serious consequences to this legal and upfront democracy that every human in the world is entitled to, citizen do not only have a right but a responsibility to participate in their community to fulfil their interest and desires. Moreover participation is the core of human rights based approach to development and to poverty reduction.

When a person or persons are prevented from exercising their responsibility not only do, they lose hope of playing any effective role they also succumb to an attitude of indifferences. The development of any democratic system becomes impossible which is violation to human dignity. Let us share love – In love the secret of respect is found in every man and every woman.

**Khalil Ali** (London, UK)

“Inequalities across the world have increased, and became more pronounced due to the Covid-19 pandemic of the last two years. Add to this the growing challenges being faced by the poorest, due to the impact of climate change on their very existence and human rights, it is clear that much more needs to be done to protect and sustain the rights of the most vulnerable of our societies. Alongside this are the growing evil and curse of racism, discrimination, modern slavery, and the displacement of children and their families due to conflicts. Protection of, and fight for, our human rights are now more important than ever.”

**Mehen Poinosawmy** (Paris, France)

**EQUALITY-REDUCING INEQUALITIES, ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Human Rights Day 2021 theme is based on "EQUALITY-REDUCING INEQUALITIES, ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS » and this COVID-19 pandemic which has ravaged many nations has taught us great lessons about humanity which will certainly make us revise our priorities so that everybody can lead a better life. Every human life is a precious gift from God and we must learn to love each other. The whole of humanity has suffered from this COVID-19 pandemic irrespective of his nationality; color, race, religion, gender, rich or poor.

To fight against the virus many were claiming that « we are not safe until we are all safe » and the programme for widespread global vaccination was not equally distributed for every nation. Rich nations were served and protected first by vaccinations against COVID and this highlighted the growing wealth gap between countries. Some other key issues referring to human rights concerns which humanity has to face in the future are the climate change which brings natural disasters. We can also highlight the right to food, education, health, fight against poverty; the fight for women's right and gender equality, democracy and justice. The principle of equality is crucial to human rights, but we should see in the future how human rights and equality can empower each other.

**Ashook Ramsaran** (New York, USA)

Denial of human rights at any level is an outright violation of fundamental, “inalienable rights and freedoms including a right to education, a decent living, health care and a right to live free from any form of discrimination among others”. The devastating effects of Covid-19 on the world's poor and resulting global restrictions on migration further aggravate denial of basic human rights which ought to be a shared burden for world health, cooperation and co-existence. Equity and social justice for all humanity are a noble causes.

**Roopnarain Persaud** (Florida, USA)

The UDHR is a false claim and assertion:

Were “slaves” born free and equal? Then why were they enslaved and maltreated by Christian nations who now profess that, “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”?

- Are human beings being treated as if they are “born free and equal in dignity and rights”? Then how about the millions of refugees in Europe and elsewhere?
- How about those human beings who are being persecuted and bombed because they were/are Communists, or those who are being oppressed and murdered by dictators?

*The global realities negate this claim that people are “born free and equal in dignity and rights!”*

**Dr. Vishnu Bisram** (New York, USA)

Some 72 years ago, the UN Charter came into effect declaring equality for all and respect for human rights. Today, around the globe, so many have been denied socio-economic and political equality. So many have faced racial discrimination and denied employment opportunities. Also, the most vulnerable, the poor, the physically and mentally challenged are neglected. Immigrants and those seeking better economic opportunities are targeted for abuse. In so many countries, governments have behaved like people don’t matter. Poverty and hopelessness pervade so many countries. A small percentage of the people in every country controls the overwhelming bulk of the wealth while others are struggling to make ends meet. Human Rights declarations are more than words. They must be followed by actions. Socio-economic and political reforms are needed for to narrow the gap between rich and poor and to encourage participatory governance.

**Dr. Arnold Thomas** (St. Vincent & the Grenadines)

THOUGHTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2021 IN ST.VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES (SVG)

The year 2021 will long be remembered in SVG for the many challenges posed during the year such as the Covid-19 pandemic, dengue fever and the volcanic eruption. All these developments have impacted the social welfare and development of Vincentians in one way or another, but on this Human Rights Day nothing has caused such an outcry among various groups as the recent Government passing of the Public Health (Public Bodies’ Special Measures) Rules 2021 requiring “frontline workers” to be mandatory vaccinated against Covid-19 by November 19. Public workers who failed to be vaccinated will not be allowed to enter their respective workplaces such as government offices including primary and secondary schools. This has become a major issue of human rights violation among several unions and associations including religious organizations, who have been calling for the mandate to be rescinded.

**IDC’s focus on:** Human rights for children, women, gender equality, religious and political rights, ethnic origin and heritage, senior and the elderly, social equality and justice, Covid-19 vaccine access equality, guaranteed legal protection and rule of law, refugees and displaced populations, persons with disabilities and compliance with guaranteed rights under own constitutions and UN Charter (Human Rights), human rights for Romani people.

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*Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage, and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations, and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.*



**Fight Inequality, Fight Racism**

Racism, xenophobia and related discrimination and intolerance exist in all societies, everywhere. Racism harms not just the lives of those who endure it, but also society as a whole. We all lose in a society characterized by discrimination, division, distrust, intolerance, and hate. The fight against racism is everyone’s fight. We all have a part to play in building a world beyond racism.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day>