

# Survivors, Inc.

*low-income women and our allies*

*building a movement for welfare rights and economic justice*

To Whom It May Concern:

The challenges facing Boston are complex, interrelated and often structurally ingrained. Agencies and community organizations working in isolation can often effectively address symptoms through patchwork provision of services, but tackling the ailing system itself requires pooling resources, ideas and effort within a common framework. The members of Survivors, Inc., along with several affiliated Boston-area organizations, believe that the only framework that fully encompasses their progressive work and vision is a human rights perspective, where social services are not handouts but justice, where the needy and less fortunate do not beg for charity but claim their due rights. It is in this spirit that Survivors, Inc. invites you to join in bringing the practical realization of human rights to Boston.

On April 19, 2011 Councillor Charles Yancey and the Boston City Council approved a resolution proclaiming Boston a Human Rights City, bringing it into a network of over twenty cities worldwide (including Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.) working toward incorporating human rights into local planning, social services and city culture. But this resolution was only the beginning of a long-term movement. Working with the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning, the international sponsor agency of the Human Rights City network through UN-HABITAT, Survivors, Inc. is building a multi-focus network of organizations throughout Boston to identify local human rights priorities as well as to examine the work and contributions of our organizations toward bettering Boston from the interconnected perspective of human rights.

Survivors, Inc. will be in contact soon regarding upcoming city-wide dialogue and mapping sessions to bring the vision of a Boston Human Rights City to reality. In the meantime, the attached resources provide an overview of what it means to be a Human Rights City and the path Survivors, Inc. has taken to date toward this end. We very much hope to hear from you and to recruit your help in building the Boston Human Rights City.

Sincerely,

Dottie Stevens  
Coordinator, Survivors, Inc.

---

95 Standard Street, Mattapan, MA 02126 · (617) 298-7311

*Survivors, Inc. is the publisher of Survival News*

# City of Boston

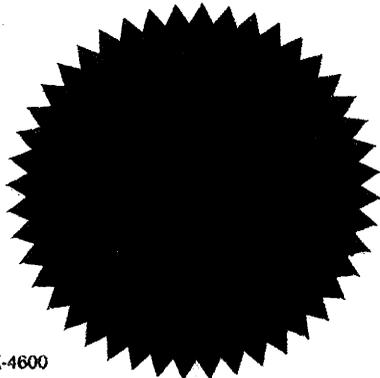
IN

## CITY COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR CHARLES C. YANCEY  
AND THE BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING BOSTON AS A HUMAN RIGHTS CITY

- WHEREAS: A *Human Rights City* is one whose residents and local authorities, through on-going discussions and creative exchanges of ideas, come to understand that human rights, when widely known as a way of life, can influence meaningful, positive economic and social change; and
- WHEREAS: Developing *Human Rights Cities* is an attempt to build infrastructure for conflict prevention, human security, sustainable development, and to create a place for active civic engagement at the local, national, and global level; and
- WHEREAS: Boston, Massachusetts, as a *Human Rights City*, becomes a model for communities around the world to witness practical ways in which the human rights framework can make every citizen a partner of sustainable change; and
- WHEREAS: Washington, DC was declared the first *Human Rights City* in the United States on December 10, 2008 in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The nation's capital joined other *Human Rights Cities* around the world in working to provide leadership and advocacy, and to secure, protect, and promote human rights for all people; and
- WHEREAS: Declaring a municipality as a Human Rights City provides that municipality with an opportunity to call attention to human rights violations around the world and to continue to promote the importance of educating its citizens about human rights; Therefore Be It
- RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council, in meeting assembled, proclaims the City of Boston a *Human Rights City* on April 20, 2011, effective immediately and ceaselessly, forevermore.



By: Stephen J. Murphy  
President of the City Council

Attest: Richard J. Farnsworth  
Clerk of the City of Boston

Offered by: John C. Farnsworth

Date: April 13, 2011

# Human Rights Cities : An Introduction

"The development of human rights cities creates space for active civic engagement at the local, national and global level, guided by the human rights framework. Human rights cities are about people developing a new political culture based on human rights."

Shulamith Koenig, founder of PDHRE  
and winner of 2003 UN Prize in Human Rights

## Human Rights Cities (HRC) in U.S. and Canada

- Edmonton, Canada (est. 2003)
- Washington, D.C. (est. 2008)
- Chapel Hill & Carrboro, NC (est. 2009)
- Pittsburgh, PA (est. 2011)
- Boston, MA (est. 2011)
- approximately 30 in total worldwide

## What is a Human Rights City?\*

A Human Rights City is one whose residents and local authorities, through learning about the relevance of human rights to their daily lives, join in ongoing learning, discussions, systemic analysis and critical thinking at the community level, to pursue creative idea exchange and joint planning of actions to realize economic, social, political, civil, environmental and cultural human rights.

## General Human Rights City process\*

1. **Establish a Steering Committee.** The Steering Committee should represent diverse sectors of society, and functions democratically and independent of municipal authorities.
2. **Draft a plan of action.** The Steering Committee and HRC participants examine city laws, policies, resource allocation and power relations from the perspective of the human rights framework. Action plan links community priorities with learning and advocacy about human rights to develop curricula and learning resources as well as strategies and projects to promote human rights within the city.
3. **Implement plan of action and learning activities.** The Steering Committee and sub-committees create a vertical and horizontal progressive learning process, reaching out to neighborhoods, schools, agencies and community organizations to examine the human rights framework and relate it to their beliefs, collective memory, aspirations and individual/institutional objectives. These communities and groups identify, monitor and document their needs and engage in one of the most important actions in the city: developing an alternative participatory budget.
4. **Evaluate work of the Human Rights City.** The Steering Committee is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes and effectiveness of the learning activities and network projects. Evaluation is ideally carried out at all levels of the community.
5. **Publicize and expand the effort.** As positive results are obtained and documented, many Human Rights Cities have been able to publicize their experience throughout the country and assist other communities in adapting the model to their own settings.

\*Adapted from S. Marks and K. Modrowski, *Human Rights Cities* (2009)

## HRC Steering Committees

- Size: Varies by city, usually 10 to 25 representatives
- Common sectors: Youth and students; business community and professionals; people with disabilities and aged; minority communities; LGBTQ community; religious and indigenous communities; labor and worker groups; unemployed, impoverished and homeless; government and law enforcement
- Role: Facilitate the development of the Human Rights City through communication, education, organization, and documentation.‡
- Objectives: Expand learning of human rights at the community level, leading to sustained social transformation; Work together with local groups, movements, and individuals to identify city-specific human rights needs and support work to help realize these rights; Develop priorities, take actions and deepen relationships and movements toward achieving equality, peace and justice guided by the holistic human rights framework in freedom and dignity for all.‡
- Commitment: Meet regularly (once per month) for project and strategy coordination. Expected commitment to Steering Committee is yearlong.

‡From the "Statement of Purposes" of the  
Washington, D.C. HRC Steering Committee

***Into your hands, a document we should learn and integrate into our daily lives  
read it out loud to reimaging and re craft a meaningful change***

**MOVING FROM CHARITY TO DIGNITY - Free from fear and free from want**

## **Summary- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights -UDHR**

The UDHR was Adopted by the United Nations on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1948

- Article 1** All human beings are born free and equal.
- Article 2** Everyone is entitled to the same rights without discrimination of any kind.
- Article 3** Everyone has the human right to life, liberty, and security.
- Article 4** No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
- Article 5** No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 6** Everyone has the human right to be recognized everywhere as a person before the law.
- Article 7** Everyone is equal before the law and has the human right to equal protection of the law.
- Article 8** Everyone has the human right to justice.
- Article 9** No one shall be arrested, detained, or exiled arbitrarily.
- Article 10** Everyone has the human right to a fair trial.
- Article 11** Everyone has the human right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- Article 12** Everyone has the human right to privacy.
- Article 13** Everyone has the human right to freedom of movement to leave and return to one's country
- Article 14** Everyone has the human right to seek asylum from persecution.
- Article 15** Everyone has the human right to a nationality.
- Article 16** All adults have the human right to marry and found a family. Women and men have equal human rights to marry, within marriage, and at its dissolution.
- Article 17** Everyone has the human right to own property.
- Article 18** Everyone has the human right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- Article 19** Everyone has the human right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- Article 20** Everyone has the human right to peaceful assembly and association.
- Article 21** Everyone has the human right to take part in government of one's country.
- Article 22** Everyone has the human right to social security and to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for dignity.
- Article 23** Everyone has the human right to work, to just conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to sufficient pay to ensure a dignified existence for one's self and one's family, and the right to join a trade union.
- Article 24** Everyone has the human right to rest and leisure.
- Article 25** Everyone has the human right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services.
- Article 26** Everyone has the human right to education.
- Article 27** Everyone has the human right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community.
- Article 28** Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which these rights can be realized fully.
- Article 29** Everyone has duties to the community.
- Article 30** No person, group or government has the right to destroy any of these human rights.  
No one human right can violate another.!

*--Human rights are Universal , Indivisible, Interconnected and interrelated*

*--With equality and without discrimination for all women and men, youth and children*

*--Democracy must be a delivery system of human rights*

*--All must know, own, organize, plan and act guided by human rights as a way of life.*

# Human Rights Cities in Boston?

Dottie Stevens

I first heard of the Human Rights Cities concept at the Old South Church in Boston at an, Ideas and Actions conference where I was asked to facilitate a workshop. I learned it was an international campaign that was already implemented in 8 other countries. Having already been working on trying to implement and enact the, Universal Declaration for Human Rights for many years here I thought this was a good step forward.

In 2009 when the National Welfare Rights Union held their annual meeting in Detroit Mi. the Mass Welfare Rights Union and Survivors Inc. then brought the campaign to the table to make all our cities in the United States, into Human Rights Cities. The NWRU voted on and adopted the Human Rights Cities Campaign as a national campaign.

Survivors Inc. and the ARMS Center at UMass/Boston then organized to bring this campaign to Boston. On April 21, 2010 Mass Welfare Rights Union and Survivors Inc held a conference on the campus of UMass/Boston where approximately 35 people attended. , and the response was positive to move ahead and create a steering committee of at least 12 people from connected interests to begin the process. The goal is to have the language of the human rights declaration to be included in all government policies as well as school curriculums. The premise being that we should all be intimately familiar with the idea of human rights. Attendees at this conference : Cuf Ferguson, Sylvia Mignon, Dottie Stevens, Diane Dujon, Ann Withorn, Nancy Wrenn, Debbie-Ann Meskimen Ferretti, Shakita Stafford, Linda Hardenbergh, ValerieMiller, Elaine Ward, Matthew Meskimen.

December 6, 2010 another interesting conference was held entitled: Human Rights Cities/ Modern Day Slavery, The Immokalee Worker from Florida Cruz Salucio and Megan Cohorst from Student/Farm Workers Alliance along with The Justice Center and Survivors Inc were panelists. The workers from Florida spoke of the injustice and violations of their rights as human beings and workers while employed by the produce companies and about their upcoming planned protests. David Jefferson from the Social Justice Coalition and Spare Change Newspaper, spoke about unfair treatment of migrant workers and low wages they are paid. Dottie Stevens from Survivors Inc, Connie Chow a Human Rights activist, Diane Dujon from Mass Welfare Rights Union and Lenore Pereira from the 25% Solution spoke about the Human Rights Cities Campaign and that we should adopt it here in Boston, Ma. We learned that a precedent had already been set as Washington, D.C. has passed a resolution to implement a Human Rights City there.

On April 20, 2011 Councilman Charles Yancey, representing the Boston City Council, presented Survivors Inc and The Arms Center at UMass/Boston with a resolution proclaiming Boston, Massachusetts a Human Rights City.

# PDHRE

## PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS LEARNING

(Legal name: Decade of Human Rights Inc.)

### Board of Directors

#### Presidium:

SUSANA CHIAROTTI  
PETER LEIPRECHT  
ADAMA SAMASSEKOU

#### Vice Presidents:

KAMAL HOSSAIN  
BETTY REARDON

### Board Members:

NESHAD ASLANI  
LIPENDRA BAXI  
WOLFGANG BENEDEK  
FANTU CHERU  
IVANKA CORTI  
SATYA DAS  
CEES FLINTERMAN  
RICHARD GOLDSTONE  
IVA KAUFMAN  
MILOON KOTHARI  
WALTHER LICHEM  
ORLY LUBIN  
KATHLEEN MODROWSKI  
JEAN-LOUIS ROY  
DANILO TURK  
BURNS H. WESTON

### Advisors

ELSA STAMATOPOULOU

### Endorsers

OSCAR ARIAS  
P.N. BHAGWATI  
WILLY BRANDT  
JIMMY CARTER  
ROSALYNN CARTER  
ADOLFO PEREZ-ESQUIVEL

### Advisory Board

FATMA ALLOO  
THEO VAN BOVEN  
THOMAS BUERGENTHAL  
ELISE BOULDING  
RICHARD CLAUDE  
ADAMA DIENG  
F. ROBERT DRINAN  
ASBJRN EIDE  
RICHARD FALK  
CEES FLINTERMAN  
MARVIN FRANKEL  
CHERI HONKALA  
J. PAUL MARTIN  
ABRAHAM MAGENDZO  
VERONICA MATUS  
VITIT MUNTARBHORN  
SONIA PICADO  
LORETTA ROSS  
CANÇADO TRINDADE  
ANNE S. WALKER

### Founding President:

SHULAMITH KOENIG

### Executive Director

Robert Kesten

To:

Dear

I have received your name from members of the Steering Committee now working to have Boston become a living reality as a human rights city, following the recent Resolution of the City Council to have Boston become a human rights city.

My name is Shulamith Koenig -- please see enclosed the United Nations Press Release. I happen to be, with all humility, the person who has originated and facilitated with my colleagues in PDHRE the development of a number of human rights cities around the world.

At PDHRE, People's Movement for Human Rights Learning, we bring forth the idea of collaboration and cooperation between members of the community coming from all walks of life. We suggest to introduce in the community, as an ongoing process, dialogue and learning to have all women, men, youth and children know and own, plan and act, in their neighborhoods towards economic and social transformation. (I enclose the description of what a human rights city including the Corps.)

For Boston, a celebrated historic city, becoming a human rights city, it stands to be an example for the whole world. Such actions will enrich the life of humanity - whatever religious affiliation, economic and educational status - toward people determining and participating in creating a better future for the city and thus for humanity... --an ongoing process of change as a model and a valuable experience.

I am also enclosing a posting of mine on Huffington written after Teddy Kennedy's death... This was his City and the work in Boston can also be in reverence to his memory.

We hope that you will be able to share these materials with your colleagues and join in giving it your energy and the profile it needs for the USA and the whole world to celebrate a new vision of human rights.

Please be so kind to respond to this letter so that I will feel free to call you and answer questions that you may have. I will be glad to come again to the city and speak with you and your colleagues to invigorate the process and talk with those who need further encouragement and information.

With warm greetings, a prayer, hopes and expectations,

Thank you for "listening"

*Shulamith Koenig*

Shulamith Koenig - Recipient of the 2003 United Nations Human Rights Award.  
[shulakoenig@gmail.com](mailto:shulakoenig@gmail.com)

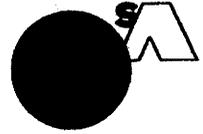
--Please see three enclosures  
*"A real democracy is a delivery system of the holistic vision and practical mission of human rights as a way of life."*

NY Office: Suite 4E, 526 W. 111<sup>TH</sup> Street, New York, NY 10025, USA Tel: +1-212-749-3156 Fax: +1-212-666-6325 Email: [pdhre@igc.org](mailto:pdhre@igc.org)

REGIONAL OFFICES: AFRICA: Bamako, Mali, Accra, Ghana \* EUROPE: Graz, Austria \* LATIN AMERICA: Rosario, Argentina

Web Site: <http://www.pdhre.org>

NGO IN CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH THE UN • OBSERVER STATUS: AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN & PEOPLES' RIGHTS



Gold Medal of the Pio Munzu Centre

Awarded by the International Scientific Committee of the Pio Munzu Center to:

## Shulamith Koenig

All human beings have human rights, *"but do human beings know that human rights are relevant to their daily lives and the learning about human as a way of life will put in their hands a powerful tool to belong in dignity and community with others? – free from fear and want?"*

This has always been a major bugbear for Shulamith Koenig, founder of the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning, who firmly believes that *"those who learn and integrate human rights in their lives will be able to break through the vicious cycle of humiliation that plagues much of humanity today"*

As a paladin of human rights for more than 30 years she has been advocating what Nelson Mandela called a "new political culture", enabling men and women alike to take part in the decision making process that shapes their lives and to live together in dignity, trust and respect. Progressing from a simple, lethargic knowledge of what human rights are to realizing the power of ownership of human rights, Koenig proposes to have people and communities create a new way of life, which is a *sine qua non* for real, sustainable and lasting development.

For the purposes of creating a practical, operating model of the kind of a world she hopes humanity will join to create, Shulamith Koenig since 1997 has facilitated the creation of "Human Rights Cities", 17 are in development now. Built on the foundations of equality and non-discrimination these human rights societies, as a result of learning and participation of local communities, guarantee that fundamental human rights will be realized, insuring that gender equality, human security, education, healthy food, drinking water, housing and decent work of their inhabitants will not be compromised and *"..equality is not exchanged for survival"*

The Pio Manzù Centre is pleased to honour Shulamith Koenig for the great contribution she has made to the recognition of human rights as a new worldwide political culture so that every individual can experience, with dignity and to the fullest, their own condition as human beings. The Centre wishes to express to her its heartfelt admiration and gratitude for the fruits that her extraordinary efforts have yielded and will continue to yield in the years to come.

( Signed)

Mikhail Gorbachev

Rimini, 23 October 2011

Dear Friends,

We have taken the liberty of attaching the short version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All members the United Nations have agreed that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on December 10<sup>th</sup> 1948, is the standard of achievement for human rights and thus defines a vision of the future or, in the words of Nelson Mandela, "A new political culture based on human rights." The one-page summary of the UDHR is designed to assist in mobilizing people everywhere to join this effort.

We live in a time of change in all parts of the world and global power structures are shifting as long-time tyrants are being swept from power, nations considered stable are facing economic downturns leading to mass protests and countries long dominated by a single figure are now trying to shape new constitutions. There is one constant vision emerging from social movements worldwide based on the recognition of dignity and human rights as a shared vision for change.

Attached is the "short" version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that provides a foundation for each and everyone of us to live together in dignity within our own communities and the society we call our own.

We are calling for your help us join and think out loud on how we can ensure that each and every woman, man, youth and child from your community has this one page in their own language, in their hand by the end of 2012, that each person in your region has it in their hand by the end of 2013 and that each and every citizen and resident of your nation has it in their hand by the end of 2015. As people receive it, you can suggest that they read it aloud in their homes, in their offices, in their schools, in their places of worship and initiate a dialogue around its meaning in their lives.

It is only when we know and own our human rights that we can truly live in a world that respects our dignity, our right to be human.

Take a moment to write to us, tell us if you can translate this document or if you need assistance. Join in this movement, put the short version of the UDHR into the hands of everyone you know, everyone you meet and everyone you see. Seed the pathway to a more brilliant, more humane world.

We are looking forward to your comments, to your possible commitment in building a world movement based on the vision and mission of human rights as a way of life.

Thank you ,

PDHRE, People's Movement for Human Rights Learning

[pdhe@igc.org](mailto:pdhe@igc.org)

[www.pdhre.igc.org](http://www.pdhre.igc.org)