

Statement by the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett on Human Rights Day

The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights set a milestone in the world's modern history. It proclaimed the fundamental inalienable rights of every individual in the world and laid the foundations for the existing human rights architecture that helped millions of people attain their dignity and freedom.

Celebrating today's 70th anniversary of the Declaration, it is important to acknowledge that while the world is still witnessing human rights violations, tremendous progress in the advancement of these rights has been achieved. This includes a continued expansion and evolution of the international framework of human rights law, greater public awareness of fundamental rights and freedoms, invaluable work of human rights defenders across the world and a wide recognition of a strong correlation between respect for human rights, peace and development.

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without the protection of human rights and neither can democracy. For the Community of Democracies, respect and protection of these rights lies at the heart of all its activities and shared democratic values enshrined in the Warsaw Declaration, which calls for all human rights - civil, cultural, economic, political and social to be supported and protected.

In line with its mission to advance democracy worldwide, the Community of Democracies will continue to work with governments and civil society to #StandUp4HumanRights and contribute towards building just, inclusive and peaceful societies where dignity, equality and freedom of every individual are fulfilled, upheld and protected.