

Universal Declaration Against Rape and All Forms of Sexual Abuse

Preamble

Recognizing that every human being is entitled to dignity, freedom, and security, and affirming that rape and all forms of sexual abuse are grave violations of these inalienable rights, we—the peoples and nations of the world—hereby declare our determination to eradicate all manifestations of such violence.

Guided by the universal principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women¹, the Istanbul Convention, and relevant United Nations resolutions (including UNSC Resolutions 1325, 1820, 2106, among others), we assert that rape and sexual abuse are not only crimes against persons but also crimes against humanity and obstacles to sustainable peace and development. We commit to ensuring protection, justice, and reparations for victims and to preventing these heinous acts through robust legal, educational, and social measures.

Article 1 – Definitions

For the purposes of this Declaration, the following definitions apply:

- a) **Rape:** Any non-consensual penetration—however slight—of any part of the body, by any means or object, without the freely given, informed, and unequivocal consent of the victim.
- b) **Sexual Abuse:** Any unwanted sexual activity or conduct that causes physical, psychological, or emotional harm. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, coercion, exploitation, harassment, and forced prostitution.
- c) **Expanded Forms of Sexual Violence:** This Declaration further recognizes the following as grave violations of sexual autonomy and integrity:

¹<https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unga/1993/en/10685>

- i. **Non-Consenting Voyeurism:** The act of observing or recording individuals in private settings without their consent for sexual gratification.
 - ii. **Child Sexual Abuse (including pedophilia):** Any sexual activity involving a child or minor, where the child is incapable of giving informed consent.
 - iii. **Incest:** Any sexual activity between close family members where consent is either not given or cannot be validly obtained due to inherent power imbalances or familial duty.
 - iv. **Bestiality:** Any sexual contact between a human and an animal, which violates the inherent rights and welfare of the animal and constitutes a form of sexual abuse.
- d) **Consent:** A clear, voluntary, and unequivocal agreement to engage in a specific sexual act, given by an individual who possesses the capacity to decide freely without coercion, manipulation, or undue influence.

Article 2 – Universal Right to Freedom from Sexual Violence

Every person has the inalienable right to live free from all forms of rape and sexual abuse. Such violence constitutes a violation of human rights, undermines individual dignity, and destabilizes communities.

Article 3 – State Obligations

States shall:

- a) Enact, reform, and enforce laws that categorically criminalize all forms of rape and sexual abuse, including non-consenting voyeurism, child sexual abuse, incest, bestiality, and any related conduct, in conformity with international human rights standards.
- b) Ensure that definitions of rape and sexual abuse are consent-based and free from gender bias, acknowledging the full spectrum of non-consensual sexual violence.
- c) Adopt measures to eliminate legal, social, and cultural practices that condone or perpetuate sexual violence, including those rooted in discriminatory traditions and myths.

Article 4 – Victim Protection, Support, and Reparations

States shall guarantee that victims receive:

- a) Immediate and accessible medical, psychological, legal, and social support services.
- b) Protection from further harm, including from secondary victimization by law enforcement or judicial processes.
- c) Effective redress and reparation, including restitution, compensation, and rehabilitation measures, in line with international standards.

Article 5 – Prevention, Education, and Public Awareness

States shall promote prevention through:

- a) Comprehensive public education and awareness campaigns aimed at dismantling rape myths, challenging gender stereotypes, and fostering a culture of respect for human rights.
- b) Training for law enforcement, judicial officials, healthcare providers, and educators to ensure sensitivity and competency in handling cases of all forms of sexual violence.
- c) Community engagement programs that empower all individuals, regardless of gender or status, to prevent sexual violence.

Article 6 – Accountability and Justice

States shall:

- a) Ensure that all allegations of rape and sexual abuse are investigated promptly and thoroughly, with full respect for the rights of both victims and the accused.
- b) Guarantee that perpetrators are held fully accountable under the law, without impunity, and that criminal proceedings are conducted fairly and transparently.
- c) Collaborate with international judicial bodies and support cross-border legal cooperation to combat transnational sexual violence and related crimes.

Article 7 – International Cooperation

Recognizing the transnational nature of sexual violence, States shall:

- a) Cooperate in the exchange of information, best practices, and resources to prevent and prosecute all forms of sexual abuse.
- b) Support international initiatives and instruments that seek to harmonize legal definitions and enforcement practices across jurisdictions.

Article 8 – Non-Discrimination and Equality

No individual shall be denied protection or justice on account of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, disability, or any other status. States shall actively work to remove any barriers—legal or cultural—that inhibit access to justice and support services for victims of sexual violence.

Article 9 – Implementation and Monitoring

- a) States shall establish independent monitoring bodies to ensure the effective implementation of this Declaration and report regularly on progress.
- b) National, regional, and international mechanisms shall be created or strengthened to evaluate, coordinate, and enforce measures taken to eradicate rape and sexual abuse.
- c) Robust data collection and research shall be supported to inform policy improvements and measure the impact of preventive and remedial efforts.

Article 10 – Review and Amendments

This Declaration, as a living document, shall be subject to periodic review and amendment in light of emerging evidence, evolving legal standards, and changing social conditions, ensuring its continuous relevance and effectiveness in combating sexual violence.

Closing Statement

We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, in the spirit of justice, equality, and human dignity, hereby proclaim this Universal Declaration Against Rape and All Forms of Sexual Abuse. We call upon every State, institution, and individual to embrace and

implement its principles so that future generations may live in a world free from the horrors of sexual violence.