



## **ETHICS AND CODE OF CONDUCT OF RYTHMUS**

**Effective Date from-14.11.2024**

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on **December 10, 1948**, is a milestone document in the history of human rights. Drafted in the aftermath of World War II, the declaration set out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected. It is a powerful statement of equality, freedom, and justice, forming the foundation for international human rights law.

### **History and Background:**

The horrors of the **Second World War**, particularly the atrocities committed during the Holocaust, highlighted the urgent need for a global commitment to human rights. Recognizing this, the **United Nations** (founded in 1945) made the promotion and protection of human rights one of its key objectives.

The UDHR was drafted by a diverse group of representatives from different legal, cultural, and religious backgrounds, chaired by **Eleanor Roosevelt**, the former First Lady of the United States. The declaration was adopted by the General Assembly with **48 votes in favor, none against, and 8 abstentions**.

### **Core Principles of the UDHR:**

The UDHR consists of a **preamble** and **30 articles** outlining the basic rights and freedoms to which all people are entitled, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, or status. Some of the key principles include:

1. **Equality and Non-Discrimination:**
  - **Article 1:** All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
  - **Article 2:** Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind.
2. **Right to Life, Liberty, and Security:**
  - **Article 3:** Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.
3. **Prohibition of Slavery and Torture:**
  - **Article 4:** No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
  - **Article 5:** No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.
4. **Right to a Fair Trial:**
  - **Article 10:** Everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal.



5. **Freedom of Thought, Expression, and Religion:**
  - **Article 18:** Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.
  - **Article 19:** Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
6. **Right to Education:**
  - **Article 26:** Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.
7. **Right to Work and Social Security:**
  - **Article 23:** Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work.
  - **Article 25:** Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care.

### **Why the UDHR Matters:**

1. **Universal Appeal:** The UDHR applies to all human beings, without exception. It is a global standard for human rights and serves as a moral and legal benchmark that transcends cultural and national boundaries.
2. **Foundation for International Law:** The UDHR has inspired more than 60 human rights treaties, regional human rights instruments, and national constitutions worldwide. Key international agreements like the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** stem directly from it.
3. **Empowering Civil Society:** The UDHR empowers individuals and NGOs to advocate for human rights, dignity, and freedom. It has provided a platform for grassroots movements, civil rights campaigns, and legal battles against injustice.
4. **Guiding Framework for Governments:** Governments around the world have used the UDHR as a guideline for policy-making, enshrining human rights into domestic laws and practices.
5. **Catalyst for Global Change:** The declaration has played a pivotal role in shaping modern human rights discourse. It has contributed to the abolition of colonialism, the fight against apartheid, the advancement of gender equality, and the protection of minorities and marginalized groups.

### **UDHR in the Context of NGOs:**

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in promoting and protecting the principles of the UDHR by:



1. **Advocacy and Awareness:** NGOs help raise awareness about human rights violations and advocate for policies that align with the UDHR's principles.
2. **Legal Assistance and Representation:** Many NGOs provide legal aid to individuals whose rights are violated, using the UDHR as a foundation for their legal arguments.
3. **Education and Training:** NGOs educate communities, particularly marginalized groups, about their rights under the UDHR and empower them to defend these rights.
4. **Monitoring and Reporting:** NGOs monitor human rights conditions, document violations, and report these to international bodies such as the United Nations, ensuring that human rights abuses do not go unnoticed.
5. **Humanitarian Aid:** NGOs work in conflict zones, refugee camps, and disaster-stricken areas, providing essential services in line with the UDHR's principles of dignity, safety, and human security.

### **Conclusion:**

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** stands as one of the most powerful affirmations of human dignity and rights. Though it is not legally binding, its moral and political influence has shaped the development of human rights law and advocacy globally. For NGOs, the UDHR remains a crucial tool to promote justice, equality, and freedom, ensuring that every individual enjoys the rights and freedoms that define humanity itself.