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MECHANISMS FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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INTRODUCTION

Human rights are fundamental entitlements inherent to every individual by birth, completely free from discrimination based on race, gender, nationality, language, or faith. These core protections encompass the rights to life, autonomy, education, fair labour, and free expression. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, serves as a permanent moral compass for the world's 8.1 billion citizens. Although it is not inherently a legally binding document, its profound ethical weight has fundamentally redefined international law, anchored subsequent treaties, and shaped national legislation globally. As one of the most translated texts in history, its reach extends deeply into local and global communities alike. Today, amidst ongoing geopolitical conflicts and systemic inequalities, this landmark document remains a transformative guide toward peace and solidarity, highlighting that the need for constructive global dialogue has never been more vital to protecting our shared human dignity.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The global operations of UN Human Rights, along with the various oversight systems it maintains, are built directly upon the foundation of international human rights law. This comprehensive legal framework originated with the historic passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which marked the first time in human history that basic human rights were formally articulated. Today, alongside two major international covenants, the UDHR comprises the International Bill of Human Rights. Following its landmark adoption in 1948, the declaration has served as the catalyst for a vast network of legally binding global treaties, proclamations, and legal instruments that continue to direct and reinforce the UN's human rights initiatives. To ensure these standards are met, the United Nations utilizes two distinct categories of monitoring systems: treaty-based bodies and charter-based bodies. The

ten treaty-based bodies consist of specialized committees of independent experts who actively track how effectively nations implement the core international treaties, while the charter-based bodies encompass broader political and investigative entities, including the Human Rights Council, Special Procedures, the Universal Periodic Review, and Independent Investigations. Across all of these diverse monitoring frameworks, UN Human Rights acts as a central pillar, offering the essential technical expertise and administrative backing required for them to function effectively.

OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

As an essential division of the United Nations, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was officially created by the UN General Assembly in response to the directives set forth during the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights. To carry out its mission, the OHCHR maintains an extensive global footprint, operating regional field offices across areas such as Central Asia, East and Southern Africa, the Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East. These localized branches serve as vital hubs for tracking and advancing human rights directly within communities. They collaborate closely with domestic governments, grassroots civil society organizations, and various local partners to confront humanitarian challenges, deliver educational programming and training, and facilitate the domestic integration of international human rights benchmarks. By seamlessly linking high-level institutional advocacy at the UN headquarters with these direct, grassroots operations, the OHCHR demonstrates a multifaceted strategy that highlights its indispensable position in the worldwide campaign for human dignity. Ultimately, the agency does not merely formulate and spread global human rights principles, it actively participates in the hands-on, practical work required to safeguard and champion these fundamental rights across the globe.

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The launch of the Human Rights Council in 2006 represented a major advancement in how the United Nations manages and prioritizes global human rights. Created to succeed the former UN Human Rights Commission, this modern institution was structured to amplify the international community's ability to confront systemic abuses and to fortify the defence of basic liberties worldwide. Administratively, the Council is required to convene at least three times annually, a consistent schedule that guarantees continuous global focus on pressing humanitarian issues. While it carries out its daily functions independently, the Council

ultimately answers to the General Assembly, which possesses the authority to suspend any member state found guilty of widespread and flagrant human rights violations. The Council's chief duties involve fostering a global culture of respect and protection for all human rights, intervening in cases of severe state-sponsored abuses, and submitting formal recommendations to the General Assembly. Structurally, the body is composed of 47 member states, each voted in directly and individually by the General Assembly through a process designed to ensure fair geographic distribution across the globe. These representatives serve fixed three-year terms and are restricted to a maximum of two back-to-back rotations, a policy that ensures a continually evolving and diverse membership.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the ecosystem of global human rights stretching from the foundational philosophy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the active oversight of the UN Human Rights Council and the OHCHR presents a unified and evolving framework dedicated to preserving human dignity. While the historic 1948 declaration established the unshakeable moral benchmarks for our global society, the subsequent development of treaty and charter-based monitoring mechanisms transformed those ideals into actionable accountability. Through a strategic blend of high-level international diplomacy and vital, on-the-ground regional operations, these institutions bridge the gap between global policy and domestic reality. In an era marked by persistent geopolitical friction and systemic inequality, the continuous collaboration between these bodies, sovereign governments, and grassroots organizations remains indispensable. Together, they ensure that the protection of fundamental liberties is not merely a theoretical ambition, but a practical, enduring reality for all individuals worldwide.

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