

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- What does the expression “human rights” suggest to you?
- Can you think of any rights that are fundamentally important for a person?
- Do you know what THE UNITED NATIONS (In Italian ONU) is?
- Have you ever heard of Amnesty International?

Human rights include civil and political rights, such as the right to life and liberty, freedom of expression and equality before the law and social, cultural and economic rights, including the right to participate in culture, the right to food, the right to water, the right to work and the right to education.

After the Second World War the Allied Powers decided to create an international body to guarantee the observance of human rights all over the world. This was done through the creation of an international organism called The United Nations. In 1948 the state members issued a Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which aimed to promote human, civil, economic and social rights, asserting that they are part of the *‘foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’*.

One of the most important non-governmental organisations that campaigns for the respect of human rights is Amnesty International. Amnesty, as it is also called, is an independent worldwide movement of people based in London who work to improve human rights through campaigning and international solidarity.

Amnesty International was founded by Peter Benenson in 1961. Benenson was horrified when he heard about two Portuguese students sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment for raising a toast to freedom. His yearlong campaign, Appeal for Amnesty 1961, was launched by The Observer, a British newspaper, and called on people everywhere to protest against the imprisonment of men and women for their political or religious beliefs – so called ‘prisoners of conscience’.

Some of the issues Amnesty is working on today include: stopping violence against women, defending the rights and dignity of people trapped in poverty, abolishing the death penalty, opposing torture, freeing prisoners of conscience, protecting the rights of refugees and migrants and regulating the global arms trade. Amnesty is funded by individuals through personal donations, this allows Amnesty International full independence from all governments, political ideologies, economic interests and religions.

MATCH SYNONYMS

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Non-governmental | punishment |
| Campaign for | global |
| Worldwide | promote |
| Belief | problem, theme |
| Issue | idea, opinion |
| Penalty | independent, private |

MATCH THE FOLLOWING VERBS WITH THEIR ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Guarantee | Abolire |
| Issue | Avere lo scopo |
| Aim | Condannare |
| Assert | Lanciare |
| Sentence | Finanziare |
| Launch | Garantire |
| Abolish | Asserire, affermare |
| Fund | Emettere |

CHOOSE THE SENTENCES IN THE PASSAGE THAT HAVE THE SAME MEANING AS THE FOLLOWING ONES

1. The objectives of the Declaration of human Rights was the promotion of all human rights
2. Amnesty International is an important independent organisation which is very active in raising people’s awareness about human rights
3. People support Amnesty through donations and this allows the organisations to be independent from all government influence and economic or religious interest

FILL IN THE GAPS WITH THE CORRECT WORDS

Campaign – active – rights – independent – proclaimed – death

The end of the Second World War posed the serious problem about the respect for fundamental human 1 The United Nations were created and in 1948 a Universal Declaration of Human rights was 2 Organisations like Amnesty International are very 3 in fighting cases of human rights abuses and their negation throughout the world while at the same time working to raise awareness for the respect of human rights. It is an 4 organisation supported by private, individual donations. Its members fight to eliminate all forms of abuse and are opposed to torture and to the 5penalty; they 6 to liberate political prisoners and to improve the life of all discriminated minorities and people in need.



ANSWER QUESTIONS

What do you mean by “human rights”?

What are The United Nations?

When were The United Nations created?

Why were The United Nations created?

Why was the UDHR written?

What is Amnesty International?

Is it a governmental organization?

Who founded Amnesty International?

When was Amnesty International founded?

What were the two Portuguese students imprisoned for?

Who were the ‘prisoners of conscience’?

What is Amnesty International campaigning for today?

Is Amnesty International politically dependent?

Do you think Amnesty International is an important organization? Why?

Would you support it? In what way?

What are, in your opinion, the most important human rights? Why?
