

## **Protecting human rights is protecting human dignity**

*by*

**H. TAHSİN FENDOĞLU**

Today, Dec. 10, we commemorate the 59th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) at the United Nations General Assembly as Human Rights Day, which represents a celebration of the outcome of a long struggle for human dignity and honor.Â Â

The UDHR, adopted on Dec. 10, 1948, made specific references to human rights, furthering the cause which started with the UN Charter. The declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly was also endorsed by our country on April 6, 1949. Dec. 10 is celebrated as the commemoration of this historic moment to promote the protection of human rights, raise awareness in the world and disseminate the spirit and message of the declaration. Â

The UDHR represents a human rights ideal that all states agree upon, reflecting the commonly held values of humanity and making references to economic, social and cultural rights. The declaration, which is morally binding on the states, declares that all humans are entitled to a life based on equality, freedom and honor, regardless of their gender, race, color, religion, language or wealth -- simply because they are human. Under the declaration all enjoy their inherent rights and freedoms without any prior conditions.

At a number of other regional and international conventions, treaties and declarations were adopted to address human rights issues following the declaration; progress in the field culminated in the establishment of international criminal tribunals vested with the authority to prosecute the perpetrators of the most heinous crimes.

Today, protection of human rights is no longer a domestic issue; it is an issue that concerns the entire international community. Whereas the states are primarily responsible for protection and promotion of human rights, this task also requires close cooperation with a number of other players, including civil society organizations. For this reason, raising awareness among ordinary individuals and civil society actors is vital for the effective promotion of human rights. Â

The fact that human rights, democracy and the rule of law are universal principles which need to be promoted by all countries is fully embraced in our country. A number of actions have been taken to improve the living conditions in the country and to further progress in the field of human rights. The transformation is particularly important for achievement of a more peaceful, safe, wealthy, moral and humane order.

It should also be recalled that protection and promotion of human rights is not something that threatens public security; quite the contrary, it is the assurance of a peaceful and stable public order.

I hope that Human Rights Day will be taken as an opportunity to raise public awareness on human rights issues and to promote them in the media; with this in mind, we celebrate the Human Rights Day of all.

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*\*Professor H. Tahsin Fendoğlu is the president for Human Rights at the Office of the Prime Minister*

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