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SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MESSAGE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DAY, 10 DECEMBER

Eight years have now passed since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed as "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations", as a goal towards which men and women everywhere should strive.

It is important to recall the signposts which have guided us in the past and may still guide us in the future towards an international order in which freedom and justice may prevail.

The Declaration is one such signpost. It is no formal treaty. It is a declaration of man's faith in himself, of his belief in human dignity, of his aspiration towards a moral order. It sets forth in words the rights and freedoms which are man's greatest gifts and which those in power are pledged to promote. When these are denied, and "the dignity and worth of the human person" is forgotten, there can be no peace.

Recently, we have been sharply reminded of these truths. Peoples and nations turned to the United Nations so that their voice might be heard.

The anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights should remind us of the dedication that a life of freedom demands and the rewards that it promises.

As Secretary-General of the United Nations I appeal to peoples everywhere, this day, to let themselves be guided, in all their actions, by respect for the fundamental rights of man as recognized in the Declaration of Human Rights.

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