

Dear Party Leaders,

We are writing to you today, as the silent majority, to convey a simple message: we support human rights and believe they are more important than ever.

For nearly 70 years the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has acted as a blueprint for defending the most vulnerable. From upholding the equal rights of men and women to prohibiting torture and slavery, it has inspired numerous UN conventions as well as regional and national laws which allow individuals to assert their rights in court.

Throughout this period the UK has regularly taken the lead, either in drafting these vital standards, signing up to their aims or calling for more oppressive states to do the same. You will find a British 'stamp' on countless human rights treaties as the world has sought to learn from our example.

But the UK must walk the walk as well as talk the talk. Troubling disputes over human rights in this country – or more accurately in Westminster and the press – threaten to jeopardise our human rights protections and disempower the British public. Our example to others will become meaningless if we continue to promote human rights abroad then question or even violate them here at home.

As the Universal Declaration states, human rights are "the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world" and should be above politics. They are the indispensable tools we use every day to hold our government to account. This is no less important now than it was in the wake of the Second World War when they were first formed.

This Human Rights Day we urge you, as leaders of the three major political parties, to commit to championing our human rights protections which uphold the "inherent dignity" of all people in the UK.

Yours sincerely,



the Howard League for Penal Reform

We the undersigned add our names to this petition:

Simone Abel  
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Robert Parker  
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Eddie Saint-Jean  
Nathalia Salamanca  
Natalie  
Samarasinghe  
Christine Sanderson  
Constance Mary  
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Steven Scotland  
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Philip Scribbins  
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Malcolm Searle  
Jonathan Seyghal  
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Maryam Sharifi  
Michael Shaw  
Miranda Shaw  
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Hannah Shaw-Ridler  
Rosa Shea  
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Shepherd  
John Shirley  
Steph Siddall  
Ruth Sillar  
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Robin Smith  
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Mary Southwell  
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Marilyn Stafford  
Philippa Stilwell  
Colin Stone  
Les Stratton  
Robert Streeter  
Ailsa Stuart  
Anita Sturdy  
Kanagakulasingam  
Suththanantha  
Hans Svennevig  
Judith Swain  
Batur Talu  
Margo Tamm  
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Dabir Tehrani  
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Rosemary Theobalds  
Catherine Thick  
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Katherine Thompson  
Jane Thompson  
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Kathleen Tillinghast  
Janette Timlett  
Guy Tindale  
Ruth Tolland  
Audrey Tullett  
Roslyn Tummon  
Christopher Turner  
Anna Tylor  
Clare Usher  
Athina Van der  
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Peter Varney

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Katy Vaughan  
Sandra Veloy  
Roshan Verghese  
Martin Verity  
Noel Vethanayagam  
Karen Vogt  
Lilian Volcan  
Ona-Adele Vrondis-  
Fontinelle  
Lydia Vulliamy  
Lucy Wake  
Derek Wales  
Alexander Walker  
Edith Walker  
Michael Walls  
Máire Walton  
Dianne Wannell  
Sean Ward  
Nick Ward  
David Wardrop  
Paul Warren

Denise Watkins  
Anne Watson  
Jacqueline Watson-  
Yarngo  
Elizabeth Way  
Agnes Wedderburn  
Bob Welch  
Kit Welchman  
John Welford  
Penelope Wells  
Tessa West  
Michael Westcombe  
Ian White  
Richard Whithouse  
Chris Whitwell  
Louise Wiggins  
Helen Wildbore  
Liam Wilkinson  
Peter Williams  
Alison Williams  
Richard Williams  
Laura Williams

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Francis John Wilton  
Kara Winney  
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