**Human Rights and International Law Must Be Respected**

**Universally Rather Than Selectively** (Draft)

We Unitarian Universalists believe in the worth and dignity of every human being, in justice and equity for all, and in a world community at peace;

We understand that these human rights to worth, dignity, justice, equity, and peace hold for all people without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or other human differences;

We Unitarian Universalists therefore assert the universality of human rights and affirm that both human rights and international law must be respected universally rather than selectively;

We recognize, however, that human rights and international law are not at present respected universally, neither domestically within the United States nor internationally;

We recognize that rights to health care, education, housing, and other fundamental human rights are not universally respected domestically within the United States but that major inequities exist according to race, gender and other differences among human beings.

We note that International human rights law and the United Nations [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights) [have inspired](https://www.aclu.org/blog/human-rights/human-rights-and-racial-justice/web-du-boiss-historic-un-petition-continues) and [continue to inspire](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/assets/121013-humanrightsfacts.pdf) work for the human rights of all people here in the United States;

We recognize that human rights and international law are also not at present respected universally internationally. Instead, the United States and other nations condemn violations when committed by strategic enemies and ignore them when committed by themselves or their allies;

We believe that this hypocrisy regarding the fundamental principles guiding our collective life must be opposed if we are to achieve a world that is truly at peace and ruled by respect for human rights and international law;

We note, in illustration of the international hypocrisy, that Russia has been rightly condemned for its violations of human rights and international law in its brutal 2022 invasion of Ukraine and has been held to account with massive boycotts, divestments and sanctions by the United States and Western European countries, but equally egregious violations by other countries including the United States and its allies have escaped all accountability;

We note, for example, that the US invasion of Iraq was [a violation of the supreme international law](https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/iraq-invasion-illegal-war-of-aggression-by-peter-singer-2018-04) against war on another country that is not based on immediate self-defense nor approved by the UN Security Council, but no sanctions have been imposed on the US;

We note, for example, that Israel is guilty of the [international crime of apartheid](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/52311b65e4b0996e8e2d3d35/t/62542421e332131c7a66c321/1649681444625/The+Israel+Apartheid+Report+Database.pdf) as shown by Palestinian, Israeli, United Nations and international human rights organizations, and is also guilty of [other international crimes](https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-182472/) including the acquisition of territory by military force with its annexation of the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, but Israel is not being held to account;

We note, for example, that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with the help of the United States maintain a brutal war on the people of Yemen causing the [world’s greatest humanitarian crisis](https://caat.org.uk/homepage/stop-arming-saudi-arabia/the-war-on-yemens-civilians/#:~:text=The%20war%20in%20Yemen%20has,crisis%20caused%20by%20the%20war.) with tens of thousands of civilians killed and millions at risk of starvation, but neither the United States, Saudi Arabia nor the Emirates are being held to account;

We believe that universal respect for international law would reduce the likelihood of war with its associated human rights violations and environmental degradation. Moreover, the huge expenditures of resources on war [prevents these resources](https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/) from being used to meet our universal human rights to a sustainable planet, to health care, to education, and to opportunities for personal growth;

We note [the racism involved](https://worldbeyondwar.org/russia-israel-and-the-media/) in the immediate and profound response of the United States and its European allies to the suffering of white European Ukrainians in comparison to the lack of response to decades of suffering of Iraqis, Palestinians, Yemenis, and other people of color. We note this [same racism in the massive attention](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/russia-war-ukraine-drains-aid-crisis-afghanistan-yemen-horn-africa-rcna29169) given by Western media to the crisis in Ukraine and the lack of attention to human rights violations and humanitarian crises in Yemen, Palestine, Myanmar, and East Africa. We note how this massive difference in attention prevents the responses that are desperately needed as well as the delivery of aid;

We recognize, as Unitarian Universalists, that we are part of an interdependent web of existence in which violations of human rights anywhere affect all of us everywhere.

Be it therefore resolved by this 2022 Unitarian Universalist General Assembly:

1. That all countries including the United States must respect human rights and international law universally, both domestically and internationally, rather than selectively;
2. That the United States government must end its unconditional military support for its allies Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates because of their egregious violations of human rights and international law; and
3. That Unitarian Universalists are called to petition the United States government to end such support.