



Cayman Islands Human Rights Commission

promoting, protecting and preserving human rights

Press Release on Recognising International Human Rights Day **Thursday 10 December 2015**

The Human Rights Commission joins the world in recognising International Human Rights Day which is observed every year on 10th December. This year's theme is 'Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always.' International Human Rights Day commemorates the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 1950, the Assembly passed resolution 423 (V), inviting all States and interested organisations to observe 10th December of each year as International Human Rights Day.

According to the United Nations,

"this year's Human Rights Day is devoted to the launch of a year-long campaign for the 50th anniversary of the two International Covenants on Human Rights: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The theme, 'Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always.' aims to promote and raise awareness of the two Covenants on their 50th anniversary. The year-long campaign revolves around the theme of rights and freedoms – freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear."

[\(http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/\)](http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/).

The United Nations further notes that:

"'Freedoms' is highlighted in this year's theme as it recalls 'the four freedoms that underlie the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and two major human rights covenants, which were first articulated in 1941 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his "four freedoms speech" to the US Congress.'"

Roosevelt considered these four freedoms so fundamental that he regarded it as America's duty to go to war to defend them and the democracy that underpins them. He was explicit that the "preservation of civil liberties for all" was one of the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy, which, by definition, regards all people as equal. His view was clear:

"Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere. Our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them."

In the Cayman Islands our rights, freedoms and responsibilities are enshrined in Part One of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 which came into force on 6 November 2012. It reflects the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and two major human rights covenants. Basic human rights

including the right to life, a fair trial, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and marriage; along with basic freedoms from torture, inhumane treatment, slavery, and discrimination are all protected by our Bill of Rights.

The Commission takes this opportunity to reiterate the importance of promoting, protecting and preserving human rights in the Cayman Islands and encourages all members of the public to join us in celebrating International Human Rights Day 2015.

Ends.