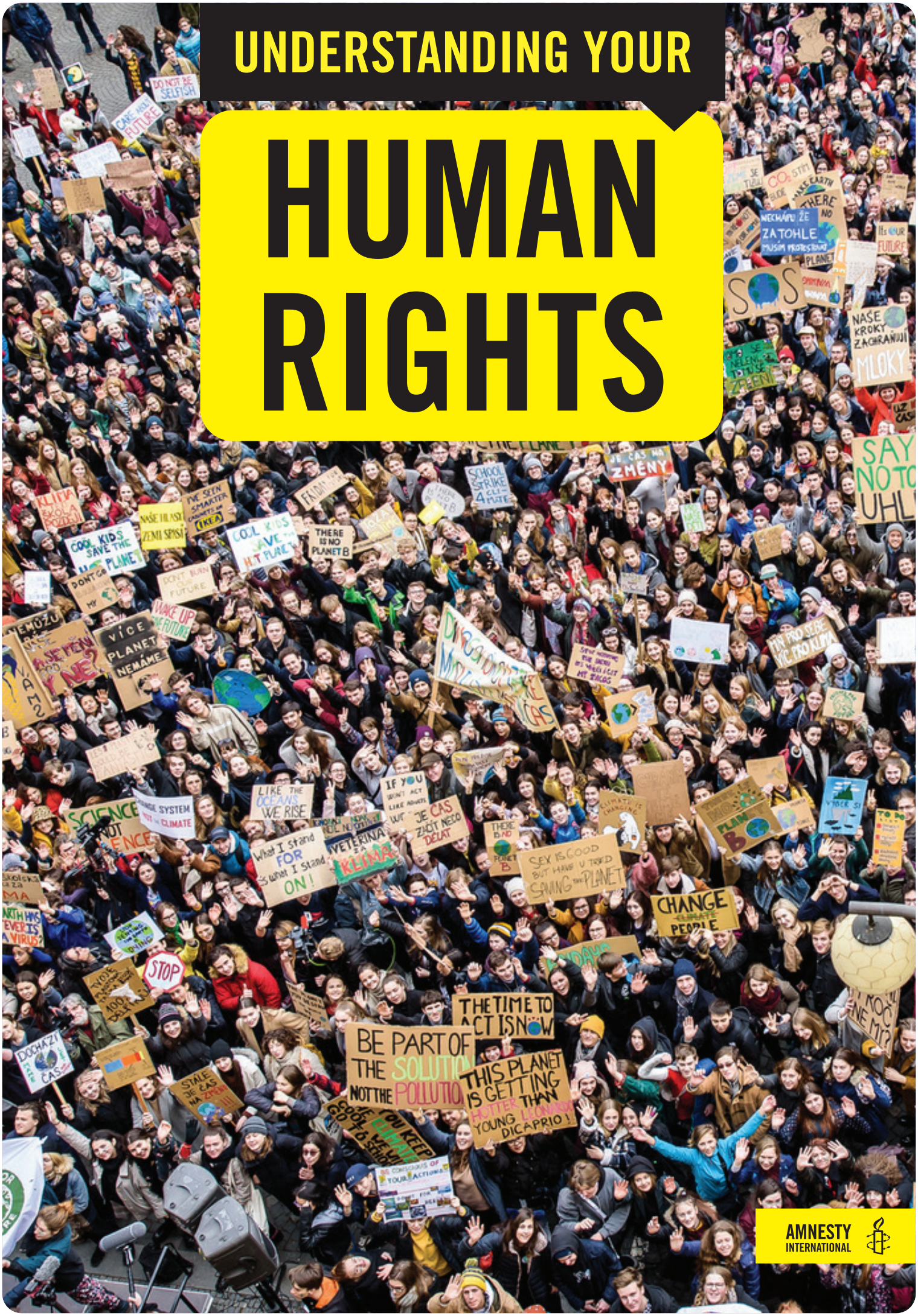
UNDERSTANDING YOUR

HUMAN RIGHTS



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

Locked Bag 23 Broadway
NSW 2007
e supporter@amnesty.org.au
1300 300 920
ABN 64 002 806 233
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Article 27

The right to participate in the cultural life of your community.

A crowd marches in Melbourne for Naidoc Week, 2019. © Maelle Raluy.

Cover: Students in Prague, Czech Republic, strike for climate on 15 March 2019. © Petr Zewlakk Vrabec/Greenpeace.

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

A young child holds balloons at a Naidoc Week march in Melbourne, 2019. © Maelle Raluy.

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that belong to every single one of us.

All human beings are born with equal, inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms.

Human rights are based on dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of your nationality, your religion or your beliefs.

Your rights are about being treated fairly and treating others fairly, and having the ability to make choices about your own life.

These basic human rights are:

Universal: they belong to all of us – everybody in the world.

Inalienable: they cannot be taken away from us.

Indivisible and interdependent: governments should not be able to pick and choose which rights are respected.

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)?

In 1948, following the traumatic events of World War II, country representatives at the United Nations (UN) banded together to create a list of the rights everyone around the world should enjoy.

Article 1 of the UDHR states that: *"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."*

There are 30 articles in the Declaration of Human Rights – 30 rights for everyone on this planet.

Despite the Declaration's international credibility, the standards outlined in it are sometimes difficult to enforce. That's why it's important for ordinary people to speak out whenever human rights violations happen and to keep governments and others across the world accountable.

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Activists march for climate in Berlin, 2019.
© Amnesty International

The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the UDHR on 10 December 1948.

These rights belong to you. **They are your rights.** Familiarise yourself with them.

Help to **promote** and **defend** them for yourself as well as for your fellow human beings.

Article 1 Everyone is born free and equal in dignity and with rights.

Article 2 You should never be discriminated against for any reason. Rights belong to all people, whatever our differences.

Article 3 Everyone has the rights to life, liberty and security.

Article 4 No-one shall be held in slavery or servitude.

Article 5 No-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6 You have the right to be treated as a person in the eyes of the law.

Article 7 You have the right to be treated by the law in the same way as everyone else. Everyone has a right to protection against violations of their human rights.

Article 8 If your rights under law are violated, you have the right to see justice done in a court or tribunal.

Article 9 No-one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10 You have the right to a fair and public trial by an independent and impartial tribunal.

Article 11 Everyone is to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in a fair trial. No one should be charged with a criminal offence for an act which wasn't an offence at the time the act was done.

Article 12 No-one has the right to intrude in your private life or interfere with your home and family without good reason. No-one has the right to attack your good name without reason.

Article 13 You have the right to freedom of movement within your country. Everyone has the right to leave a country and to return home.

Article 14 You have the right to seek and to enjoy asylum from persecution in other countries. You may not invoke this right if fleeing just laws in your own country.

Article 15 You have the right to a nationality.

The above Articles are abbreviated. For a full version of the Declaration go to www.un.org/Overview/rights

Hakeem al-Araibi arrives at Tullamarine Airport after being jailed in Thailand for over 2 months. © Amnesty International

Article 9

No-one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

> I'm especially grateful for all people who supported Hakeem around the world. Finally this nightmare has ended."
>
> Hakeem's wife

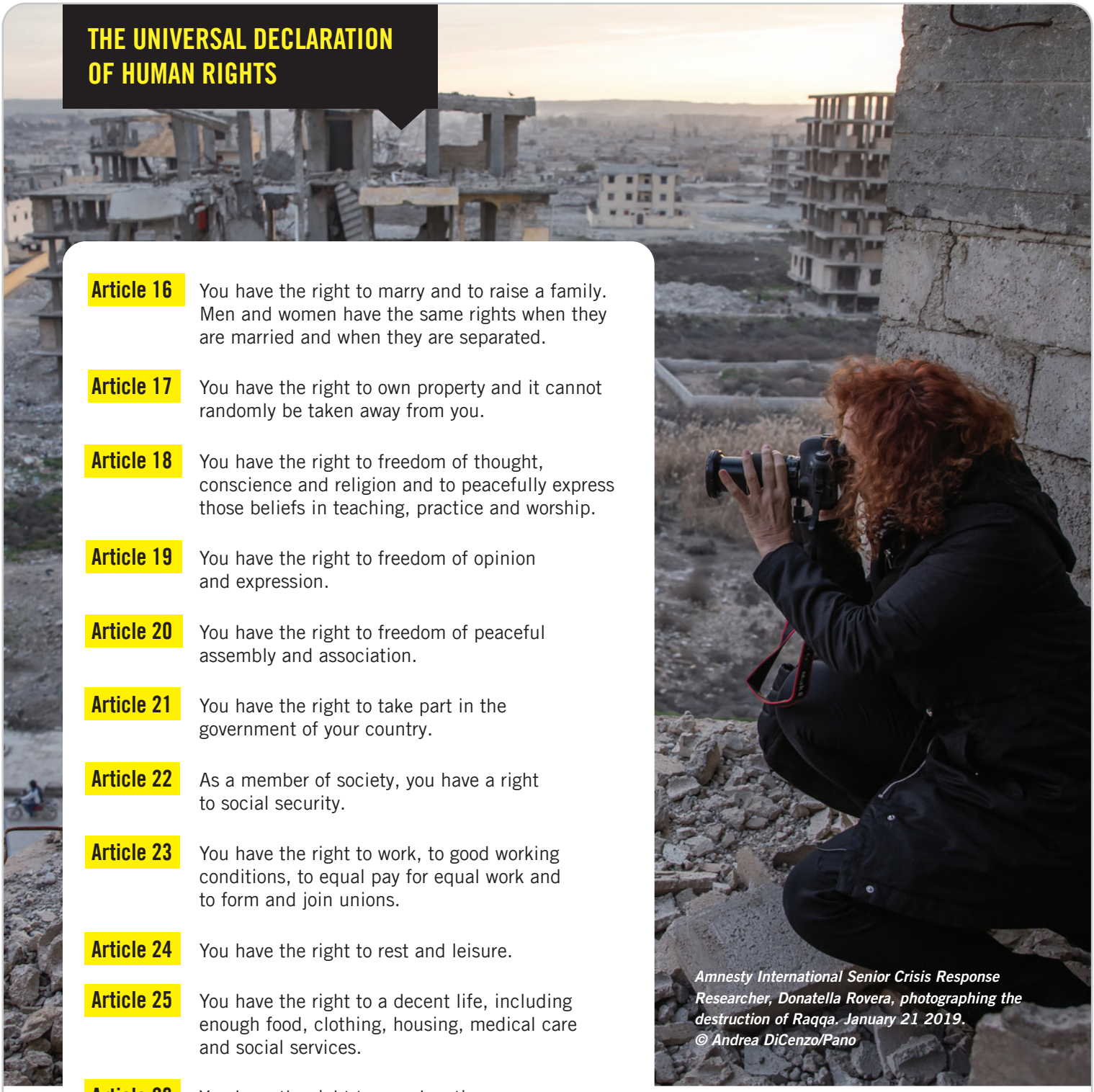
Hakeem al-Araibi fled Bahrain in 2014 after he was convicted in an unfair trial of vandalizing a police station, even though he was abroad and playing in a televised football match at the time.

Hakeem spent 76 days unjustly imprisoned in Thailand and for every single one of those days, he faced deportation to danger in Bahrain.

Supporters across the world joined forces. We partnered with other organizations, and together mobilized more than 165,000 people to add their voice to #SaveHakeem. On 11 February, it was announced that Hakeem would be coming home.

Find more successes for human rights at > www.amnesty.org.au/wins

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



Amnesty International Senior Crisis Response Researcher, Donatella Rovera, photographing the destruction of Raqqa. January 21 2019. © Andrea DiCenzo/Pano

Article 16 You have the right to marry and to raise a family. Men and women have the same rights when they are married and when they are separated.

Article 17 You have the right to own property and it cannot randomly be taken away from you.

Article 18 You have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to peacefully express those beliefs in teaching, practice and worship.

Article 19 You have the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Article 20 You have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Article 21 You have the right to take part in the government of your country.

Article 22 As a member of society, you have a right to social security.

Article 23 You have the right to work, to good working conditions, to equal pay for equal work and to form and join unions.

Article 24 You have the right to rest and leisure.

Article 25 You have the right to a decent life, including enough food, clothing, housing, medical care and social services.

Article 26 You have the right to an education.

Article 27 No-one may stop you from participating in the cultural life of your community.

Article 28 You have the right to live in the kind of world where your rights and freedoms are respected.

Article 29 We all have a responsibility to the people around us and should protect their rights and freedoms.

Article 30 There is nothing in this declaration that justifies any person or country taking away the rights to which we are all entitled.

Article 7

You have the right to be treated by the law in the same way as everyone else. Everyone has a right to to protection against violations of their human rights.

The above Articles are abbreviated. For a full version of the Declaration go to www.un.org/Overview/rights

Article 20:
You have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Burmese student activist Phyoe Phyoe Aung at court hearings in Myanmar, May 2015. © Private

“I thank everyone very much for their support for me and our movement. Receiving letters gives me real inspiration for what we are doing. I have begun to notice that the world is watching and cheering us – we are not alone.”

Phyoe Phyoe Aung

In 2015, student leader Phyoe Phyoe Aung was jailed for helping organise peaceful protests against the government in Myanmar.

For this she was charged with a range of offences, including inciting the public to commit offences against the State, and faced up to nine years’ imprisonment.

After almost 400,000 Amnesty supporters called for her release, Phyoe Phyoe Aung walked free in April 2016.

Find more successes for human rights at > www.amnesty.org.au/wins

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The UDHR applies equally to everyone.

To further protect the rights of the world's most vulnerable people the UN has adopted several other human rights agreements. When countries sign up to these agreements, it means their governments commit to protecting these rights in their countries.

Joseline Kemar on her traditional homelands at Utopia, Northern Territory, Australia. © Amnesty International

The rights of Indigenous people

The International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP) outlines the unique rights of Indigenous Peoples and sets a standard for the protection of these rights.

The UN adopted the Declaration on 13 September 2007, after more than 20 years of discussion.

Outlined in the DRIP include Indigenous Peoples' rights to:

- be free from discrimination
- their cultural identity
- self-determination (the right to decide on matters that affect your own life, land or livelihood)
- free, prior and informed consent (the right to be consulted and given all the information necessary to make decisions that may impact your life or land)

Download a simplified version of the Declaration with commentary from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at: www.amnesty.org.au/DRIP

Abdul Aziz Muhamat finds freedom at last in Switzerland. © Getty

The rights of refugees and asylum seekers

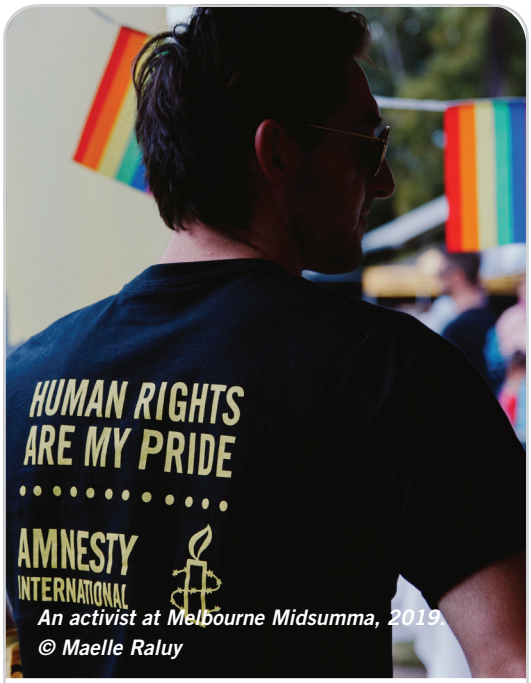
By the end of June 2019, 70.8 million people around the world had been forced to leave their homes. This is a result of conflict, persecution, violence and human rights violations. Of these:

- 25.9 million people had to escape to another country, half of whom are under the age of 18. These people are referred to as refugees.
- A third of refugees — 6.7 million people — are hosted by the world's poorest countries.
- 3.5 million people have sought safety in another country. These people are seeking asylum, and awaiting recognition as refugees.
- 41.3 million people were displaced within their own country. These people are described as internally displaced persons.
- There are also millions of stateless people who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.

When people are forced to flee their countries, the international community must step in to provide refugees with the protection and rights due to them. This is outlined in Article 14 of the UDHR. The 1951 Refugee Convention outlines who is a refugee and the kind of legal protection, assistance, and social rights they are entitled to. Australia has signed up to abide by the Refugee Convention.

> "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution"
>
> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



An activist at Melbourne Midsumma, 2019. © Maelle Raluy

LGBTQI rights

All people have the same human rights regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or because they are intersex. That includes the right to be free from discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation.

The right of adults to enter into consensual marriage is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 16).

No-one should be denied the right to marry the person they love because of their gender or sexuality.

> "You have the right to marry and to raise a family. Men and women have the same rights when they are married and when they are separated."
>
> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16

A young child wears traditional clothing in her home-town of Grassy Narrows, Canada. © Allan Lissner

Children's rights

Children and young people (anyone below the age of 18) have further rights in recognition of their need to develop to their full potential, and to protect them from exploitation and abuse. ***The rights of children are outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.***

Teodora Vasquez hugs her family and friends shortly after being released from prison in El Salvador on 15 February 2018, where she was serving a sentence under anti-abortion laws after suffering a miscarriage. © Getty

Women's rights

Despite some gains, most women and girls are far from enjoying equal rights and face widespread, often institutionalised discrimination and violence. Many women and girls around the world are married against their will, trapped in conflicts where rape is used as a strategy, blocked from fair wages, education and political participation.

Millions of women cannot choose freely what happens to their body. For example, in some countries abortion is a crime in all circumstances, even for survivors of rape and incest, or when a woman's life is at risk.

This is not an exhaustive list; anyone can be at risk of having their rights taken away.

A group of women raise their fists in solidarity with human rights activist Marielle Franco, who was murdered in 2018. © Elisângela Leite

What is Amnesty International?

Amnesty International is the world's largest and most-respected human rights organisation. In Australia and across the globe we bring torturers to justice, change oppressive laws and free people jailed for voicing their opinions.

We send researchers into countries where human rights abuses are occurring to investigate and report. We then use this evidence to call on governments or companies to uphold, create or change laws or policies that will protect human rights.

Amnesty's vital work is funded by people just like you. We're independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion to ensure we can speak out on human rights abuses wherever they occur.

People power

Amnesty is a grassroots movement: ordinary people from all walks of life, standing together for justice, freedom, human dignity and equality.

Around the world we stand with people and communities who come under attack, encourage governments and others to respect human rights and raise awareness of the international standards that protect us all.

Our 7 million supporters worldwide sign petitions, write letters, partake in peaceful protests and take online actions directed at governments, groups or individuals. And we also support human rights advocates and activists defending human rights in their own countries.

Together our movement:

- defends freedom of expression and association
- demands safety for people fleeing war and persecution
- works to protect and defend women's rights
- campaigns for the abolition of the death penalty everywhere
- works for and with Indigenous people to secure equality
- demands justice for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes
- defends the rights of the LGBTQI community

The world's **largest** human rights organisation

A global movement of **7 million supporters** in more than 150 countries

Nobel **Peace Prize winner** 1977

Watch a video about how Amnesty works at www.amnesty.org.au/the-movement

Human rights are being violated all the time and right now thousands of people are being denied a fair trial, tortured and imprisoned because of what they think or believe.

The UDHR is the bedrock of our campaigning for these people – allowing us to hold authorities to account when rights are abused.

Join Amnesty and act on behalf of people whose human rights are being abused.

Your support can change lives.

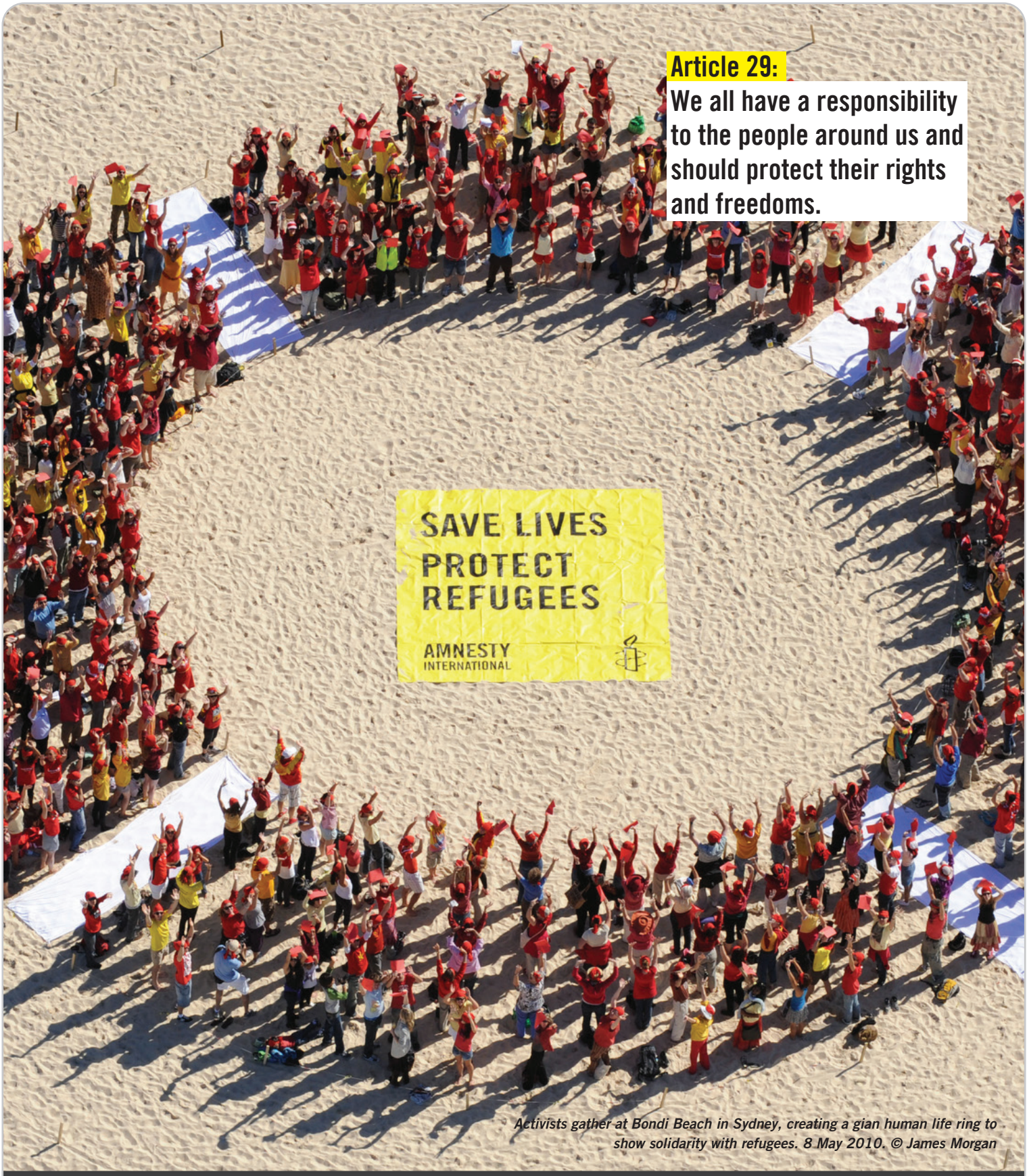
Register to volunteer:
www.amnesty.org.au/donate-my-time

Become a member:
www.amnesty.org.au/sign-up

Donate to support Amnesty's work:
www.amnesty.org.au/give-once

Find a local group or event:
www.amnesty.org.au/find-my-group

An activist holds a candle and rose at a vigil for Mhelody Polan Bruno, a trans woman who was murdered in September 2019. © Amnesty Rainbow QLD Network.



Article 29:
We all have a responsibility to the people around us and should protect their rights and freedoms.

Activists gather at Bondi Beach in Sydney, creating a gian human life ring to show solidarity with refugees. 8 May 2010. © James Morgan

Connect with us

f facebook.com/AmnestyOz
@AmnestyOz
e supporter@amnesty.org.au
1300 300 920

www.amnesty.org.au

Amnesty International Australia Locked Bag 23 Broadway NSW 2007
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