

**International American Studies Association's Official Statement
on the Violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
and the Convention on the Rights of the Child
23rd October 2023**

The Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads clearly that “Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms” in full awareness of the fact that, historically, “disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind,” and with a view to “the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want.” Representing all inhabited continents of the world, we the Scholars of the International American Studies Association, universally share the “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” as “the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

In the light of the fact that the Governments of the States who have ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child are legally bound guardians of these fundamental rights, their inaction in the face of acts of aggression renders them complicit in the ongoing horrendous slaughter of civilian lives, including lives of thousands of children. As Members of the International American Studies Association, we therefore call upon the United Nations Organization and all Member States to take efficient action, legal, diplomatic, and economic alike, to safeguard the lives, wellbeing, and fundamental rights of all civilians in the war zones.

We call upon the United Nations and its Member States to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance of the Declaration, “both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.” We demand that the United Nations Organization, along with its Member States, take immediate action towards a renewed and united effort for a diplomatic resolution to ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, Ukraine, and all other war zones, where structures of governance capable of vouchsafing freedom, justice and peace in the world no longer exist. No aggression in which civilians perish can be condoned: unless those who pledged themselves to the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms live up to their obligations, the mortal cycle of aggression and retaliation will not be broken.

We call upon the Nations who ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to act now, and act efficiently to put an end to the suffering of innocent people in the Middle East, in Ukraine, and world-wide, thereby making the third decade of the 21st century, war-free.

As a Community of Scholars associated in IASA whose essential goal is to foster intersectional understanding, we shall continue to meticulously observe the steps of the States and Organizations whose refusal to act renders the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a tragic mockery of compassion.



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“You who wronged...”
by Czesław Miłosz

*You who wronged a simple man
Bursting into laughter at the crime,
And kept a pack of fools around you
To mix good and evil, to blur the line,
Though everyone bowed down before you,
Saying virtue and wisdom lit your way,
Striking gold medals in your honor,
Glad to have survived another day,
Do not feel safe. The poet remembers.
You can kill one, but another is born.
The words are written down, the deed, the date. [...]
[Translated by Richard Lourie]*

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