

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Introduction

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** is one of the most important documents in the history of the world. It was adopted by the **United Nations General Assembly** on **10th December, 1948** in Paris. This date is now celebrated every year as **Human Rights Day** all over the world.

The UDHR was created after the horrific events of **World War II** (1939-1945), where millions of people were killed, tortured, and treated with extreme cruelty. The world leaders realized that there was a need for a **universal document** that protects the rights and dignity of every human being — regardless of their race, gender, religion, nationality, or social status.

The declaration was drafted by a committee chaired by **Eleanor Roosevelt**, the former First Lady of the United States who called it "the international Magna Carta of all mankind. It contains a **Preamble and 30 Articles** that cover a wide range of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights.

Main Features of the UDHR Yes! These are the **correct and actual main features of the UDHR!** 😊 These are the **4 core features** recognized internationally. Let me now write them in a proper, simple, and exam-ready format for you:

Main Features of the UDHR

1. Universal and Inalienable

The most important feature of UDHR is that human rights are **universal** — meaning they belong to **every person in the world**, without any exception. It does not matter which country, religion, caste, gender, or race a person belongs to. Every human being is equally entitled to these rights.

Human rights are also **inalienable** — meaning they **cannot be taken away** from any person. However, in certain specific situations, some rights may be restricted — for example, the **right to liberty** may be restricted if a person is found guilty of a crime by a court of law. But even then, it must follow **due process of law**.

2. Indivisible and Interdependent

All human rights mentioned in the UDHR are **indivisible** — meaning no right is more important than another. Civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights are all **equally important**.

They are also **interdependent** — meaning all rights are connected to each other. One set of rights cannot be fully enjoyed without the other. For example:

- If a person does not have the **right to food and health** (economic rights), they cannot fully enjoy their **right to life** (civil right)
 - If **civil and political rights** improve, it becomes easier to exercise **economic and social rights**
 - Similarly, violating one right negatively affects many other rights
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3. Equal and Non-Discriminatory

As stated in **Article 1** of the UDHR — “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

This means every person must be treated **equally and fairly**.

Article 2 further guarantees **freedom from discrimination** — no person can be discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, nationality, or social origin.

This principle of non-discrimination is so important that it became the central theme of two major international conventions:

- **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**
 - **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**
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4. Both Rights and Obligations

The UDHR does not only give rights — it also creates **obligations and duties**. This applies to both **States (governments)** and **individuals**.

Obligations of States:

- **Obligation to Respect** — Governments must not interfere with or violate human rights of people
- **Obligation to Protect** — Governments must protect individuals and groups from human rights abuses by others
- **Obligation to Fulfil** — Governments must take positive steps to ensure that people can enjoy their basic human rights

Obligations of Individuals:

- While every person is entitled to human rights, they must also **respect and stand up for the human rights of others**

Conclusion

The four main features of the UDHR — **universality, inalienability, indivisibility, interdependence, equality, non-discrimination, and shared rights and obligations** — form the very foundation of international human rights law. These features ensure that human rights are not just words on paper, but a **living reality for every human being** on earth.