Human Rights Day: 175+ UK Organisations Warn Against Government Undermining Universal Rights

Tuesday 9 December, 2025

Instead of marking this landmark anniversary at home, the UK Government heads to a Council of Europe meeting prompted by calls to limit rights protections

This Human Rights Day should be a moment of celebration: **75 years since the European Convention on Human Rights** and **25 years of the UK Human Rights Act -** landmark achievements that have safeguarded dignity, fairness, and accountability for generations.

Instead, civil society fears the UK Government is paving the way for a retreat from universal protections. As the Government prepares to attend a **Council of Europe meeting on 10 December**, triggered by calls to limit protections in migration cases, over **175 organisations from across the UK** have issued an open letter urging political leaders to strengthen - not weaken - the frameworks that underpin our democracy.

Signatories include **Liberty, Amnesty International UK, Parkinson's UK, Kinship, Mind, Carers UK**, and many more, representing health, social care, legal, and advocacy sectors across the UK. Together they are calling on leaders to:

- **Publicly reaffirm** the UK's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Human Rights Act.
- **Reject proposals** that weaken these frameworks and secure them for the future.
- **Invest in implementation**, ensuring communities and public bodies have the knowledge and resources to uphold rights in practice.
- **Lead with clarity and courage**, making clear that human rights are the shared foundation of democracy, not a partisan issue.

The letter concludes with a call for hope and leadership:

"As fear and division threaten to take hold, we can choose to step forward together in support of universal human rights, confident in the values that have long defined us."

Sanchita Hosali, CEO of coordinating organisation, the British Institute of Human Rights, said:

"Human rights are not the problem — they are the solution. They are the rules that keep our democracy decent and our society fair. Framing rights as an obstacle to immigration control - which the Government knows is not the issue - sets us on a dangerous and slippery path, with a destination that risks dismantling decades of progress. Instead of tampering with protections they owe each of us, the UK Government should fix real concerns: immigration backlogs, housing crises, and underfunded public services."

Recent political briefings suggest the UK Government may explore ways to limit **ECHR obligations in immigration cases**. Undermining rights for some strikes at the heart of **universal human rights for everyone**. Any UK effort to dilute or sidestep these obligations would not only undermine protections at home but also damage the UK's standing as a global leader in human rights.

Notes to Editors:

- The letter is signed by over 175 leaders from human rights, equality, and social justice organisations across the UK.
- Full text and signatory list available on request (online from 00.01am at https://tinyurl.com/dhkz9kts
- For media enquiries, contact: Sanchita Hosali or Carlyn Miller on press@bihr.org.uk or cmiller@bihr.org.uk or 020 3039 364

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Human Rights Day :: UK Politics :: ECHR :: Civil Society :: Council Of Europe :: UK Government ::

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- Interviews and quotes from can be arranged.
- Analysis available on the wider impact beyond immigration - on fairness, dignity, and accountability across UK society.

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