

UPF Düsseldorf Dusseldorf Gathering Shares Concerns about Human Rights

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Düsseldorf, Germany - To mark Human Rights Day, UPF-Düsseldorf held an evening of shared information and discussion on December 8, 2025.

After the welcome, a video of UN Secretary-General António Guterres' address from 2024 set the mood for the topic. H.E. Guterres warned that human rights are under massive pressure worldwide. He criticized the increase in armed conflicts, the strengthening of authoritarian governments and increasing discrimination and violence. He was particularly concerned about the restriction of press freedom and the regression in the rights of women and minorities.



In the subsequent lecture, Mr. Sergio Brina made it clear that peaceful coexistence does not work without clear rules. He explained that there was no universal agreement that enshrined individual rights until December 10, 1948, when the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Mr. Brina pointed out a historical peculiarity: Of the 58 UN member states at the time, only 48 cast their votes. This was mainly due to the geopolitical situation of the post-war period, as many areas in Africa

and Asia were still under colonial rule and were not sovereign states. From Africa, only Egypt, Ethiopia and South Africa took part. While Ethiopia was the only country in Africa that had never been colonized, the South African apartheid regime of the time abstained because it rejected the principle of equality for all people.

Although the declaration is not a legally binding treaty in the sense of international law, it still enjoys enormous moral and political significance today. It serves as a recognized benchmark for the protection of human dignity worldwide.



UPF sees it as its core task to support the United Nations in its commitment to peace and the protection of human rights. Current developments such as the attacks on Christian minorities in Syria and Ethiopia underline the urgency of this commitment.

There is also reason for concern within UPF at the moment: The founder Dr. Hak Ja Han has been in custody in South Korea for over two months. She is accused of having arranged for gifts to be handed over to the wife of a former president. Mr. Brina sharply criticized the prison conditions, saying it is inhumane to keep an 82-year-old woman with known health problems, such as a previous heart operation and severe eye problems, in custody solely because of the alleged risk of flight. Currently, several religious figures are imprisoned in South Korea.

In conclusion, Mr. Brina appealed to those present to understand human rights not as a mere document, but as a daily obligation. The foundation laid 77 years ago must be strengthened and defended together, he said. Universal human rights are the basis for a peaceful and just international community. It is important to reaffirm this promise every day.

The lecture was met with great appreciation and warm applause. After questions from the audience were answered, the participants took the opportunity to exchange ideas about the evening's topics over refreshments.