

1945: The United Nations Charter is adopted, establishing the United Nations and explaining that treaties created through the organization are to be honored above all other treaties. The Charter also says that participant states are legally bound by contractual obligation to strive for the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Charter states that the purpose of the United Nations is to promote and create respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of sex. This marks a step towards the development of women's rights in the international community.

1946: The Commission on Status of Women is established. The Commission begins as a sub-commission of the Commission on Human rights. It explores general guarantees of non-discriminations from a gender perspective and helps better define these issues. Its mandate is to create recommendations for urgent problems in women's rights and implement the principle that men and women should have equal rights.

1948: The International Bill of Human Rights is created. The Bill strengthens and extends the emphasis on the human rights of women, previously mentioned in the UN Charter. It lists a comprehensive set of rights to which all persons are entitled.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is included as a part of the Bill and states the entitlement of every human being to equality before law. Again, it emphasizes the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, forbidding distinction based upon gender.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also constitutes part of the Bill. It translates the principles of the Universal

Declaration into a legally binding form, making all rights set forth applicable to all persons, with no distinction of any kind. This binds ratifying states to ensure that women and men have an equal right to the enjoyment of the rights set forth by the Bill.

However, the statement of women's humanity presented by the International Bill of Human Rights proves to be insufficient to guarantee enjoyment of rights by women.

1952 - 1965: The Commission fails to include certain issues in its previous works. It later elaborates on these, in various conventions:

1. The Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952
2. The Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, 1957
3. The Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration for Marriage, and Registration of Marriages, 1965
4. The Conventions above fail to deal with discrimination in a comprehensive way. There is also concern that human rights regime set in place is not working as well as it should.

1963: Resolution 1921 is adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It invites the Commission on the Status of Women to prepare a draft declaration on the equal rights of men and women.

1965: Drafting by the CSW begins with **Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women**. The Declaration comprehensively sets international standards for the treatment of women in one instrument.

1967: The Declaration is adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It is only a statement of moral and political intent, lacking the binding

force and contractual obligations of a treaty.

1972: The CSW calls upon United Nations Secretary-General to give binding force to the Declaration.

1973: A working group is appointed by the Secretary-General to consider the task of giving force to the Declaration.

1974: The General Assembly decides to make the Declaration a binding treaty. It is a single, comprehensive and internationally binding instrument with the purpose of eliminating discrimination against women worldwide.

1975: A **Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women [CEDAW]** with effective means of implementation is called for at the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in Mexico City.

1976 - 1979: The treaty text is developed and revised until a final version is agreed upon.

1979: **CEDAW** is adopted by United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 34/180. It is voted in with 130 member states agreeing to its terms. No members show opposition to the Convention, while only ten countries abstain from the vote.

1980: Sixty-four states sign the Convention, and two countries express their immediate intent to ratify. President Carter signs the Convention to the United States Senate; however, the treaty is never ratified

1981: **CEDAW** goes into force for all signed participants.

2009: **186 Countries have signed and ratified or acceded to the treaty.**