

## The NCHR Celebrates Human Rights Day - 2013

### 65 Years of Human Rights - 1948 - 2013.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights commemorates its **65th Anniversary** on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2013.

It was on December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR, which has become the universal standard for defending and promoting Human Rights.

The theme of Human Rights Day 2013 is: [20 Years Working for Your Rights](#)

"As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, let us intensify our efforts to fulfill our collective responsibility to promote and protect the rights and dignity of all people everywhere."

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon once said: "It is our duty to ensure that these rights are a living reality -- that they are known, understood and enjoyed by everyone, everywhere. It is often those who most need their human rights protected, who also need to be informed that the Declaration exists -- and that it exists for them."

Every year on December 10, Human Rights Day is celebrated all over the world in commemoration of the adoption of the Universal Declaration. On Human Rights Day we celebrate around the globe that "All human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms". Article 16, section 3 of the UDHR reads: "*The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.*" Everyone is guaranteed protection by the law for the right not to be subjected to arbitrary interference with one's privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to attacks upon one's honour and reputation, Article 12 UDHR. These rights are confirmed in the European Convention on Human Rights and fundamental freedoms, ECHR, (Article 8) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNCROC, (Article 16).

"Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

"Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty," Article 2 UDHR.

In Sweden, December 10 is celebrated as the Nobel Prize Day, but not as **Human Rights Day**. In Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway, we observe constant and recurring

violations of Human Rights through laws and practices that break up and undermine the family - the natural family - which in every normal setting is the corner stone of society, no matter how poor or primitive the country may be.

All the Nordic countries have signed and ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which guarantees protection for everyone's basic Human Rights.. In addition, the European Convention is embedded in the Nordic Constitutions. However, children who are forcibly taken into care and placed in foster homes, and their parents and relatives, suffer gross violations of their Human Rights at the hands of the social councils and the administrative courts. In cases of transfer of the guardianship of foster children, often the civil courts contribute to the gross violations of the children's and their parents' and relatives' Human Rights to private and family life - and to a fair trial. The result has been that several tens of thousands of children have been taken into care and placed in foster homes among total strangers, resulting in a total severing of the family bonds, which is tantamount to torture (Article 3, ECHR) and constitutes one of the features of genocide.

The governments of Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway are always quick to condemn Human Rights violations in other countries. While we deem it important and necessary to criticise others, we are appalled that they ignore the serious Human Rights violations that are taking place on a daily basis in our own countries. Our parliaments and governments have passed laws that undermine **The Family**, the cornerstone of society, in favour of the institutions put in place by the welfare states - "in the best interest of the child", they claim. By using the term "the best interest of the child" they seem to comply with the pre-requisites of Article 3 of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, the history of our Nordic welfare states shows that several tens of thousands of children have been taken into care and placed in foster homes and institutions - on arbitrary grounds.

Christmas is fast approaching and Christmas time is Family time. Families, whose children have been taken into compulsory care and placed in foster homes, are very often subjected to rigid restrictions on their visiting rights. Often the parents and relatives of the children in "care" are not allowed to see the children at Christmas or to even deliver their presents in person on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. The social services' staff require the parents and relatives of the children in compulsory care to deliver the Christmas presents to them, for them to be handed over to the children - when it suits the foster homes. Such practices are not necessary in a democratic society, and must be condemned.

Every year the NCHR/NKMR sends Christmas Appeals to the rulers of our respective Nordic countries requesting them to release the children so that they can spend Christmas with their loved ones. So far, our appeals have fallen on deaf ears, but once again we encourage parents and grandparents and other relatives to demand visiting rights with their children in compulsory care at Christmas.

Human Rights Day, 2013

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