

## **Brief Overview of selected international human rights instruments**

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, 1948. Worldwide instrument setting out the basic human rights of all persons on the basis of equality and non-discrimination.

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**, 1967. Sets forth a broad catalogue of civil and political rights, including the rights to life, physical integrity, recognition before the law, political participation, freedom of movement and choice of residence, and protection of the family.

**International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**, 1967. Sets out economic, social and cultural guarantees, including the rights to adequate food, shelter, clothing, health care, an adequate standard of living, and guarantees concerning work, social welfare, education and participation in cultural life.

**Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)**, 1984. Defines and prohibits torture under all circumstances. Stipulates that States cannot transfer a person to another State if there are grounds for believing that s/he will be tortured (principle of non-refoulement).

**International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)**, 1965. Prohibits racial discrimination: when a person or group is treated differently because of race, colour, descent, national origin or ethnic origin with the aim or effect of denying their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide**, (1948). Defines genocide as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, and declares it as a crime, whether committed during peacetime or war.

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, 1979. Sets a framework for national action for ensuring women enjoy, on an equal footing with men, their rights in all fields, including employment, education and administration of property, and for ensuring the protection of women, especially against threats to their physical safety and against rape and sexual exploitation. **Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)** also reiterated that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those negatively affected by conflict and called for measures to ensure that women are more equally represented in all stages of peace processes. It furthermore called on all parties to armed conflict to fully respect international law applicable to the rights and protection of civilian women and girls, in particular the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and two Additional Protocols of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and Protocol of 1967, the human rights instruments, including CEDAW and its Optional Protocol of 1999, and the CRC and its two Optional Protocols of 2000.

### **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989**

The Convention outlines the fundamental rights of children to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse. It specifies the range of these rights, including the right to be protected from armed conflict, economic exploitation and harmful work, all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, and physical or mental violence. It also requires children not be separated from their family against their will. Together with:

- **Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, 2000** and,
- **Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 2000**

Provides a comprehensive code to protect the rights and best interests of children (under 18 years of age). Obliges States to take measures to ensure protection, care, psychological recovery and social reintegration of children affected by armed conflict, including unaccompanied or separated children. The optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict prohibits compulsory recruitment and direct use in hostilities of persons under 18.

### **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPD), 2006**

Reaffirms human rights and emphasizes their importance for persons living with disabilities. Also provides guidance to States on ways to ensure that those with disabilities, including survivors of landmines and ERW, can exercise their rights on a full and equal basis with others.

### **International Convention for the Protection of all Persons against Enforced Disappearances (CED), 2006**

Defines and prohibits enforced disappearance under any circumstances and obliges States to prevent such acts, to prosecute and punish or extradite those responsible, and provide reparations for victims and their families.

### **Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO Convention No. 182), 1999**

Obliges States to take all necessary measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, such as slavery, trafficking, prostitution or forced labour, including recruitment of children (under 18 years) for use in armed conflict.

### **International Convention on the Protection of all Migrant Workers (CMW), 1990**

Provides a framework for the protection of the human rights of migrant workers during all stages of the migration process; before departure, during transit and in the country of employment.

### **Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO Convention No. 169), 1989**

Sets a framework for ensuring indigenous and tribal peoples enjoy their rights on an equal footing with other persons. Specifically addresses the issue of relocation of peoples, establishing conditions and guarantees to be fulfilled for this to be lawful.