LET'S TALK ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

We often say that we have a “right” to this and that, but where does that come from? What does it really mean to live like a human being, to live with dignity?

We say it in pieces – we need access to health, food, education, safety, self-determination, voting rights, housing, equality before the law – but the human rights frame helps tie it together because a human being should have all of those things in order to live fully and with dignity.

HOW ARE HUMAN RIGHTS DIFFERENT THAN CIVIL RIGHTS?

Instead of laws or governments telling us what rights we have, human rights come from the dignity all human beings are born with.

We can talk about what we want to build, not just what we want to tear down. Human rights are about having all our basic needs met.

We can make transformational and radical demands when we think in terms of human rights, not just those demands that fit inside the systems that were built to oppress black and brown bodies.

We can use alternative systems, like the United Nations, instead of only relying on the broken US legal system.

Movements across the globe use human rights terms, not civil rights. By framing our struggles as human rights ones, we can connect across borders.