

Throughout history, most societies have had traditions such as the Golden Rule. This means “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

The U.S. Bill of Rights came into effect in 1791 but excluded (did not apply to) women, people of color, and members of certain social, religious, economic, and political groups.

In 1919, the International Labor Organization (ILO) was formed to protect workers to be sure they stayed healthy and safe. But this organization didn’t last.

During World War II (in the 1930s and 1940s), millions of people were killed by the Nazis. These people included Jews, gypsies, and people with disabilities.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave a speech in 1941 about his vision, or dream, for the world. He said that everyone should have four freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want (being hungry), and freedom from fear.

In 1945, after World War II, governments decided to start the United Nations. The goal of the United Nations (UN) was to foster peace and stop conflict, or fighting between countries, around the world.

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was written by people belonging to the United Nations. Fifty-six nations that belonged to the United Nations agreed to follow the ideas in this document.

Today, more than 185 nations around the world have taken the ideas from the UDHR and put them in their own constitutions. (Constitutions are the rules and laws of a country.)