



FACT SHEET

United States Fails to Ratify Key International Conventions, Treaties, and Laws

“We talk the talk, but we don’t walk the walk.”

The United States played a key role in composing the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other key principles that changed the nature of international human rights legislation. However, the U.S. has failed to ratify several principle international agreements designed to enhance civil and human rights worldwide, compromising its credibility as a leader for human rights.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

On December 18, 1979, the United Nations adopted CEDAW. This treaty is the most comprehensive and detailed international agreement that seeks the advancement of women. CEDAW has been ratified by 185 countries. **The United States is the only industrialized country that has not ratified the treaty**, putting us in the company of countries such as Sudan, Iran and Somalia.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The CRC was adopted by the UN in 1989, and is one of the most widely received conventions. The CRC has been accepted by 193 countries. The U.S. may soon be the only country in the world not to ratify this convention.

The Kyoto Protocol

In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol legally bound industrialized countries by 2010 to reduce their collective emissions of six greenhouse gases by 5.2% compared to 1990 levels. 141 countries have signed the treaty, but the United States (the largest producer of greenhouse gases) has not.

The International Criminal Court (ICC)

The ICC conducts trials of individuals accused of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity when there is no other recourse for justice.

146 countries have signed the ICC, including the United States, and 106 countries have ratified it. However, on May 2, 2002 **the United States stated that it did not intend to be bound by its signature to the ICC and that it had no intention to ratify it.** Though President Clinton signed the ICC, President Bush and the Republican-led Senate refused to ratify it.

The ICC identifies gender crimes and the crime of apartheid as crimes against humanity. Article 7 of the Statute presents clear language that defines rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity as gender crimes.