

“All men are free. . .” When the Universal Charter of Human Rights was launched in 1948, it was a great step towards a just world. Yet the road from a good declaration to reality and to specific actions can be long. Worldwide humans are still treated without dignity, are suppressed, tortured, enslaved or deprived of their freedom. This book undertakes two things at the same time:

1. It tells the story of human rights and discusses their basis, their theory and their content.
2. It describes the reality of today: How are human rights violated, how far are we away from a just world?

Only those two sides taken together inform readers to take action.



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Schirmmacher is chair of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), director of the International Institute for Religious Freedom (Bonn, Cape Town, Colombo) and Ambassador for Human Rights of WEA; the WEA represents churches with 600 million members altogether. He also is a member of the board of the International Society for Human Rights.

Schirmmacher regularly testifies in the German parliament and other parliaments in Europe, as well as in the EU in Brussels, the OSCE in Vienna and other international bodies. He has written 102 books; three of his newest books are Fundamentalism, Racism, and Human Trafficking. He has earned four doctorates, in missiology and ecumenical theology, in cultural anthropology, in ethics, and in sociology of religion, and received two honorary doctorates from the USA and India.

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Promise and Reality

