

REMARKS IN RECOGNITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

HILLARY CLINTON

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...This weekend, we will celebrate Human Rights Day..., the anniversary of one of the great accomplishments of the last century... [O]n December 10th, 1948... the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted. It proclaims a simple, powerful idea:... rights are not conferred by government; they are the birthright of all people....

Step by step, barriers that once prevented people from enjoying the full measure of liberty, the full experience of dignity, and the full benefits of humanity have fallen away. In many places, racist laws have been repealed, legal and social practices that relegated women to second-class status have been abolished, the ability of religious minorities to practice their faith freely has been secured....

Today, I want to talk about the work we have left to do to protect one group of people whose human rights are still denied in too many parts of the world today....

I am talking about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, human beings born free... I speak about this subject knowing that my own country's record on human rights for gay people is far from perfect. Until 2003, it was still a crime in parts of our country....

Like being a woman, like being a racial, religious, tribal, or ethnic minority, being LGBT does not make you less human. And that is why gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights.

...It is a violation of human rights when governments declare it illegal to be gay, or allow those who harm gay people to go unpunished. It is a violation of human rights when lesbian or transgendered women are subjected to so-called corrective rape, or forcibly subjected to hormone treatments....

The Obama Administration defends the human rights of LGBT people as part of our comprehensive human rights policy and as a priority of our foreign policy....

[T]he President has directed all U.S. Government agencies engaged overseas to combat the criminalization of LGBT status and conduct....

CONSTITUTION 201:
THE PROGRESSIVE REJECTION OF THE FOUNDING AND THE RISE OF BUREAUCRATIC DESPOTISM

There is a phrase that people in the United States invoke when urging others to support human rights: “Be on the right side of history.”... Those who advocate for expanding the circle of human rights were and are on the right side of history, and history honors them....



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