



NELSON MANDELA  
FOUNDATION

*Living the Legacy*

December 2008

Distinguished guests,

Today, as we mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we must not forget that we are human only through the humanity of other human beings.

We celebrate the fact that the Declaration has inspired extraordinary human rights development in the past six decades.

For those who had to fight for their emancipation, such as ourselves here in South Africa, who had to free ourselves from the criminal apartheid system, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights served as the vindication of the justice of our cause.

At the same time, it is a challenge to us that our freedom, once achieved, should be dedicated to the implementation of the fundamental freedom and rights contained in the Declaration.

Today, human beings, who are the subject of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, continue to be afflicted by wars and violent conflicts, oppression, discrimination, poverty, and other social ills which constitute an offence against the Declaration.

Far too many are still denied the fundamental and inalienable rights enshrined in this historic document. The very right to be human is denied everyday to hundreds of millions of people.

Ten years ago, when the Declaration turned 50, we told the United Nations General Assembly that the challenge posed by the next 50 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights consisted in whether humanity, especially those occupying positions of leadership, would have the courage to build a human world consistent with the articles of the historic Declaration.

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Today, this pressing challenge remains more relevant than ever. Human rights are in our hands. Our generation, and the men and women who drafted the Declaration 60 years ago, have done our part. Now it is in your hands to ensure that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights becomes a reality to all.

We thank you.

N R Mandela