

War era. The Conference was attended by 171 states and hundreds of NGOs, and the resulting document, the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* (Vienna Declaration), provides an excellent snapshot of the perception of the international community of the status and content of international human rights law at that time.

Among the key statements in the Vienna Declaration were a reaffirmation of human dignity, inherent in the birth of every human being, as the source of human rights; recognition that the UN Charter contained legally binding obligations for states to protect and promote human rights; recognition of the universal nature of human rights and the interdependence and inseparability of civil and political and economic, social and cultural rights; and the reaffirmation of the rights to self-determination and to development.

Further attempts to strengthen the human rights framework of the UN followed, with the creation of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and, through the UN Secretary-General's blueprint for UN reform, *In Larger Freedom*, the creation of the Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review.¹³⁸ Meanwhile, regional systems developed in Europe, the Americas and Africa have added another layer of accountability for human rights.¹³⁹

Forty-five years after the UDHR, the Vienna Conference demonstrated that the legitimacy of human rights as a mainstream concern for the international community, and the status of human rights as legal rights with corresponding international obligations, were beyond question. The continuing questions for contemporary debate thus relate not to the existence of human rights or their status as law, but to the scope of human rights and obligations—for example, questions about the extraterritorial reach of human rights obligations and the conditions in which they may be invoked, discussed in Chapter 19.4—and questions about the actors to which those obligations might apply—for example, non-state actors such as multinational corporations, discussed in Chapter 13.

¹³⁸ See Chapter 6.9 for discussion of *In Larger Freedom* and the formation of the Human Rights Council.

¹³⁹ See Chapter 8.