

## **Renewing Our Commitment to Human Rights During the Aseret Yemay Teshuvah (The 10 Days of Repentance)**

The High Holidays are a time when we review the year that has just passed and make commitments for the year ahead. We begin again, informed by our past in order to make concrete change in our future. This year, the United States also stands poised at a time of change. No matter who wins the election, America must recommit to human rights and once again be a recognized moral leader around the world. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees that all human beings are born free and equal. Article 5 states: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." During these Days of Repentance, when we stand in judgment for our actions, we will search our souls and hold ourselves accountable for inhumane treatment perpetuated in our name.

We must renew our commitment to human rights. We must raise our voices on behalf of those who are silenced and do justice. Here are 10 actions you can take in the New Year, one for each day of the Aseret Yemay Teshuvah, to make this dream of renewal a reality.

- 1 Join K'vod Habriot: A Jewish Human Rights Network**, a growing grassroots community of Jews committed to the core values of Judaism and human rights. Sign up at: [http://www.rhr-na.org/kvod\\_habriot/individual\\_sign\\_up](http://www.rhr-na.org/kvod_habriot/individual_sign_up). Information for communities to sign up can also be found on our website.
- 2 Sign up 5 friends for K'vod Habriot.** Our work will thrive when we all come together in the shared goal of tikkun olam. This Rosh Hashanah, plant the seed for a local community of Jewish human rights activists.
- 3 Add your name** to the Campaign to Ban Torture, an interfaith, bipartisan project calling for an Executive Order to ban torture, at [www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org) (click on "Tell the President to Ban Torture").
- 4 Celebrate Human Rights Shabbat, December 12-13, 2008.** There are many different ways to participate, big and small. Email: [rkahnroster@rhr-na.org](mailto:rkahnroster@rhr-na.org) to include your community on our list! <http://www.rhr-na.org/human-rights-shabbat-2008>.
- 5 Study about Jewish values and torture!** Resource material linking the themes of the Yamim Noraim to Judaism and human rights (including new sermons for this year!) can be found at: <http://www.rhr-na.org/resources/yamim-noraim>.
- 6 Call a candidate** for national office and explain to them that as a Jew and as a citizen, you believe that the United States must restore the rule of law and end all forms of torture. Tell them: "No torture, no exceptions."
- 7 Pray for victims of torture.** A misheberach for victims of torture can be found at: <http://www.rhr-na.org/resource/misheberach-victims-torture>. Other liturgical resources for the High Holidays are also in the Resource section of our site.
- 8 Celebrate your commitment to human rights** with your family and friends, and use our home ritual for candle lighting and the blessing of challah. Find it at: <http://www.rhr-na.org/resource/family-prayer-5769>.
- 9 Register for the Second North American Conference on Judaism and Human Rights**, December 7-9 in Washington, DC. Sign up at: <http://www.rhr-na.org/story/registration-is-now-open-for-the-second-north-american-conf>.
- 10 Read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.** Its wisdom continues to inspire and influence our world, as every human being works for a time when there will be freedom, justice, and peace for all. The Declaration can be found at: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.