



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

Department for Planning
and Operations

lutheranworld.org

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70 YEARS ON: UPHOLDING THE DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN BEING

LWF reaffirms Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a framework for safeguarding human dignity

GENEVA, Switzerland

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) reaffirms the declaration as a major achievement of humankind. The declaration has provided a universal framework for safeguarding human dignity and obliges States to protect people's rights.

The LWF believes that every human being is created in God's image (Gen 1.27). Because of this fundamental faith conviction, every person is seen as endowed with God-given dignity.

For the LWF, the human rights framework expresses this fundamental conviction in the public space. It represents the common language to address challenges to human dignity. It provides the platform and framework through which our member churches and the global communion engage with other actors, secular and faith-based, in the common cause to uphold the dignity of every human being.

The promotion and protection of human rights have been an essential part of LWF's work since its founding in 1947. This focus has become an integral part of the LWF's witness, especially as it works to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, marginalized and discriminated against.

Today, the LWF is deeply concerned about the growing tendency to delegitimize, marginalize or undermine the framework provided by the UDHR. As a consequence, people at the margins, minorities, those being oppressed because of their gender, ethnicity, social, economic or political position, are discriminated against, suffer persecution and oppression including death.

The Universal Declaration calls human rights the “common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.” Against this background and on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the UDHR, the LWF calls upon the community of States to:

- Protect and secure human rights and not to lose sight of their importance in safeguarding freedom, justice, and peace in the world.
- Reaffirm the commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Ensure the implementation of the human rights framework locally and globally and hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable.
- Promote and protect the work of human rights defenders.

The LWF calls upon its member churches to:

- Create awareness about the importance of the human rights framework among their members.
- Advocate for the promotion and protection of human rights in their local contexts.
- Work together with ecumenical partners, interfaith partners, and other civil society actors to promote and protect human rights.

*But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (Amos 5:24)*

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'M. Saur' and the signature on the right is 'Karl-Friedrich Schaefer'.

The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 75.5 million Christians in 99 countries. The LWF acts on behalf of its member churches in areas of ecumenical and interfaith relations, theology, humanitarian assistance, human rights, communication and the various aspects of mission and development.

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High resolution images of the LWF President and General Secretary are available for media purposes at <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmwYi84y>