Today... An open letter to our political leaders on Human Rights Day.

Dear Political Leaders,

Today is Human Rights Day. Across the globe, people are celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This international Magna Carta for all humanity has inspired so much, including our own Human Rights Act.

Today we celebrate the often overlooked everyday differences our Human Rights Act makes for people across the UK. Our examples are many; whether this is supporting children to access education, stopping inhuman treatment of older people, providing refugees with safety, preventing discrimination, or offering justice for victims and families failed by the system, and many more.

Today we celebrate how our Human Rights Act strengthens our democracy, giving everyone a voice, and ensuring the powerful do not go unchecked.

Today we celebrate how our Human Rights Act does more than defend our traditional liberties. It makes the universal human rights we share with people across the world part of our law here at home.

Today the future of human rights in the UK is uncertain. Today we stand with the Human Rights Act recognising it is the promise of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights made law here at home. We urge our political leaders to stand with us.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Bowen, Director, British Institute of Human Rights; Fiona Bawdon, Caithlinn Gallagher, Martha Spurrier, Director, Act for the Act Campaign; Paul Brecknell, Chief Executive, Action on Hearing Loss; Steven Johnson, Chief Executive, Advice UK; Justine Greening, Chief Executive, Advocacy Focus; Rachel Rowlands, Chief Executive, Age Connects; Dean Richards, Chief Executive, Age Connects Neath Port Talbot; Ian Cranage, Chief Executive, Age Connects North East Wales; Jeff Hawkins, Chairman, Age Connects Wales; and Chief Executive, Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale; Brian Sloan, Chief Executive, Age Scotland; Matthew Evans, Director, AIRE Centre; Neil Campbell, Chief Executive, Alternative Futures Group; Joe Powell, National Director, All Wales People First; Kate Allen, Director, Amnesty International UK; Shamberi Ubhi, Director, Ashtiana Network; Wayne Mystik, Chief Executive, Asylum Aid; Ewan Roberts, Centre Manager, Asylum Link; Danni Kenningham, National Coordinator, ATD Fourth World; Donna Covey, Director, AVA (Against Violence and Abuse); Priscilla Nwenti, Chief Executive, BHA for Equality; Elizabeth Prochaska, Chair, BIAHR; Asif Afridi, Deputy Chief Executive, BRAP; Andrew Copson, Chief Executive, British Humanist Association; Ann Chivers, Chief Executive, British Institute of Learning Disabilities; Brian Gormally, Director, CAJ; Maurice Frankel, Director, Campaign for Freedom of Information; Helena Herklots, Chief Executive, Carers UK; Dr Philip Matthew, Chief Executive, Carers UK; Tim Baillie, Children and Young People’s Commissioner, Scotland; Peter Newell, Coordinator. Children are unbeatable! Alliance; Anne Longfield, Children’s Commissioner for England; Sally Holland, Children’s Commissioner for Wales; Louise King and Carla Marsh, Co-Directors, Children’s Rights Alliance for England; Jim Bowen, Manager, Clynfwy Care Farm; Jatin Haria, Executive Director, Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights; Catherine Rayner, Chair, Discrimination Law Assoicate of Lawyers; Tim Loughton, Chief Whip, Director, Downing St; Dan Stevens, Director, The World; Carol Boys, Chief Executive, Down’s Syndrome Association; Gary Fitzgibbon, Chief Executive, Action on Elder Abuse; Sarah Green, Director, End Violence Against Women; John Chard, Director, English PEN; Sharii Patel, Chief Executive,Extract, Shani, Director, Extract, Dimitrina Petrova, Executive Director, Extract, Equal Rights Trust; Ali Harris, Chief Executive, Equality and Diversity Forum; Jacqui Hunt, Director, Equality Now; Jago Russell, Chief Executive, Fair Trials; Mustafa Field MBE, Director, Family Advice Group; Sam Apps, Director, Fareshare; Dimitrina Petrova, Executive Director, Fayscott Society; Susan Munroe, Chief Executive, Freedom From Torture; Peter Roscoe, Chair, FRESH; Chris Whitwell, Director, Friends, Families and Travellers; Nik Noone, Chief Executive, GALOP; Helen Buxland QC, Barrister, Garden Court Chambers; Terry Reid OBE, Director, Gender Identity Research Society (GIRS); Gillian Caldwell, Executive Director, Global Witness; Lucy Peake, Chief Executive, Grandparents Plus; Bella Kosmatas, Coordinator, Greenwich Migrant Hub; Helen Hibberd, Co-Managing Director, Hackney Migrant Centre Prof Cornelius Katona, Medical Director, Helen, Bambrer Foundation; Alison Gelder, Chief Executive, Housing Justice; Frances Crook, Chief Executive, Howard League for Penal Reform; Damian Short, Director, Dr Corrine Lennox, Co-Directors, Human Rights Consortium; Kevin Harratty, Director, Human Rights Consortium; David Meapham, Director, Human Rights Watch; Simon Hancock, Board Equality Champion, Hywel Dda University Health Board; Dr. Theo Gavrielides, Founder & Director, IARS International Institute; Mari Larasii, Executive Director, INQUEST; Inman Khan and Partners; Deborah Coles and Helen Shaw, Co-Directors, INQUEST; Sarah Khan and Kalsom Bashir, Director, Inspire Women; Saira Grant, Chief Executive, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants; Shaunea Lambe, Executive Director, Justice for Kids; Alya Khanani, Interim Director, JUST Worcester; Andrew Coombes, Director, JUSTICE; Kate Roberts, Head of Policy, Kalayaan; Julie Bishop, Director, Law Centres Network; Steve Hynes, Director, Legal Action Group; Nicola Macintosh QC (Hon) and Jenny Beck, Co-Chairs, Legal Aid Practitioners Group (LAPG); Paul Roblin, Chief Executive, Liberty, LGBT Foundation; Shami Chakrabarti, Director, Liberty; Eithne Rynne, Chief Executive, London Voluntary Service Council; Phillip Watson, Chief Executive, Manor Gardens Welfare Trust; Theresa Schleicher, Acting Director, Medical Justice; Jenny Edwards CBE, Chief Executive, Mental Health Foundation; Zrinka Brato, Executive Director, Migrant and Refugee Community Forum; Don Flynn, Director, Migrant Rights Network; Paul Farmer, Chief Executive, Mind; Deborah Gold, Chief Executive, NAT; Rob Greg, Chief Executive, National Development Team for Inclusion; Sarah Yannoullou, National Director, National Survivor User Network; Megan Dunn, President, National Union of Students; Des Kelly, Executive Director, National Care Forum; Jeremy Taylor, Chief Executive, National Voices; Zarin Hairston, Chair, NAWO; Patrick Yu, Executive Director, NICEM Sean Silver, Chair, Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council; Kouta Yasumura, Commissioner, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People; Colin Devine, Coordinator, North West Community Foundation; Sarah Roscoe, Older People’s Commissioner for Wales; Katherine Murphy, Chief Executive, Patients Association; Karen Chandler, Chief Officer, Pembrokeshire People First Sally Daghlian OBE, Chief Executive, Praxis; Juliet Lyon, Director, Prison Reform Trust; Andy Greg, Chief Executive, Race on the Agenda; Ria Chadha, Chief Executive, RAMFEL; Cara Ferstman, Director, REDRESS; Maurice Wiren, Chief Executive, Refugee Council; Mia Hasenson-Gross, Director, Rene Cassin; Clare Algar, Chief Executive, Reprieve; Emma Scott, Director, Rights of Women; Yasmin Ahmed, Chair, Rights Watch UK; Prof Cathy Warwick, Chief Executive, Royal College of Midwives; Omar Khan, Director, Runnymede Trust; Barbara Natsagabara MBE, Chief Executive, Safer Wales Ltd; Marjorie Wallace, Chief Executive, SANE; Mark Atkinson, Chief Executive, Scope; Eamon Keane, Convener, Scottish Legal Aid Action Group; Durrah Mahmood, Trustee Secretarey, Feet; Jan Gavin, Chief Executive, Southern Advocacy Services; Jon Barrick, Chief Executive, Stroke Association; Heidi Travis, Chief Executive, Sue Ryder; Joy Hibbins, Founder/Codirector, Suicide Crisis; Kolbassia Hassoun, Co-ordinator, Survivors Speak Out; Dr Ngongi Barthelemy, Survivors Managing Director, Tameside Human Rights Watch and UK Immigration Services; Prof Katja Ziegler, Director, The Centre of European Law and Internationalisation (CEL); Matthew Reed, Chief Executive, The Children’s Society; Annette Lawson, Chair, The Justice Trust; Anna Duckham, Chief Executive, The Life Story Network; Juliet Harris, Director, Together – Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights; Frances O’Grady, General Secretary, Trade Union Congress; Penelope Gibbs, Director, Transform Justice; Yvonne Machmchara, Chief Executive, Traveller Officer, Traveller Movement; Martin Coyle, Director, True Voice; Paul Dillane, Executive Director, UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group; Alan Anstead, Coordinator, UK Race and Europe Network; Dave Prentis, General Secretary, UNISON; Dianna Holland, Assistant General Secretary, United; Natalie Samarasignhe, Executive Director, United Nations Association – UK; Michele Lamb, Head of Department Social Sciences, University of Roehampton and Grubilee Centre for Human Rights; Alexandra Runswick, Director, Unlock Democracy; Kunju Ludole, Director, Voice4Change; Mike Sherriff, Chief Executive, Voluntary Action Islington Eleri Butler, Chief Executive, Welsh Women Aid; Joyce Kaliev, Director, Wish, Jonathan Tatey, Chief Executive, VDNS (West Norfolk Disability Information and Support); Polly Nesté, Chief Executive, Women’s Aid; Annie Campbell, Chief Executive, Women’s Aid Federation Northern Ireland; Vivienne Hayes, Chief Executive, Women’s Resource Centre; Oliver Carter and Rachel Francis, Co-Chairs, Young Legal Aid Lawyers.