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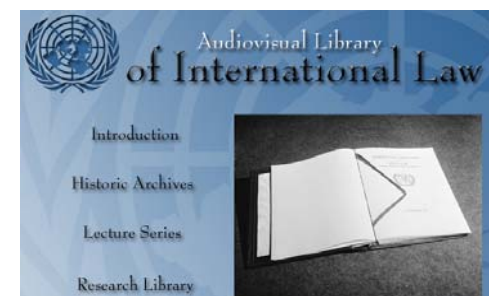
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Ms. Edith Brown Weiss
Francis Cabell Brown Professor of International Law
Georgetown University Law Center

Biography

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Entries for more than 30 (out of a total of 76 anticipated) instruments have been added to the website.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Paris, 10 December 1948


Introduction | Procedural History | Documents

By **Antônio Augusto Cançado Trindade**
Former President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

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When the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted, on 10 December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in one of the brief periods of enlightenment in the twentieth century, one could hardly anticipate that a historical process of generalization of the international protection of human rights was being launched, on a truly universal scale. Throughout the last six decades, of remarkable historical projection, the Declaration has gradually acquired an authority which its draftsmen could not have foreseen. This happened, not only because of the persons who participated in its elaboration, nor because of the firm which was given to that historical document, nor because of the circumstances of its adoption: it happened mainly because successive generations of human beings, from distinct cultures and all over the world, recognized in it a "common standard of achievement" (as originally proclaimed), which corresponded to their deepest and most legitimate aspirations.

Already throughout the previous preparatives of the Universal Declaration (particularly in the thirteen months between May 1947 and June 1948), the holistic view of all rights to be proclaimed promptly prevailed. Such outlook was espoused in the official preparatory work of the Declaration, that is, the debates and drafting in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and subsequently in the Third Committee of the General Assembly. In addition, in 1947, in a contribution to the work then in course in the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization undertook an examination of the main



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