

HOT TOPICS – AUGUST 2022

INTERNATIONAL DAY COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS OF ACTS OF VIOLENCE BASED ON RELIGION OR BELIEF

OVERVIEW: You are probably aware of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that address important issues such as freedom of religion or belief, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly and the right to freedom of association. *“Upholding these rights plays an important role in the fight against all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief”* [Source: [International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief | United Nations](#)]



BACKGROUND: This important day came about as the result of the 2019 General Assembly of the United Nations resolution 73/296, which designated **August 22nd** as the international day to commemorate the victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief. It reports that since that designation *“the world has faced an alarming escalation of hate, both online and offline, targeting religion or belief minorities as well as members of lesbian, gay, transexual and intersex communities”* [Source: [International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, 22 August 2021 | OHCHR](#)]

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?: As stated above, according to the United Nations (UN), acts of intolerance and violence, which are based on religion and belief against individuals *“including against persons belonging to religious communities and religious minorities around the world, and the number and intensity of such incidents, which are often of a criminal nature and may have international characteristics, are increasing”* [Source: [International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief | United Nations](#)]



So, **August 22nd** is the day chosen to commemorate this important issue because it recognised the importance of giving both support and assistance to victims of acts of violence based upon religion or belief as well as members of their families.



DISCUSSION POINTS: In your role as a police officer, you may have to manage situations where there are opposing points of view regarding freedom of religion or belief, peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and the right to freedom of association. Those situations may even escalate and

involve acts of violence. Discuss with your PDC the types of situations that you may have to deal with where this may be the case and then consider what types of decisions you might have to make? Whilst thinking about this, remember the safeguards of the Human Rights Act and your responsibility to recognise those. How might this affect your decisions and the actions you take? Below is a table of the Articles and protocols covered by the Act – which ones do you think may impact your decision making?

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

What human rights are covered by the Act?

The Act sets out your human rights in a series of ‘Articles’. Each Article deals with a different right. These are all taken from the ECHR and are commonly known as ‘the Convention Rights’:

Article 2: Right to life

Article 3: Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment

Article 4: Freedom from slavery and forced labour

Article 5: Right to liberty and security

Article 6: Right to a fair trial

Article 7: No punishment without law

Article 8: Respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence

Article 9: Freedom of thought, belief and religion

Article 10: Freedom of expression

Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association

Article 12: Right to marry and start a family

Article 14: Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms

Protocol 1, Article 1: Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property

Protocol 1, Article 2: Right to education

Protocol 1, Article 3: Right to participate in free elections

Protocol 13, Article 1: Abolition of the death penalty

[Source: [The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#)]

Please watch the short YouTube video [duration 2 mins 20 secs] which outlines the extent and scope of acts of violence based upon religion or belief

[\[International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief - YouTube\]](#)

Further reading: [International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief | United Nations](#)