## Selected Human Rights Treaties and US Status

### UN Treaty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treaty</th>
<th>Adopted</th>
<th>Entry into Force</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reservations</th>
<th>Underlying</th>
<th>Declaration</th>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
<td>Dec 10, 1948</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Ratified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (OPT)</td>
<td>Dec 16, 1989</td>
<td>Not Signed or Ratified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</td>
<td>Oct 6, 1999</td>
<td>Dec 22, 2000</td>
<td>Not Signed or Ratified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### OTHER WEBSITES

- Personal Website
- Race and Health
- The Whistle: Law Schools

### Submit for Periodic Updates

Update List

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treaty/Convention</th>
<th>Date Signed/Entered into Force</th>
<th>Date Ratified/Signed</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.</td>
<td>Dec 18, 1990</td>
<td>Not Signed or Ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)</td>
<td>Nov 19, 1984</td>
<td>Oct 21, 1994</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (MWC)</td>
<td>Dec 18, 1990</td>
<td>Not Signed or Ratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reservations:

“(1) That article 20 does not authorize or require legislation or other action by the United States that would restrict the right of free speech and association protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

“(2) That the United States reserves the right, subject to its Constitutional constraints, to impose capital
punishment on any person (other than a pregnant woman) duly convicted under existing or future laws permitting the imposition of capital punishment, including such punishment for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age.

"(3) That the United States considers itself bound by article 7 to the extent that `cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment' means the cruel and unusual treatment or punishment prohibited by the Fifth, Eighth, and--or Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

"(4) That because U.S. law generally applies to an offender the penalty in force at the time the offence was committed, the United States does not adhere to the third clause of paragraph 1 of article 15.

"(5) That the policy and practice of the United States are generally in compliance with and supportive of the Covenant's provisions regarding treatment of juveniles in the criminal justice system. Nevertheless, the United States reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to treat juveniles as adults, notwithstanding paragraphs 2 (b) and 3 of article 10 and paragraph 4 of article 14. The United States further reserves to these provisions with respect to States with respect to individuals who volunteer for military service prior to age 18."

Understandings:

"(1) That the Constitution and laws of the United States guarantee all persons equal protection of the law and provide extensive protections against discrimination. The United States understands distinctions based upon race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or any other status -- as those terms are used in article 2, paragraph 1 and article 26 -- to be permitted when such distinctions are, at minimum, rationally related to a legitimate governmental objective. The United States further understands the prohibition in paragraph 1 of article 4 upon discrimination, in time of public emergency, based `solely' on the status of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin, not to bar distinctions that may have a disproportionate effect upon persons of a particular status.

"(2) That the United States understands the right to compensation referred to in articles 9 (5) and 14 (6) to require the provision of effective and enforceable mechanisms by which a victim of an unlawful arrest or detention or a miscarriage of justice may seek and, where justified, obtain compensation from either the responsible individual or the appropriate governmental entity. Entitlement to compensation may be subject to the reasonable requirements of domestic law.
“(3) That the United States understands the reference to `exceptional circumstances’ in paragraph 2 (a) of article 10 to permit the imprisonment of an accused person with convicted persons where appropriate in light of an individual’s overall dangerousness, and to permit accused persons to waive their right to segregation from convicted persons. The United States further understands that paragraph 3 of article 10 does not diminish the goals of punishment, deterrence, and incapacitation as additional legitimate purposes for a penitentiary system.

“(4) That the United States understands that subparagraphs 3 (b) and (d) of article 14 do not require the provision of a criminal defendant’s counsel of choice when the defendant is provided with court-appointed counsel on grounds of indigence, when the defendant is financially able to retain alternative counsel, or when imprisonment is not imposed. The United States further understands that paragraph 3 (e) does not prohibit a requirement that the defendant make a showing that any witness whose attendance he seeks to compel is necessary for his defense. The United States understands the prohibition upon double jeopardy in paragraph 7 to apply only when the judgment of acquittal has been rendered by a

“(5) That the United States understands that this Covenant shall be implemented by the Federal Government to the extent that it exercises legislative and judicial jurisdiction over the matters covered therein, and otherwise by the state and local governments; to the extent that state and local governments exercise jurisdiction over such matters, the Federal Government shall take measures appropriate to the Federal system to the end that the competent authorities of the state or local governments may take appropriate measures for the fulfillment of the Covenant."

Declarations:

“(1) That the United States declares that the provisions of articles 1 through 27 of the Covenant are not self-executing.

“(2) That it is the view of the United States that States Party to the Covenant should wherever possible refrain from imposing any restrictions or limitations on the exercise of the rights recognized and protected by the Covenant, even when such restrictions and limitations are permissible under the terms of the Covenant. For the United States, article 5, paragraph 2, which provides that fundamental human rights existing in any State Party may not be diminished on the pretext that the Covenant recognizes them to a lesser extent, has particular relevance to article 19, paragraph 3 which would permit certain restrictions on the freedom of expression. The United States declares that it will continue to adhere to the requirements and
constraints of its Constitution in respect to all such restrictions and limitations.

"(3) That the United States declares that the right referred to in article 47 may be exercised only in accordance with international law."

United States of America

"The United States declares that it accepts the competence of the Human Rights Committee to receive and consider communications under article 41 in which a State Party claims that another State Party is not fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant.

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

Reservations

Upon signature:

"The Constitution of the United States contains provisions for the protection of individual rights, such as the right of free speech, and nothing in the Convention shall be deemed to require or to authorize legislation or other action by the United States of America incompatible with the provisions of the Constitution of the United States of America."

Upon ratification:

"I. The Senate's advice and consent is subject to the following reservations:

(1) That the Constitution and laws of the United States contain extensive protections of individual freedom of speech, expression and association. Accordingly, the United States does not accept any obligation under this Convention, in particular under articles 4 and 7, to restrict those rights, through the adoption of legislation or any other measures, to the extent that they are protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

(2) That the Constitution and laws of the United States establish extensive protections against discrimination, reaching significant areas of non–governmental activity. Individual privacy and freedom from governmental interference in private conduct, however, are also recognized as among the fundamental values which shape our free and democratic society. The United States understands that the identification of the rights protected under the Convention by reference in article 1 to fields of 'public life' reflects a similar distinction between spheres of public conduct that are customarily the subject of governmental regulation, and spheres of private conduct that are not. To the extent, however, that the Convention calls for a broader regulation of private conduct, the United States does not accept any
obligation under this Convention to enact legislation or take other measures under paragraph (1) of article 2, subparagraphs (1) (c) and (d) of article 2, article 3 and article 5 with respect to private conduct except as mandated by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

(3) That with reference to article 22 of the Convention, before any dispute to which the United States is a party may be submitted to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice under this article, the specific consent of the United States is required in each case.

II. The Senate's advice and consent is subject to the following understanding, which shall apply to the obligations of the United States under this Convention:

That the United States understands that this Convention shall be implemented by the Federal Government to the extent that it exercises jurisdiction over the matters covered therein, and otherwise by the state and local governments. To the extent that state and local governments exercise jurisdiction over such matters, the Federal Government shall, as necessary, take appropriate measures to ensure the fulfilment of this Convention.

III. The Senate's advice and consent is subject to the following declaration:

That the United States declares that the provisions of the Convention are not self-executing."

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