# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Joint statement by the Minister for Social Justice and Counsel General to celebrate Human Rights Day** |
| **DATE**  | **09 December 2022** |
| **BY** | **Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice and Mick Antoniw MS, Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution** |

On this Human Rights Day, we stand together to celebrate a collective day in which communities across the globe can reflect on the global efforts to safeguard and promote human rights. The members of the United Nations made a Universal Declaration to recognise the rights every single human being is entitled to regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. We are proud to be a nation that not only recognises and stands up for the rights of its citizens but also as a Nation of sanctuary for those who have been persecuted or had those rights taken away from them.

This Human Rights Day, gives us a tangible focus to express and reflect on what it means to protect human rights and to also give us an opportunity for us to examine our own actions and focus. As a Welsh Government, we fully support our own commitment to promote and protect human rights, something which is fundamentally embedded into the founding legislation of devolution.

In our Programme for Government, we are very much committed to the safeguarding and promoting of human rights and embedding this ethos across the full range of our work, from our ground-breaking Anti Racist Wales Action Plan, to the advancing of disabled people’s rights, the elimination of discrimination against women and our forthcoming LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

Looking forward to the forthcoming New Year, 2023 will mark an historic and important milestone for humankind, the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was a response to the atrocities and inhumanity of World War 2.

It has therefore never been more important that Wales continues its focus on strengthening, advancing and defending universal human rights, both in this country and around the world.  Especially at a time when they are increasingly being threatened elsewhere, including by Russia in Ukraine.

We have been clear in stating our opposition to the UK Government’s Bill of Rights, which we view as a catalyst to increase the rights of UK Ministers and which will serve to reduce the power of Devolved Governments, UK Courts and the European Court of Human Rights.

Our own research shows we have much work to do across Wales. We have established a new Human Rights Advisory Group to help us take forward the recommendations from this research to safeguard advance, strengthen; and promote and protect equality and human rights for all our citizens. We commit again today, on this Human Rights Day, to continue this valuable work and to remain firm to our commitment to advance human rights throughout everything we do in Welsh Government, ensuring Wales remains a safe place of sanctuary for all citizens of the world.