

Welcome to:
**Bringing Human
Rights Home**

**Building a Human Rights Cities Movement
Against Structural Racism**

US Human Rights Cities Alliance

<http://humanrightscities.us>

Email: uprcities@humanrightscities.mayfirst.org

Special Thanks to our Partners: US Human Rights Network, Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance,
University of Pittsburgh Global Studies Center

Human Rights Cities: *A Global Movement*

- **Global South-** “Right to the City”
 - Slum dwellers and displaced rural residents at the frontlines
- **Europe:** Promoting Social Europe vs. Market Integration
 - [European Charter of Cities for Human Rights](#)
 - [European Coalition of Cities Against Racism](#)
- **Human Rights Cities Movement-** United Nations/Global
 - Led by [People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning](#)
 - First “Human Rights City”: [Rosario Argentina](#) 1997
 - First US Human Rights City: [Washington DC 2008](#)
 - [World Human Rights Cities Forum](#), Gwangju-S. Korea (since 2007)

[See: Human Rights City](#) – Wikipedia Site

Human Rights Cities Defined

- A Human Rights City is a municipality that **refers explicitly to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards and/or law in their policies, statements, and programs.**
- "both a **local community and a socio-political process ...** where human rights play a key role as fundamental values and guiding principles." ([World Human Rights Cities Forum](#), Gwangju)
- *People-Centered Human Rights* (Human Rights Cities [Statement of Principles](#))

Growth of Human Rights Cities

*Formally Declared** Human Rights Cities in N. America

Edmonton, AB, Canada (2003)

Winnipeg, MB, Canada (2003)

United States

Washington D.C. (2008)

Carrboro, NC (2009)

Chapel Hill, NC (2009)

Richmond, CA (2009)

Eugene, OR (2011)

Boston, MA (2011)

Pittsburgh, PA (2011)

Seattle, WA (2012)

Jackson, MS (2014)

Edina, MN (2016)

Mountain View, CA (2016)

*This is a more restricted list—many “human rights” cities have incorporated human rights principles in local legislation or adopted international treaty commitments such as CEDAW, CRC

Why a *Global Human Rights* Movement?



As long as you call it “civil rights” your only allies can be the people in the next community, many of whom are responsible for your grievance. But when you call it “human rights” ... you can take your troubles to the World Court.... ***And anybody anywhere on this earth can become your ally.***

--Malcolm X

Bringing voices from US cities & communities to the United Nations Review

UPR Cities USA - "The 3 Cs"

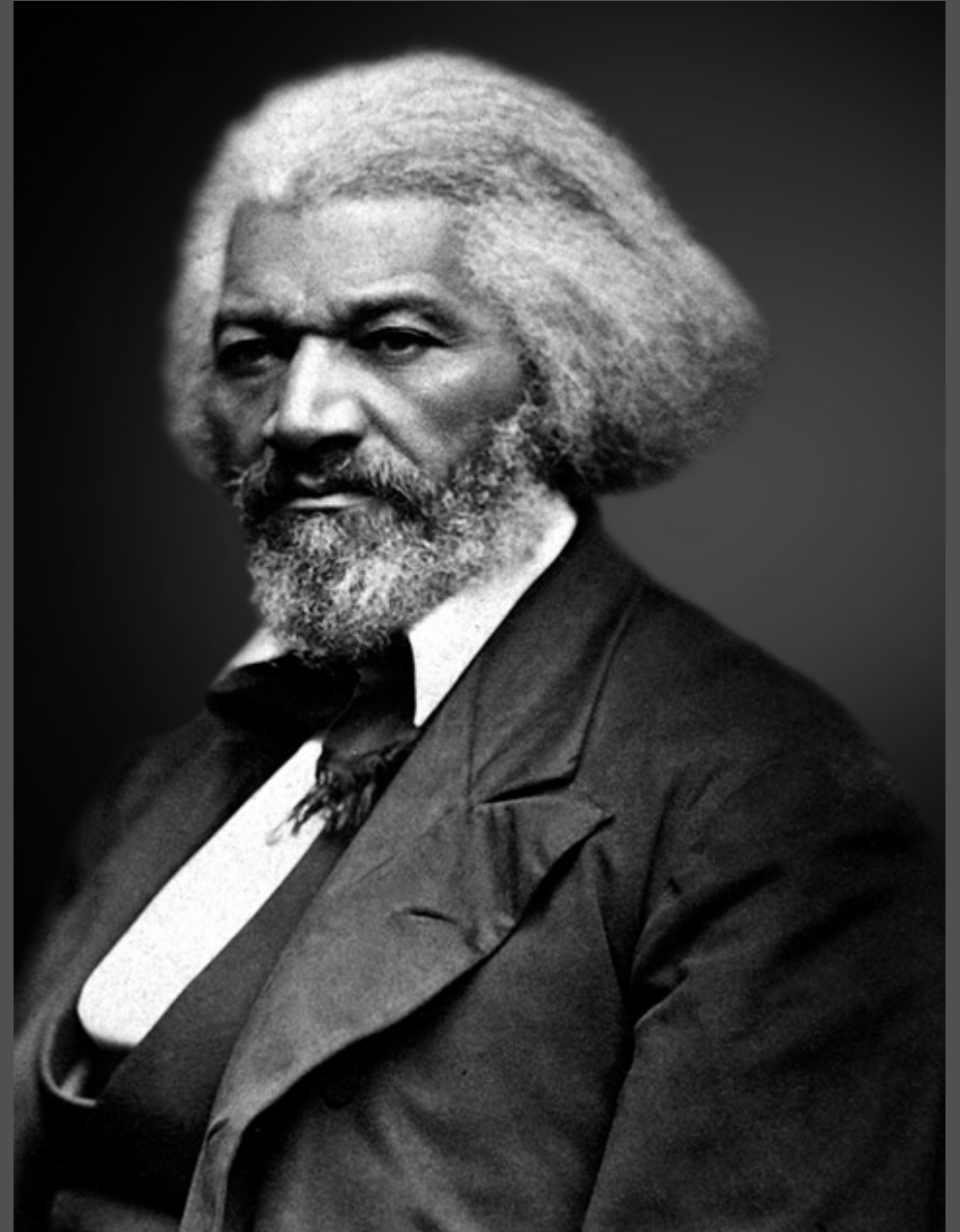
- 1) Collect** local testimony about human rights.
- 2) Compile** summary reports of local human rights conditions & recommendations for change.
- 3) Clamor!** Publicize UPR reports and press local governments to implement recommendations.

UN Human Rights Instruments vs. Structural Racism

- [We Charge Genocide: Petition to the United Nations](#) 1951
- [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination \(CERD\)](#) (1969) [US: 1994]
- [World Conference Against Racism](#) 2001
 - [Expert Working Group](#) on People of African Descent
- [Caricom Reparations Commission \(CRC\)](#) 2013
- [International Decade of People of African Descent](#) 2015-2024
- [US Country Visit](#) Expert Working Group on People of African Descent 2016

Power and those in control
concede nothing...without a
demand.... Each and every
one of us must keep
demanding, must keep
fighting, must keep
thundering, must keep
plowing, must keep on
keeping things struggling,
must speak out and speak up
until justice is served because
where there is no justice
there is no peace.

—Frederick Douglass



Treaty Bodies

The United States has ratified the following international human rights treaties, which makes the US government subject to periodic reviews of its performance.

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Human Rights (ICCPR)
- Convention Against Torture (CAT)

[*Link to all UN Treaty Bodies](#)

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

- [2014 Concluding Observations Report*](#)
- [General recommendation No. 34 adopted by the Committee - Racial discrimination against people of African descent](#)
- [General recommendation No. 31 on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system](#)
- [General recommendation No. 25 on gender-related dimensions of racial discrimination](#)
- [General recommendation No. 13 on the training of law enforcement officials in the protection of human rights](#)

**These reports provide a baseline of the most recent set of recommendations made by treaty review committees to the US government. We can draw from these recommendations in assessing local human rights practices and the extent to which they reflect these recommendations.*

Treaty Bodies (*cont.*)

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Human Rights
 - [2014 Concluding Observations Report*](#)
 - [General comment No. 36 - Article 6 \(the right to life\)](#) (para. 44)
- Convention Against Torture
 - [2014 Concluding Observations Report*](#)
 - Link to [2014 USHRN Stakeholder Report](#) “Torture in the Homeland” with Chicago Police case

**These reports provide a baseline of the most recent set of recommendations made by treaty review committees to the US government. We can draw from these recommendations in assessing local human rights practices and the extent to which they reflect these recommendations.*

Other international mechanisms for use by Human Rights Cities

- Intergovernmental Working group on the Effective implementation and Follow-up to the Durban declaration and Programme of Action
 - [Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on its 9th session](#)
- [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteurship on the rights of persons of African descent and on racial discrimination](#)
- [International Decade for People of African Descent](#)
 - [Preventing and Countering Racial Profiling of People of African Descent](#)
 - [Women and Girls of African Descent: Human Rights Achievements and Challenges](#)
 - [More IDPAD resources and publications](#)

United Nations Special Rapporteurs & Expert Working Groups

- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (Est. 1993)
 - [Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US \(A/HRC/11/36/Add.3, 2009\)](#)
 - [Xenophobia: Its conceptualization, trends and manifestations \(A/HRC/32/50, 2016\)](#)
 - [US shootings: Use of racist language to gain votes or power must stop, say UN rights experts](#)
 - [Statement delivered at the occasion of 2019 International Day against Racial Discrimination](#)
- UN Expert Working Group on People of African Descent
 - [Report on the WG People of African Descent's visit to the US \(A/HRC/33/61/Add.2, 2016\)](#)
 - [Human Rights experts find racial discrimination in the USA alive and thriving \(2016\)](#)
 - [Fact-finding mission to US looks at human rights condition of African Americans \(2016\)](#)
- UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues
 - ["Legitimate concerns" over outcome of Michael Brown and Eric Garner cases](#) – UN rights experts
 - [Confronting the Two Faces of Racism: Resurgent Hate and Structural Discrimination](#) – UN rights experts

[Fact Sheet N° 27: Seventeen Frequently Asked Questions about United Nations Special Rapporteurs.](#)

United Nations Special Rapporteurs & Expert Working Groups (*cont.*)

- Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty (1998)
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US ([A/HRC/38/33/Add.1](#), 2018)
- Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing (2000)
 - Report on the UN Special Rapporteur's visit to US ([A/HRC/13/20/Add.4](#), 2010)
 - [Annual report Main focus: Financialization of housing and the right to adequate housing](#) (2017)
 - [Special Rapporteurs on the right to adequate housing and on the right to safe drinking water and sanitation Visit to city of Detroit](#) (2014)
- Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice
 - Report on the UN WG's visit to the US ([A/HRC/32/44/Add.2](#), 2016)
 - [Migrant caravan: States have duty to protect human rights](#)
- Special Rapporteur on the right to education
 - Report on UN Special Rapporteur's visit to the US ([E/CN.4/2002/60/Add.1](#), 2006)

Guide for advocates [“Engaging UN Special Procedures to Advance Human Rights at Home”](#)

Sample recommendations from 2015 UPR Report to US

- “Prohibit that federal authorities undertake racial profiles, and investigate the disproportionate use of lethal force against coloured people by state and local police” [*supported**]
- Take necessary measures to combat discriminatory practices against women and migrant workers in the labour market” [*supported*]
- Strengthen human rights education programmes and training for all civil servants, particularly for law enforcement and immigration officers, and combat impunity concerning abuses against defenceless persons [*supported*]

* According to Resolution 5/1, the State Under Review can either ‘support’ or ‘note’ a recommendation. States cannot “reject” recommendations but can provide comments on “noted” recommendations, including explanations on why they do not support said recommendations.

Sample recommendations from 2015 UPR Report to US (*cont.*)

- “Undertake measures to combat racial discrimination, including adoption of a National Action Plan to Combat Racial Discrimination as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination” [*noted*]
- “Take further measures to eliminate racial discrimination in all of its forms and manifestations, in particular, by prohibiting the practice of race profiling in law enforcement, as recommended by the United Nations treaty bodies” [*supported*]
- “Prohibit racial discrimination and racist hate speech, as well as broaden the protection afforded by law” [*noted*]

When crafting local reports, activists can draw from prior UPR reports:

- **Prior UPR Reviews of US Human Rights Record**

- 2015 Official Report of the UPR Working Group of the UN Human Rights Council
- 2011 Official Report of the UPR Working Group of the UN Human Rights Council

Civil Society/Stakeholder Reports

- 2015 US Human Rights Network UPR Stakeholder Report
- 2010 Shadow Report- USHRN
- 2010 submission focusing on racial health disparities and discrimination