

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Demonstrates the Right to Freedom of Assembly Is in Full Bloom

Thousands assembled peacefully around the U.S. to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., what he fought then and what we continue to fight for.

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, January 19, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Across the country, thousands exercised their right to freedom of assembly in events observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Thousands of people marched with Martin Luther King Jr.'s family in Washington, D.C., to urge Congress to pass voting rights. Others assembled to promote religious freedom and organized prayers for the Congregation Beth Israel whose religious service was interrupted by a hostage taker. Groups in cities around the country gathered to honor Dr. King with a day of service, such as the Vice President and Second Gentleman who participated in an event at [Martha's Table](#) by feeding the homeless as well as those who are challenged in providing food for their families.



Civil Rights March on Washington, DC, with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in a crowd. Dr. King used the right to assemble to lead the civil rights movement.

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The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The U.S. Constitution guarantees the [right to peaceful assembly](#) in the First Amendment. Uniquely, the right to freedom of assembly is the only right in the First Amendment that requires more than one person for its exercise.

After World War II, it was clear that having these rights only in America was not enough. It was needed for the whole world. Thus, in 1948 this right was proclaimed across the globe in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its Article 20 states: "1. Everyone has the right to freedom of

peaceful assembly and association. 2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association."

Martin Luther King Jr. spoke about the right to peaceful assembly in his famous speech "I've Been to the Mountaintop" in Memphis, Tennessee, right before he was assassinated. He said, "Somewhere I read of the freedom of assembly. Somewhere I read of the freedom of speech. Somewhere I read of the freedom of press. Somewhere I read that the greatness of America is the right to protest for rights. And so just as I said, we aren't going to let dogs or water hoses turn us around. We aren't going to let any injunction turn us around. We are going on."

This tradition and right to peacefully assemble and demonstrate for any cause or issue that you choose allows minority groups to get across a message on an issue that the majority might be ignoring or might be blissfully unaware of.

The right to peacefully assemble was called by Justice Robert Jackson, who served on the Supreme Court from 1941-1954, the "the right to differ."

Peaceful assembly has been used by suffragists to get the vote for women, by labor activists to get minimum wage and work protections, and by civil rights groups to end segregation and create many laws to ensure minorities are equally treated. The right to assembly has been crucial in getting social issues recognized, acknowledged and addressed.

To [teach about freedom of assembly](#), as well as the rest of the thirty different rights provided in



"What Are Human Rights?" educational booklet provided free of charge by Youth for Human Rights International.



Youth for Human Rights assembling to promote human rights on Human Rights Day.

the UN Declaration of Human Rights, a booklet and video demonstrating each of these rights has been created by Youth for Human Rights International. Youth for Human Rights International is offering free booklets enumerating these rights. Short public service announcements on each of the rights, including the right to assembly, are available online at their website, www.youthforhumanrights.org, as well as on YouTube.

Youth for Human Rights International exercised the right to assembly throughout the year by gatherings such as its annual Stand Up For Human Rights March at Lincoln Memorial on Human Rights Day, human rights seminars to educate groups of youth, holding a "Hill Day" for advocates to visit Congressional offices on Capitol Hill, and training sessions on how to spot human trafficking.

About Youth for Human Rights:

Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to teach youth about human rights, specifically the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to inspire them to become valuable advocates for tolerance and peace. YHRI advocates for human rights both in the classroom and in nontraditional educational settings such as through art series, concerts, and other interactive community events, including regional and international human rights summits which bring youth together from across whole sectors of the world. Their most recent campaign has included #KnowYour30 with the deliberate purpose of increasing awareness of the 30 human rights every person has, and how they are a part of everyday life. To learn more about human rights go to <https://www.youthforhumanrights.org>. For a documentary on Youth for Human Rights and its founder, go to <https://www.scientology.tv/series/voices-for-humanity/mary-shuttleworth.html>

Press Office

Youth for Human Rights International - National Office

+1 202-667-6404

[email us here](#)

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