

# International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

The United Nations' (UN) International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is annually held on December 2 to raise awareness of the atrocities of modern slavery. It's not to be confused with another UN day, [the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition](#).

## What Do People Do?

Many people use the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery as an opportunity to share their perspective in writings through poetry, opinion pieces, interviews, feature articles, short stories and other published material. Classrooms may review the history of slave trade, its evolution and changes it has undergone through to modern times. Students may also learn about the negative impacts of slavery on society.

Online, print and broadcast media promote the day through news, debates, forums, and talks about modern day slave trade and why it is a serious human rights issue. Political leaders, including senators and those with ministerial responsibilities, also take the time to urge the public to work together in eradicating any form of slavery in modern society. Flyers, posters, leaflets, newsletters about abolishing slavery and slave trade are also distributed throughout universities and in public areas on this day.

## Public Life

The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is an observance but not a public holiday.

## Background

The United Nations is committed to fighting against slavery and considers bonded labour, forced labour, the worst forms of child labour and trafficking people as modern forms of slavery. Some sources say that more than one million children are trafficked each year for cheap labour or sexual exploitation. These types of slavery are global problems and go against article four of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms".

The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery recalls the adoption of the UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (resolution 317(IV) of December 2, 1949). To remember the convention, a UN report of the Working Group on Slavery recommended in 1985 that December 2 be proclaimed the World Day for the Abolition of Slavery in all its forms. By 1995, the day was known as the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

On December 18, 2002, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2004 the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition. On November 28, 2006, the assembly designated March 25, 2007, as the International Day for the Commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The UN also annually observes the UN's [International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition](#) on August 23.

## Symbols

The UN emblem is often found in online and print material used to promote events such as the United Nations' International Day for the Abolition of Slavery. The emblem consists of a projection of the globe centered on the North Pole. It depicts all continents except Antarctica and four concentric circles representing degrees of latitude. The projection is surrounded by images of olive branches, representing peace. The emblem is often blue, although it is printed in white on a blue background on the UN flag.

**Note:** It is unclear on when the name "International Day for the Abolition of Slavery" was first used instead of the "World Day for the Abolition of Slavery" but the new name was mentioned in a UN report in 1995.

## International Day for the Abolition of Slavery Observances

Weekday ▾	Date ▾	Year ▾	Name	Holiday Type
Thu	Dec 2	2010	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Fri	Dec 2	2011	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Sun	Dec 2	2012	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Mon	Dec 2	2013	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Tue	Dec 2	2014	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance



*The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery reminds people that modern slavery works against human rights.*

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Wed	Dec 2	2015	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Fri	Dec 2	2016	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Sat	Dec 2	2017	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Sun	Dec 2	2018	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Mon	Dec 2	2019	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance
Wed	Dec 2	2020	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	United Nations observance



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