

4. *Calls upon* all Governments to cooperate with the independent expert and invites them to share best practices with the independent expert, and to provide him/her with all the necessary information related to the mandate to enable him/her to fulfil the mandate;

5. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this matter under the same agenda item at its tenth session.

41st meeting

28 March 2008

Adopted without a vote. See chapter III.

7/23. Human rights and climate change

The Human Rights Council,

Concerned that climate change poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights,

Recognizing that climate change is a global problem and that it requires a global solution,

Reaffirming the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Noting the findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including that the warming of the climate system is unequivocal and that most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-twentieth century is very likely human-induced,

Recognizing that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change remains the comprehensive global framework to deal with climate change issues, reaffirming the principles of the Framework Convention as contained in article 3 thereof, and welcoming the decisions of the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007, and in particular the adoption of the Bali Action Plan,

Recalling that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action reaffirmed the right to development, as established in the Declaration on the Right to Development, as a universal and inalienable right and as an integral part of fundamental human rights,

Recognizing that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development and that the right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet the development and environmental needs of present and future generations,

Recognizing also that the world's poor are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change, in particular those concentrated in high-risk areas, and also tend to have more limited adaptation capacities,

Recognizing further that low-lying and other small island countries, countries with low-lying coastal, arid and semi-arid areas or areas liable to floods, drought and desertification, and developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change,

Recalling the relevant provisions of declarations, resolutions and programmes of action adopted by major United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions and their follow-up meetings, in particular Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,

Recalling also Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/60 of 20 April 2005 on human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development,

Recalling further Council resolution 6/27 of 14 December 2007 on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and in particular paragraph 3 thereof, and Council decision 2/104 of 27 November 2006 on human rights and access to water,

Taking note of the contribution provided by special procedures of the Council in examining and advancing the understanding of the link between the enjoyment of human rights and the protection of environment,

Taking note also of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health to the General Assembly (A/62/214), which include a call for the Council to study the impact of climate change on human rights,

1. *Decides* to request the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to conduct, within existing resources, a detailed analytical study on the relationship between climate change and human rights, to be submitted to the Council prior to its tenth session;

2. *Encourages* States to contribute to the study conducted by the Office of the High Commissioner;

3. *Decides* to consider the issue at its tenth session under agenda item 3, and thereafter to make available the study, together with a summary of the debate held during its tenth session, to the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for its consideration.

41st meeting

28 March 2008

Adopted without a vote. See chapter III.

Recalling also Council resolutions 6/9 of 28 September 2007 on the development of public information activities in the field of human rights and 6/24 of 28 September 2007, in which the Council extended to December 2009 the first phase of the World Programme focusing on the primary and secondary school systems,

Noting paragraphs 49 to 51 of the Plan of Action of the first phase of the World Programme, according to which, at the conclusion of the first phase, Member States are expected to prepare their national evaluation reports, taking into consideration progress made in a number of areas, such as legal frameworks and policies, curricula, teaching and learning processes and tools, revision of textbooks, teacher training and improvement of the school environment, and to provide their final national evaluation reports to the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the World Programme for Human Rights Education (A/HRC/9/4);

2. *Requests* the High Commissioner to consult with States Members of the United Nations, national human rights institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on the possible focus, in terms of target sector or thematic area, of the second phase of the World Programme to begin on 1 January 2010, and to submit a report on those consultations to the Council at its twelfth session;

3. *Encourages* States Members of the United Nations to start taking steps for the preparation of their national evaluation reports on the first phase, with the assistance of international and regional organizations, as well as civil society actors, to be provided to the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System early in 2010;

4. *Decides* to consider this issue at its twelfth session under the same agenda item.

41st meeting

25 March 2009

[Adopted without a vote. See part II, chap. III.]

10/4 Human rights and climate change

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and welcoming the decisions of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007, and in particular the adoption of the Bali Action Plan,

Reaffirming also the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and recognizing that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development and that the right to development must be fulfilled

so as to meet equitably the development and environmental needs of present and future generations,

Reaffirming further that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that they must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Recalling its resolution 7/23 of 28 March 2008 on human rights and climate change,

Taking note of the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the relationship between climate change and human rights (A/HRC/10/61),

Noting that climate change-related impacts have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination and human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Recognizing that while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the effects of climate change will be felt most acutely by those segments of the population who are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status and disability,

Recognizing also that climate change is a global problem requiring a global solution, and that effective international cooperation to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention is important in order to support national efforts for the realization of human rights implicated by climate change-related impacts,

Affirming that human rights obligations and commitments have the potential to inform and strengthen international and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

1. *Decides* to hold a panel discussion on the relationship between climate change and human rights at its eleventh session in order to contribute to the realization of the goals set out in the Bali Action Plan and to invite all relevant stakeholders to participate therein;

2. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a summary of the panel discussion and decides to make the summary available to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for its consideration;

3. *Welcomes* the decision of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living to prepare and present a thematic report on the potential impact of climate change on the right to adequate housing, and encourages other relevant special procedure mandate holders to give consideration to the issue of climate change within their respective mandates;

4. *Welcomes* the steps taken by the Office of the High Commissioner and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to facilitate exchange of information in the area of human rights and climate change;

5. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to participate at a senior level, during the High-level Meeting on Climate Change, to be held ahead of the general debate of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, and at the fifteenth session and

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

*41st meeting
25 March 2009*

[Adopted without a vote. See part II, chap. III.]

10/5

Composition of staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling paragraph 5 (g) of General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, in which the Assembly decided that the Council should assume the role and responsibilities of the Commission on Human Rights relating to the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as decided by the Assembly in its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993,

Taking note of all relevant resolutions on this issue adopted by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Council,

Taking note also of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner (A/HRC/10/45),

Taking note further of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on the follow-up to the management review of the Office of the High Commissioner (A/59/65-E/2004/48 and Add.1) and on the funding and staffing of the Office (JIU/REP/2007/8),

Bearing in mind that an imbalance in the composition of the staff could diminish the effectiveness of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner if it is perceived to be culturally biased and unrepresentative of the United Nations as a whole,

Expressing its concern that, despite the repeated requests to correct the unbalanced geographical distribution of the staff, the situation remains that one region accounts for more than half of the posts of the Office of the High Commissioner and for more posts than the four remaining regional groups combined,

Reaffirming the importance of continuing the ongoing efforts to address the imbalance regarding the regional representation of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner,

Underlining that the paramount consideration for employing staff at every level is the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and taking into account Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, expressing its conviction that this objective is compatible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution,

Reaffirming that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters,

1. *Welcomes* the statement made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in her report that achieving geographical balance in the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner will remain one of her priorities, and requests the High Commissioner to continue to take all measures needed to redress the current imbalance in geographical distribution of the staff of the Office;



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Twenty-sixth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

26/27 Human rights and climate change

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling its resolutions 7/23 of 28 March 2008, 10/4 of 25 March 2009 and 18/22 of 17 October 2011 on human rights and climate change, and 16/11 of 24 March 2011, 19/10 of 22 March 2012 and 25/21 of 28 March 2014, on human rights and the environment,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention,¹

Reaffirming also the commitment to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through long-term cooperative action, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Welcoming the holding of the recent Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the seventeenth Conference of the Parties, held in November 2011 in Durban, South Africa, the eighteenth Conference of the Parties, held in November 2012 in Doha, and the nineteenth Conference of the Parties, held in November 2013 in Warsaw,

¹ FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, dec.1/CP.16.



Welcoming also the outcome document “The future we want” of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil,²

Notes the convening of the climate summit on 23 September 2014 by the Secretary-General aimed at mobilizing action and ambition in relation to climate change,

Recalling the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Recognizing that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, and that the right to development must be fulfilled so as to meet the development and environmental needs of present and future generations,

Recognizing also the challenges of climate change to development and to the progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with regard to the goals on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, environmental sustainability and health,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Acknowledging also that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Reaffirming also that it is the primary responsibility of States to promote and protect human rights;

Recalling the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the relationship between climate change and human rights,³ the panel discussion on the relationship between climate change and human rights, held on 15 June 2009, at the eleventh session of the Human Rights Council, and the 2010 Social Forum, which focused on the relationship between climate change and human rights,⁴

Welcoming the convening of the seminar by the Office of the High Commissioner on 23 and 24 February 2012 on addressing the adverse impact of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, and recalling its summary report thereon,⁵

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the right to

² General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

³ A/HRC/10/61.

⁴ See A/HRC/16/62 and Corr.1.

⁵ A/HRC/20/7.

development and the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change will be felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status and disability,

Reaffirming that people in developing countries, particularly in least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, that have contributed the least to global greenhouse gas emissions, are among the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development, and should be provided with predictable, sustainable and adequate support to meet the costs of adaptation to and mitigation of those adverse effects,

Recognizing the need to give due consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda to the role of international cooperation in relation to the special needs and particular circumstances of developing countries and to addressing the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective realization of human rights,

Recognizing also that climate change is an urgent global problem requiring a global solution, and that effective international cooperation to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention is important in order to support national efforts for the realization of human rights affected by climate change-related impact,

Noting that, as stated in the Rio Declaration, States should cooperate to strengthen endogenous capacity-building for sustainable development by improving scientific understanding through the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge, and by enhancing the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of technologies, including new innovative technologies,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Noting the establishment of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the launching of the second edition of *Climate Vulnerability Monitor* in 2012 in New York, which may become a useful tool to orient public policies,

1. *Reiterates its concern* that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of direct and indirect implications for the effective enjoyment of all human rights, and that the effects of climate change will be felt most acutely by individuals and communities around the world that are already in vulnerable situations owing to geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status or disability;

2. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed to the increase of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

3. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and its people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change, especially those in a situation of extreme poverty, and deteriorating livelihood conditions;

4. *Stresses* the importance of fostering dialogue and cooperation between relevant international organizations and stakeholders to develop the analysis of the linkages between human rights and climate change;

5. *Calls upon* all States to continue to enhance international dialogue and cooperation in relation to the adverse impact of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights, including the right to development, particularly in developing countries, especially least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, including through dialogue and measures, such as the implementation of practical steps to promote and facilitate capacity-building, financial resources and technology transfer;

6. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the twenty-eighth session a full-day discussion on specific themes relating to human rights and climate change on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, and to dedicate one panel to identifying challenges and ways forward towards the realization of all human rights for all, including the right to development, in particular those in vulnerable situations, as well as the measures and best practices to promote and protect human rights that can be adopted by States in addressing the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, and another panel discussion to how climate change has had an adverse impact on States' efforts to progressively realize the right to food, and policies, lessons learned and good practices;

7. *Invites* the special procedures mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to participate actively in the panel discussions;

8. *Encourages* relevant special procedures mandate holders to give consideration to the issue of climate change and human rights within their respective mandates;

9. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit to the Human Rights Council, at its session following the full-day discussion, a summary report, including any recommendations stemming therefrom, for consideration of further follow-up action;

10. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights within its future programme of work;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussions and summary report thereon;

12. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*40th meeting
27 June 2014*

[Adopted without a vote.]

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ethiopia, Gabon, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam

Against:

Czech Republic, Republic of Korea, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Austria, Botswana, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Maldives, Mexico, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia]

26/27**Human rights and climate change***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling its resolutions 7/23 of 28 March 2008, 10/4 of 25 March 2009 and 18/22 of 17 October 2011 on human rights and climate change, and 16/11 of 24 March 2011, 19/10 of 22 March 2012 and 25/21 of 28 March 2014, on human rights and the environment,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention,⁹⁸

Reaffirming also the commitment to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through long-term cooperative action, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Welcoming the holding of the recent Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the seventeenth Conference of the Parties, held in November 2011 in Durban, South Africa, the eighteenth Conference of the Parties, held in November 2012 in Doha, and the nineteenth Conference of the Parties, held in November 2013 in Warsaw,

Welcoming also the outcome document "The future we want" of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil,⁹⁹

Notes the convening of the climate summit on 23 September 2014 by the Secretary-General aimed at mobilizing action and ambition in relation to climate change,

⁹⁸ FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, dec.1/CP.16.

⁹⁹ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

Recalling the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Recognizing that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, and that the right to development must be fulfilled so as to meet the development and environmental needs of present and future generations,

Recognizing also the challenges of climate change to development and to the progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with regard to the goals on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, environmental sustainability and health,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Acknowledging also that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Reaffirming also that it is the primary responsibility of States to promote and protect human rights;

Recalling the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the relationship between climate change and human rights,¹⁰⁰ the panel discussion on the relationship between climate change and human rights, held on 15 June 2009, at the eleventh session of the Human Rights Council, and the 2010 Social Forum, which focused on the relationship between climate change and human rights,¹⁰¹

Welcoming the convening of the seminar by the Office of the High Commissioner on 23 and 24 February 2012 on addressing the adverse impact of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, and recalling its summary report thereon,¹⁰²

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the right to development and the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change will be felt most

¹⁰⁰ A/HRC/10/61.

¹⁰¹ See A/HRC/16/62 and Corr.1.

¹⁰² A/HRC/20/7.

acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status and disability,

Reaffirming that people in developing countries, particularly in least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, that have contributed the least to global greenhouse gas emissions, are among the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development, and should be provided with predictable, sustainable and adequate support to meet the costs of adaptation to and mitigation of those adverse effects,

Recognizing the need to give due consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda to the role of international cooperation in relation to the special needs and particular circumstances of developing countries and to addressing the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective realization of human rights,

Recognizing also that climate change is an urgent global problem requiring a global solution, and that effective international cooperation to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention is important in order to support national efforts for the realization of human rights affected by climate change-related impact,

Noting that, as stated in the Rio Declaration, States should cooperate to strengthen endogenous capacity-building for sustainable development by improving scientific understanding through the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge, and by enhancing the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of technologies, including new innovative technologies,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Noting the establishment of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the launching of the second edition of *Climate Vulnerability Monitor* in 2012 in New York, which may become a useful tool to orient public policies,

1. *Reiterates its concern* that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of direct and indirect implications for the effective enjoyment of all human rights, and that the effects of climate change will be felt most acutely by individuals and communities around the world that are already in vulnerable situations owing to geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status or disability;

2. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed to the increase of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

3. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and its people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change, especially those in a situation of extreme poverty, and deteriorating livelihood conditions;

4. *Stresses* the importance of fostering dialogue and cooperation between relevant international organizations and stakeholders to develop the analysis of the linkages between human rights and climate change;

5. *Calls upon* all States to continue to enhance international dialogue and cooperation in relation to the adverse impact of climate change on the enjoyment of human

rights, including the right to development, particularly in developing countries, especially least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, including through dialogue and measures, such as the implementation of practical steps to promote and facilitate capacity-building, financial resources and technology transfer;

6. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the twenty-eighth session a full-day discussion on specific themes relating to human rights and climate change on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, and to dedicate one panel to identifying challenges and ways forward towards the realization of all human rights for all, including the right to development, in particular those in vulnerable situations, as well as the measures and best practices to promote and protect human rights that can be adopted by States in addressing the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, and another panel discussion to how climate change has had an adverse impact on States' efforts to progressively realize the right to food, and policies, lessons learned and good practices;

7. *Invites* the special procedures mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to participate actively in the panel discussions;

8. *Encourages* relevant special procedures mandate holders to give consideration to the issue of climate change and human rights within their respective mandates;

9. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit to the Human Rights Council, at its session following the full-day discussion, a summary report, including any recommendations stemming therefrom, for consideration of further follow-up action;

10. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights within its future programme of work;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussions and summary report thereon;

12. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*40th meeting
27 June 2014*

[Adopted without a vote.]

26/28 The Social Forum

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling all previous resolutions and decisions adopted on the Social Forum by the Commission on Human Rights and its Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, as well as by the Economic and Social Council,

Recalling also Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 of 18 June 2007, 6/13 of 28 September 2007, 10/4 of 25 March 2009, 10/29 of 27 March 2009, 13/17 of 25 March 2010, 16/26 of 25 March 2011, 19/24 of 23 March 2012 and 24/25 of 27 September 2013,



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Human Rights Council

Twenty-ninth session

Agenda item 3

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 2 July 2015

29/15. Human rights and climate change

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention,¹

Reaffirming also the commitment to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through long-term cooperative action, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Acknowledging also that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

¹ FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, dec.1/CP.16.



Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Expressing concern also that countries lacking the resources for implementing their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events, in both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries, including those in least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries with more climate vulnerability,

Recognizing the particular vulnerabilities of non-nationals who may face challenges associated with implementing appropriate responses in extreme weather conditions owing to their status and who may have limited access to information and services, resulting in barriers to the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Affirming the commitment to enhance action on adaptation under the Cancun Adaptation Framework and to implement further the Nairobi Work Programme of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Welcoming the holding of the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2015, in Paris,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change, as outlined in the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action,

Noting also the establishment and the advocacy of the Climate Vulnerable Forum,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed to the increase of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change, especially those in a situation of extreme poverty, and deteriorating livelihood conditions;

3. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the thirty-first session, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion on the adverse impact of climate change on States' efforts to progressively realize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and related policies, lessons learned and good practices;

4. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the World Health Organization and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to conduct, from within existing resources, a

detailed analytical study on the relationship between climate change and the human right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health to be submitted to the Council prior to its thirty-first session and with a view to informing the panel discussion mandated in paragraph 3 above;

5. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to submit to the Human Rights Council, at its session following the panel discussion, a summary report, including any recommendations stemming therefrom, for consideration of further follow-up action;

6. *Invites* the special procedures mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

7. *Encourages* relevant special procedures mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights within their respective mandates;

8. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights within its future programme of work;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion, the summary report thereon, and the analytical study;

10. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*44th meeting
2 July 2015*

[Adopted without a vote.]

**Human Rights Council****Thirty-second session**

Agenda item 3

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 1 July 2016**32/33. Human rights and climate change**

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ including, inter alia, its Goal 13, which calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impact,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention,²

Reaffirming also the commitment to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, through long-term cooperative action, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

² FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, dec.1/CP.16.



international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Acknowledging also that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, which can increase with greater warming, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Recognizing that climate change poses an existential threat for some, and recognizing also that climate change has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing that children are among the most vulnerable to climate change, which may have a serious impact on their enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, access to education, adequate food, adequate housing, safe drinking water and sanitation,

Looking forward to the day of general discussion of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on children's rights and the environment, to be held on 23 September 2016,

Expressing concern that countries lacking the resources for implementing their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events, in both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries, including those in least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries with more climate vulnerability,

Recognizing the particular vulnerabilities of migrants and other non-nationals who may face challenges associated with implementing appropriate responses in extreme weather conditions owing to their status and who may have limited access to information and services, resulting in barriers to the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement adopted under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which acknowledged that climate change is a common concern of humankind, and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Recognizing the urgent need for early ratification, acceptance or approval and full implementation of the Paris Agreement,

Urging the parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that have not already done so to consider ratifying and implementing the Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol,

Noting the importance for some of the concept of “climate justice” when taking action to address climate change,

Welcoming the holding of the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in November 2016, in Marrakech, Morocco,

Welcoming also the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights,

Noting the work of the United Nations Children’s Fund related to environmental sustainability for children, including its work to improve the enjoyment of rights by children, especially the most disadvantaged, and to promote children as critical agents of change, including its report on how children, particularly those in most vulnerable situations, are affected by climate change and the concrete steps needed to be taken to protect them,³

Welcoming the convening at the thirty-first session of the Human Rights Council of the panel discussion on the adverse impact of climate change on States’ efforts to progressively realize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and related policies, lessons learned and good practices, and noting the summary report on the panel discussion prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,⁴

Taking note of the analytical study on the relationship between climate change and the human right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 29/15 of 2 July 2015,⁵

Encouraging States, as appropriate, to integrate policies on health and human rights in their climate actions at all levels, including their national plans of action for climate mitigation and adaptation,

Taking note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment focusing on climate change and human rights,⁶

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on mitigation, adaptation and the provision of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing

³ *Unless we act now: The impact of climate change on children* (UNICEF, New York, November 2015).

⁴ A/HRC/32/24.

⁵ A/HRC/31/36.

⁶ A/HRC/31/52.

countries, to ensure the highest possible mitigation efforts to minimize the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action,

Noting also the establishment and the advocacy of the Climate Vulnerable Forum,

Noting further the establishment and work of regional and subregional initiatives on climate change, including the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change and the International Solar Alliance,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed to the increase of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change, especially children in a situation of extreme poverty, and deteriorating livelihood conditions;

3. *Calls upon* States to continue and enhance international cooperation and assistance for adaptation measures to help developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and persons in vulnerable situations, including children most at risk;

4. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the thirty-fourth session, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion on the adverse impact of climate change on States' efforts to realize the rights of the child and related policies, lessons learned and good practices;

5. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Health Organization, the World Meteorological Organization, and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to conduct, from within existing resources, a detailed analytical study on the relationship between climate change and the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of the child, to be submitted to the Council prior to its thirty-fifth session and to be further informed by the panel discussion mandated in paragraph 4 above;

6. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to submit to the Human Rights Council, at its session following the panel discussion, a summary report, including any recommendations stemming therefrom, for consideration of further follow-up action;

7. *Invites* special procedure mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

8. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the enjoyment of children's rights, within their respective mandates;

9. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

10. *Also calls upon* States to integrate a gender perspective in pursuing mitigation and adaptation responses to the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of every boy and girl;

11. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion, the summary report thereon, and the analytical study;

13. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*46th meeting
1 July 2016*

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Thirty-fifth session**

6–23 June 2017

Agenda item 3

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 22 June 2017**35/20. Human rights and climate change***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impact,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention,²

Reaffirming also the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention,³ including, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

² FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.16.

³ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.2, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting the invitation by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the Paris Committee on Capacity-building, in managing the 2016–2020 workplan, to take into consideration cross-cutting issues, such as gender-responsiveness, human rights and indigenous peoples' knowledge,⁴

Noting also the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and indigenous peoples' and traditional knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, which can increase with greater global warming, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Recognizing that climate change poses an existential threat for some countries, and recognizing also that climate change has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing that children, particularly migrant children and children displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impact of climate change, are among the groups most vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change, which may seriously affect their enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, access to education, adequate food, adequate housing, safe drinking water and sanitation,

⁴ See FCCC/CP/2016/10/Add.2, decision 16/CP.22.

Expressing concern that countries lacking the resources for implementing their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events, in both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries, including those in least developed countries and small island developing States,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Welcoming the entry into force of the Paris Agreement, and urging parties that have not already done so to ratify the Paris Agreement and the Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol,

Welcoming also the establishment of the Task Force on Displacement by the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Welcoming further the holding of the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be organized by Fiji in Bonn, Germany, in November 2017,

Affirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights,

Noting the importance for some of the concept of “climate justice” when taking action to address climate change,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 71/1 of 19 September 2016, in which the Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the annexes thereto, and Assembly resolution 71/280 of 6 April 2017, in which it adopted the modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration,

Recognizing the particular vulnerabilities of migrants and other non-nationals who may face challenges associated with implementing appropriate responses in extreme weather conditions owing to their status and who may have limited access to information and services, resulting in barriers to the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Welcoming the convening at the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council of the panel discussion on the adverse impact of climate change on States’ efforts to realize the rights of the child and related policies, lessons learned and good practices, and taking note of the summary report on the panel discussion prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,⁵

⁵ A/HRC/35/14.

Taking note of the analytical study on the relationship between climate change and the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of the child prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 32/33 of 1 July 2016,⁶

Emphasizing that climate change affects some children more than other children, including children with disabilities, children on the move, children living in poverty, children separated from their families and indigenous children,

Noting that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States and other duty bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and/or respect, as would be appropriate, the rights and best interests of children, when taking action to address the adverse effects of climate change,

Calling upon States to integrate, as appropriate, human rights in their climate actions at all levels, including their national action plans for climate change adaptation and mitigation,

Taking note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment focusing on climate change and human rights,⁷

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on mitigation, adaptation and the provision of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Convention and would ensure the highest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Noting the establishment and the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, and its communiqué, in which it asserted that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Noting also the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting further the establishment and work of regional and subregional initiatives on climate change,

Noting the work of the State-led Platform on Disaster Displacement and its efforts to follow up on the Nansen Initiative Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change, endorsed by more than 100 States on 13 October 2015, and the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative and its voluntary Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster,

Noting also the work being undertaken in the context of the adverse impact of climate change by international organizations and relevant United Nations agencies and bodies, including the Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division in the International Organization for Migration and Climate Change and Disaster Displacement Unit in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees,

⁶ A/HRC/35/13.

⁷ A/HRC/31/52.

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;
2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change impact for all, particularly in developing countries and the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change, including migrants and persons displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impact of climate change;
3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
4. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impact and challenges that climate change represents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all;
5. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant United Nations agencies with appropriate expertise to provide technical assistance to States, upon their request, to help to better promote and protect human rights when taking action to address the adverse impact of climate change;
6. *Calls upon* States to continue and enhance international cooperation and assistance for adaptation measures to help developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change as well as persons in vulnerable situations, including migrants and persons displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impact of climate change;
7. *Notes* the urgency of protecting and promoting human rights of migrants and persons displaced across international borders, in the context of the adverse impact of climate change, including those from small island developing States and least developed countries;
8. *Also notes* that paragraph 13 of annex II to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants envisages contributions to the process for the global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration from, among other international agencies, the Office of the High Commissioner;
9. *Recognizes* that climate change-related human mobility and human rights are cross-cutting in nature;
10. *Decides* to incorporate into the programme of work of the Human Rights Council, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, an intersessional panel discussion, and requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize an intersessional panel discussion prior to the commencement of phase II of the intergovernmental process leading to the global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration, with the theme "Human rights, climate change, migrants and persons displaced across international borders", focusing on challenges and opportunities in the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights of migrants and persons displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impact of climate change, and invites the participation of States, the Office of the High Commissioner and other relevant United Nations agencies, relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council and other relevant bodies such as the subsidiary bodies and constituent mechanisms, including the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts of the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Meteorological Organization, as well as other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including national human rights institutions;

11. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a summary report of the panel discussion to the appropriate mechanisms sufficiently in advance to ensure that it feeds into the stocktaking meeting of the preparatory process leading to the adoption of the global compact on safe, orderly and regular migration and to the work of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage, particularly to the ongoing work of the Task Force on Displacement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, noting the potential of the panel discussion to inform these processes, and to submit the summary report also to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh session;

12. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to undertake research on addressing human rights protection gaps in the context of migration and displacement of persons across international borders resulting from the sudden-onset and slow-onset adverse effects of climate change and the necessary means of implementation of adaptation and mitigation plans of developing countries to bridge the protection gaps and submit a report on the research to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-eighth session;

13. *Invites* the special procedure mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

14. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly the human rights of migrants and persons displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impact of climate change, within their respective mandates;

15. *Calls upon* States to integrate a gender perspective in pursuing mitigation and adaptation responses to the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, including those of migrants and persons displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impact of climate change;

16. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion and the summary report thereon;

18. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*36th meeting
22 June 2017*

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Thirty-eighth session**

18 June–6 July 2018

Agenda item 3

**Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on
5 July 2018****38/4. Human rights and climate change***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, and Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls,

Reaffirming the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming also that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention,¹

Reaffirming also the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention,² including, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Stressing the importance of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change,

¹ FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.16.

² See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.2, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting the invitation by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the Paris Committee on Capacity-building, in managing the 2016–2020 workplan, to take into consideration cross-cutting issues, such as gender-responsiveness, human rights and indigenous peoples' and local communities' knowledge,³

Welcoming the adoption of the first gender action plan under the Lima Work Programme on Gender at the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Noting the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and indigenous peoples' and local communities' knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that poverty eradication is critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change resilience and the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of women and girls, who account for the majority of people living in poverty worldwide,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, which can increase with greater global warming, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to work and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Recognizing that climate change poses an existential threat for some countries, and recognizing also that climate change has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing that women and girls are disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of climate change, and emphasizing that sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events seriously affect their access to food and nutrition, safe drinking water and

³ See FCCC/CP/2016/10/Add.2, decision 16/CP.22.

sanitation, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and access to decent work,

Recognizing also that women are not only victims but also agents of change, and that the integration of a gender-responsive approach into climate policies, including by conducting gender analysis, ensuring women's right to participate, access to education and training and access to and control over adequate resources, such as clean energy and technology, would increase the effectiveness of climate change mitigation and adaptation,

Noting that gender-responsive climate policies continue to require further strengthening in all activities concerning adaptation, mitigation and related means of implementation, such as finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building,

Expressing concern that countries lacking the resources to implement their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events, in both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries, including those in least developed countries and small island developing States,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Urging States that have not already ratified the Paris Agreement and the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to do so,

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on mitigation, adaptation and the provision of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Convention and would ensure the greatest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the adverse impacts of climate change on present and future generations,

Welcoming the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Climate Change Conference, organized by Fiji and held in Bonn, Germany in November 2017 and April and May 2018 respectively, and looking forward to the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties in Katowice, Poland in December 2018,

Reaffirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights,

Noting the importance for some of the concept of "climate justice" when taking action to address climate change,

Welcoming the convening of the intersessional panel discussion on human rights, climate change, migrants and persons displaced across international borders, and taking note of the summary report on the panel discussion prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,⁴

⁴ A/HRC/35/14.

Noting the research on addressing human rights protection gaps in the context of migration and the displacement of persons across international borders resulting from the sudden-onset and slow-onset adverse effects of climate change and the necessary means of implementation of adaptation and mitigation plans of developing countries to bridge the protection gaps undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 35/20 of 22 June 2017,⁵

Noting also that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States and other duty bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and respect, as would be appropriate, human rights, including those of women and girls, when taking action to address the adverse effects of climate change,

Taking note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment focusing on climate change and human rights,⁶

Noting that the Special Rapporteur on the right to food asserted that climate change has long-term and deeper impacts on food insecurity, and recommended that increasing finance to support developing countries in tackling climate change impacts, through adaptation and by addressing loss and damage, is essential,⁷

Noting with appreciation the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which asserted that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting also the establishment and work of regional and subregional initiatives on climate change, including those incorporating a gender-responsive approach,

Noting with appreciation the statement made in 2009 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on gender and climate change,

Noting the work being undertaken on the rights of women and girls in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change by United Nations agencies, bodies and entities, including the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Committee on the Status of Women,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and for the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change;

3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

4. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated and gender-responsive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and

⁵ A/HRC/38/21.

⁶ A/HRC/31/52.

⁷ See A/HRC/37/61.

principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impacts and challenges that climate change represents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all, particularly to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls both in rural and urban areas to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change;

5. *Calls upon* States to continue and enhance international cooperation and assistance, in particular in financing, the transfer of technology and capacity-building, for mitigation and adaptation measures to assist developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, to better promote human rights in general and women's access in particular to food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work, clean energy, science and technology;

6. *Urges* States to strengthen and implement policies aimed at increasing the participation of women in climate change responses at the local, national, regional and international levels, and calls upon the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and other United Nations agencies to support upon request national programmes and projects in this regard;

7. *Decides* to incorporate into the programme of work for the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion on the theme "Women's rights and climate change: climate action, best practices and lessons learned", focusing on best practices and lessons learned in the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change;

8. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a summary report of the panel discussion to the Human Rights Council at its forty-second session;

9. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Commission on the Status of Women, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to conduct, from within existing resources, an analytical study on the integration of a gender-responsive approach into climate action at the local, national, regional and international levels for the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of women, to be circulated to States and other stakeholders and to be submitted to the Council in sufficient time but no later than 30 days prior to the forty-first session;

10. *Invites* special procedure mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

11. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impacts of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly women's rights, within their respective mandates;

12. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion and the summary report thereon;

14. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

37th meeting
5 July 2018

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Forty-first session**

24 June–12 July 2019

Agenda item 3

**Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 12 July 2019****41/21. Human rights and climate change***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its commitment to leave no one behind, including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,

Reaffirming the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming also that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Reaffirming the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention, including, in the context of sustainable

¹ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



development and efforts to eradicate poverty, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Stressing the importance of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impact of climate change,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports and special reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and indigenous peoples' and local communities' knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that poverty eradication is critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change resilience and the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities who are disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of climate change,

Affirming that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, which can increase with greater global warming, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to work and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Recognizing that climate change poses an existential threat for some countries, and recognizing also that climate change has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing that persons with disabilities are among the most adversely affected in an emergency, sustaining disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality, and at the same time being among those least able to have access to emergency support,

Expressing concern at the adverse impacts of climate change on individuals with multiple vulnerability factors, including women and girls with disabilities, and emphasizing the need for States to take and to support adequate measures to address their specific needs

and to ensure participation in disaster response planning for emergency situations and evacuations, humanitarian emergency response and health-care services,

Emphasizing that sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events seriously affect the access of persons with disabilities to food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and access to decent work,

Reaffirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights,

Noting the Dhaka Conference on Disability and Disaster Risk Management, held in 2015 and in 2018, and the adoption of the Dhaka Declaration 2015 and the Dhaka Declaration 2015+ respectively,

Recognizing the need for ensuring meaningful participation, inclusion and leadership of persons with disabilities and their organizations within disaster risk management and climate-related decision-making at the local, national, regional and global levels,

Expressing concern that countries lacking the resources to implement their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events, in both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries, including those in least developed countries and small island developing States,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on mitigation, adaptation and the provision and the mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Convention and would ensure the greatest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Urging States that have not already ratified the Paris Agreement and the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to do so,

Welcoming the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Katowice, Poland in December 2018, taking note of the adoption of the implementation guidelines for the Paris Agreement, and looking forward to the climate action summit called for by the Secretary-General, to be held in New York in September 2019, and to the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties in Santiago, in December 2019, with the pre-Conference meeting to be held in San José in October 2019,

Noting the importance for some of the concept of “climate justice” when taking action to address climate change,

Welcoming the convening of the panel discussion on women’s rights and climate change: climate action, good practices and lessons learned, and looking forward to the summary report on the discussion to be prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Noting the analytical study on gender-responsive climate action for the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of women prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 38/4 of 5 July 2018,²

² A/HRC/41/26.

Welcoming the World Meteorological Organization *Statement on the State of the Global Climate in 2018*, its twenty-fifth anniversary edition, that highlights the record rise in sea levels and the exceptionally high land and ocean temperatures recorded in recent years, and expressing concerns at their adverse impacts on human rights,

Noting that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States and other duty bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and respect, as would be appropriate, human rights, including those of persons with disabilities, when taking action to address the adverse effects of climate change,

Taking note of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment focusing on climate change and human rights³ and on air pollution and human rights,⁴ the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights relating to climate change and poverty,⁵ and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food focusing on the right to food in the context of natural disasters,⁶

Noting with appreciation the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which asserted that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting also the establishment and work of regional, subregional and other initiatives, such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway) on addressing the adverse impacts of climate change,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these events have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and for the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change;

3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

4. *Encourages* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to support the Secretary-General in the preparation of the climate action summit and through its follow-up arrangements, in coordination with other relevant international organizations, agencies, convention secretariats and programmes;

5. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated, gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impact and challenges that climate change represents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all, and particularly to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of persons with disabilities both in rural and urban areas to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change;

³ A/HRC/31/52.

⁴ A/HRC/40/55.

⁵ A/HRC/41/39.

⁶ A/HRC/37/61.

6. *Calls upon* States to continue and enhance international cooperation and assistance, in particular in financing, the transfer of technology and capacity-building, for mitigation and adaptation measures to assist developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, to better promote human rights in general and the access of persons with disabilities in particular to livelihoods, food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work, clean energy, science and technology;

7. *Urges* States to strengthen and implement policies aimed at increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in climate change responses at the local, national, regional and international levels, and calls upon the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other United Nations agencies to support upon request national programmes and projects in this regard;

8. *Decides* to incorporate into the programme of work for the forty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion on the theme “Promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change”, focusing on best practices and lessons learned in the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of the adverse impact of climate change, and also decides that the panel discussion will have international sign interpretation and captioning;

9. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to submit a summary report on the panel discussion to the Human Rights Council at its forty-sixth session, and to make the report available in accessible formats, including Plain Language and Easy-to-Read;

10. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, including the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility, the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities, to conduct, from within existing resources, an analytical study on the promotion and the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change, to be circulated to States and other stakeholders and to be submitted to the Human Rights Council prior to its forty-fourth session, and further requests the Office to make the study available in accessible formats, including Plain Language and Easy-to-Read;

11. *Invites* special procedure mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including academic experts and civil society organizations, to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

12. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly rights of persons with disabilities, within their respective mandates;

13. *Decides* to consider the possibility of organizing follow-up events on climate change and human rights;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion and the summary report thereon;

15. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*41st meeting
12 July 2019*

[Adopted without a vote.]



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Human Rights Council

Forty-fourth session

30 June–17 July 2020

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 16 July 2020

44/7. Human rights and climate change

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its commitment to leave no one behind, including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,

Reaffirming the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming also that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all previous Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities

¹ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



and people in vulnerable situations, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Reaffirming the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention, including in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Stressing the importance of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impact of climate change,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports and special reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and indigenous peoples' and local communities' knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is one of the greatest global challenges, and that poverty eradication is critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change resilience and the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of older persons who are disproportionately affected by the negative impact of climate change,

Recalling the commemoration of the International Day of Older Persons in October 2019, with the theme "The journey to age equality", which emphasized the importance of reducing inequality in line with Sustainable Development Goal 10,

Recalling also the First and Second World Assemblies on Ageing, as well as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Political Declaration,

Commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on the rights of women, and stressing the importance of the participation of women, including older women, and girls in climate action,

Stressing that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, thereby promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, which can increase with greater global warming, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to work and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Recognizing that climate change poses an existential threat for some countries and recognizing also that it has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status where applicable, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing that climate change, and biodiversity loss and other types of environmental degradation, put added pressure on the environment that may in turn exacerbate disease emergence and increase the impact of pandemics, including the spread of diseases, thereby increasing the risk of exposure of the most vulnerable segments of society, inter alia, older persons, especially older persons with disabilities or chronic illnesses, to the combined negative effects and consequences of these phenomena, and put added strain on health systems, particularly those of developing economies,

Acknowledging the efforts of States to determine the best way to strengthen the protection of the human rights of older persons, while taking note of the various proposals that have been made within the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing,²

Welcoming the work of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons,

Stressing the particular vulnerabilities of older persons, including older women and older persons with disabilities, exposed by the implications of climate change, including their increased susceptibility to diseases, heat stress, reduced mobility, social exclusion and reduced physical, emotional and financial resilience, as well as the need for measures to address their specific needs and to ensure their participation in disaster response planning for emergency situations and evacuations, humanitarian emergency response, and health-care services, as appropriate,

Expressing concern at the adverse impact of climate change on individuals with multiple vulnerability factors, including older persons, particularly women and those with disabilities and/or pre-existing conditions, and recognizing that older persons are among the most adversely affected in an emergency, as has been seen during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, sustaining disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality, while at the same time being among those least able to have access to emergency support and health services,

Recalling the call for solidarity by the Secretary-General in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic,³ and welcoming his release of a policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on older persons,⁴ that recommends, among other actions, ensuring the meaningful participation of older persons in decision-making processes that affect their lives,

Emphasizing that sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events seriously affect the access of vulnerable segments of society, including older persons, to food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, health-care services and medicines, social protection, education and training, adequate housing, transportation and access to decent work,

Reaffirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights, as well as to older persons as key stakeholders in disaster risk reduction,

² A/AC.278/2019/2.

³ UN News, “UN chief calls for ‘solidarity, unity and hope’ in battling COVID-19 pandemic”, 30 April 2020.

⁴ United Nations, “Policy brief: the impact of COVID-19 on older persons”, May 2020.

Recognizing the need for ensuring meaningful participation, inclusion and leadership of older persons and their representative organizations within disaster risk management, emergency relief efforts and climate-related decision-making and in the design of policies, plans and mechanisms at the community, local, national, regional and global levels,

Expressing concern that developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, lacking the resources to implement their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies, may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events in both rural and urban areas,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on mitigation, adaptation and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Convention and ensure the greatest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Urging States that have not already ratified the Paris Agreement and the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to do so,

Welcoming the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Madrid in December 2019 under the presidency of Chile, and taking note of the Katowice climate package agreed at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018 in connection with the Paris Agreement,

Noting the announcements and commitments made by Governments and by private sector leaders at the Climate Action Summit held on 23 September 2019 in New York, including the call to action for resilience and adaptation, and recognizing that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible international cooperation to address the adverse impact of climate change, to which vulnerable segments, including older persons, are particularly at risk,

Noting also the importance of some elements of the concept of “climate justice” when taking action to address climate change,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in highlighting the need to respond to the global challenge of climate change, including by reaffirming the commitments to ensure effective climate action while advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights for all, including older persons,

Welcoming the convening of a panel discussion on persons with disabilities, and looking forward to the summary report on the discussion to be prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Noting the analytical study on the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 41/21 of 12 July 2019,

Noting also that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States and other duty bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and respect, as would be appropriate, human rights, including those of older persons, when taking action to address the adverse effects of climate change,

Taking note with appreciation of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable

environment, focusing on climate change and human rights⁵ and on air pollution and human rights,⁶ the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, relating to climate change and poverty,⁷ the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, focusing on the right to food in the context of natural disasters,⁸ and the report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, on the human rights of older persons in emergency situations,⁹

Welcoming the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which asserts that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting also the establishment and work of regional, subregional and other initiatives, such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway) on addressing the adverse impact of climate change,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these adversely affect the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and for the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change;

3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

4. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated, gender-responsive, age-inclusive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impact and human rights challenges that climate change presents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all, and particularly to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of older persons, both in rural and urban areas, to respond to the adverse impact of climate change;

5. *Calls upon* States to continue and enhance international cooperation and assistance, in particular in financing, the transfer of technology and capacity-building, for mitigation and adaptation measures to assist developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;

6. *Also calls upon* States to better promote human rights in general and the access of older persons in particular to livelihoods, food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, social protection, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work, clean energy, science and technology, and ensure services can be adapted to emergency and humanitarian contexts;

7. *Further calls upon* States to develop, strengthen and implement policies for the protection of the right of older persons in response to climate change, as appropriate, by, among other actions, the inclusion of their rights, specific risks, needs and capabilities in climate action plans and other relevant policies or legislation, the mainstreaming of climate change action into resilient and adaptive social and health care, and the provision of information on climate change and disaster preparedness response and planning through all accessible means of communication;

⁵ A/HRC/43/53 and A/74/161.

⁶ A/HRC/40/55.

⁷ A/HRC/41/39.

⁸ A/HRC/37/61.

⁹ A/HRC/42/43.

8. *Urges* States to strengthen and implement policies aimed at promoting the participation of older persons in the design of policies, plans and mechanisms in climate-related decision-making and disaster risk reduction and management at the community, local, national, regional and international levels, including for preparedness, contingency planning, early warning, evacuation planning, emergency relief, humanitarian response and assistance arrangements;

9. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the forty-seventh session, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion focusing on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by older persons and best practices and lessons learned in the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons, and also decides that the panel discussion will have international sign interpretation and captioning;

10. *Invites* special procedure mandate holders, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including academic experts, and civil society organizations, including older persons and their associations, to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

11. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a summary report on the panel discussion to the Human Rights Council at its forty-ninth session, and to make the report available in accessible formats, including Plain Language and Easy-to-Read;

12. *Also requests* the Office of the High Commissioner, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, including the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to conduct, from within existing resources, a study on the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons in the context of climate change, including their particular vulnerabilities, such as physical and mental health risks, and their contributions to efforts to address the adverse impact of climate change, to be circulated to States and other stakeholders, including older persons and their associations, and to be submitted to the Council prior to its forty-seventh session, and further requests the Office to make the study available in accessible formats, including Plain Language and Easy-to-Read;

13. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly the rights of older persons, within their respective mandates;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion and the summary report thereon;

15. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

27th meeting
16 July 2020

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Forty-seventh session**

21 June–14 July 2021

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 14 July 2021****47/24. Human rights and climate change***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its commitment to leave no one behind, including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,

Reaffirming the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming also that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all previous Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹ and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations with regard to human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, peasants, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, including people living in small island developing States and least developed countries, and in conditions of water

¹ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



scarcity, desertification, land degradation and drought, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Reaffirming the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention, including in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Stressing the importance of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impact of climate change,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports and special reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and indigenous peoples', peasants' and local communities' knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is one of the greatest global challenges, and that poverty eradication is critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change resilience and the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of people in vulnerable situations and people living in small island developing States and least developed countries, who are disproportionately affected by the negative impact of climate change,

Stressing that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, thereby promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, that can increase with greater global warming, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to work and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Stressing the importance of the participation of women, including older women, and girls in climate action,

Recognizing that climate change poses an existential threat to some countries, and recognizing also that it has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as

geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status where applicable, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing that climate change, and biodiversity loss and other types of environmental degradation, put added pressure on the environment that may in turn exacerbate disease emergence and increase the impact of pandemics, including the spread of diseases, thereby increasing the risk of exposure of the most vulnerable segments of society to the combined negative effects and consequences of these phenomena, and put added strain on health systems, particularly those of developing economies,

Stressing the particular challenges faced by people in vulnerable situations posed by climate change, including their increased susceptibility to diseases, heat stress, water scarcity, reduced mobility, social exclusion and reduced physical, emotional and financial resilience, as well as the need for measures to address their specific needs and to ensure their participation in disaster response planning for emergency situations and evacuations, humanitarian emergency response, and health-care services, as appropriate,

Expressing concern at the adverse impact of climate change on individuals with multiple vulnerability factors, who often sustain disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality, especially during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, sustaining disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality, while at the same time being among those least able to have access to emergency support and health services,

Recalling the call for solidarity by the Secretary-General in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic,² and the policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations,

Recalling also the statement made by the President of the Human Rights Council on 27 May 2020 emphasizing the importance of timely, equitable and unhindered access to safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics, and other health products and technologies necessary to ensure an adequate and effective response to the pandemic, including for the most vulnerable people affected by armed conflict, extreme poverty, natural disasters or climate change, and of the urgent removal of unjustified obstacles thereto,

Emphasizing that sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events seriously affect the access of vulnerable segments of society to food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, health-care services and medicines, social protection, education and training, adequate housing, transportation and access to decent work,

Reaffirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights and people in vulnerable situations as key stakeholders in disaster risk reduction,

Recognizing the need for ensuring meaningful participation, inclusion and leadership of people in vulnerable situations and their representative organizations within disaster risk management, emergency relief efforts and climate-related decision-making and in the design of policies, plans and mechanisms at the community, local, national, regional and global levels,

Expressing concern that developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, lacking the resources to implement their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies, may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events in both rural and urban areas,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

² UN News, "UN chief calls for 'solidarity, unity and hope' in battling COVID-19 pandemic", 30 April 2020.

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on mitigation, adaptation and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Convention and ensure the greatest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Urging States that have not already ratified the Paris Agreement and the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to do so,

Recalling the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Madrid in December 2019 under the presidency of Chile, and looking forward to the adoption of a more ambitious agreement at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in November 2021 in connection with the Paris Agreement,

Noting the commitments made by Governments and private sector leaders at the virtual Climate Adaptation Summit 2021, hosted by the Government of the Netherlands in January 2021, to accelerate, innovate and scale up global efforts to adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change, and at the virtual Leaders Summit on Climate, held in Washington, D.C., in April 2021, especially its associated Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, which underscored the urgency and economic benefits of stronger global climate action and marked a key milestone on the road to the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention,

Noting also the importance of some elements of the concept of “climate justice” when taking action to address climate change,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in highlighting the need to respond to the global challenge of climate change, including by reaffirming the commitments to ensure effective climate action while advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights for all, including people in vulnerable situations,

Welcoming the convening of a panel discussion on older persons, and looking forward to the summary report on the discussion to be prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Taking note of the analytical study on the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons in the context of climate change prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner pursuant to Human Rights Council pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 44/7 of 16 July 2020,³

Noting that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States and other duty bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and respect, as would be appropriate, human rights, including people in vulnerable situations, when taking action to address the adverse effects of climate change,

Recalling the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, focusing on climate change and human rights⁴ and on air pollution and human rights,⁵ the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, relating to climate change and poverty,⁶ the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, focusing on the right to food in the context of natural disasters,⁷ and the report of the Independent Expert

³ A/HRC/47/46.

⁴ A/HRC/43/53 and A/74/161.

⁵ A/HRC/40/55.

⁶ A/HRC/41/39.

⁷ A/HRC/37/61.

on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, on the human rights of older persons in emergency situations,⁸

Welcoming the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which asserts that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and noting its Midnight Climate Survival Deadline for the Climate initiative calling for enhanced nationally determined contributions under the mechanism of the Framework Convention,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting also the establishment and work of regional, subregional and other initiatives, such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway) on addressing the adverse impact of climate change,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these adversely affect the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and for the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change;

3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

4. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated, gender-responsive, age-inclusive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impact and human rights challenges that climate change presents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all, and particularly to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of people in vulnerable situations, both in rural and urban areas, to respond to the adverse impact of climate change;

5. *Calls upon* States to enhance international cooperation and assistance, in particular in financing, the transfer of technology and capacity-building, for mitigation and adaptation measures to assist developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;

6. *Also calls upon* States to better promote the human rights of people in vulnerable situations and their access to livelihoods, food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, social protection, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work, clean energy, science and technology, and ensure that services can be adapted to emergency and humanitarian contexts;

7. *Further calls upon* States to develop, strengthen and implement policies for the protection of the right of people in vulnerable situations in response to climate change, as appropriate, by, among other actions, the inclusion of their rights, specific risks, needs and capabilities in climate action plans and other relevant policies or legislation, the mainstreaming of climate change action into resilient and adaptive social and health care, and the provision of information on climate change and disaster preparedness response and planning through all accessible means of communication;

8. *Urges* States to strengthen and implement policies aimed at promoting the meaningful participation of people in vulnerable situations in the design of policies, plans and mechanisms in climate-related decision-making and disaster risk reduction and management at the community, local, national, regional and international levels, including

⁸ A/HRC/42/43.

for preparedness, contingency planning, early warning, evacuation planning, emergency relief, humanitarian response and assistance arrangements;

9. *Reaffirms* its commitment to advocate for combating climate change and addressing its adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, and recognizes the importance of climate action in the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms in a regular, systematic and transparent manner;

10. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the fiftieth session, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion focusing on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by people in vulnerable situations, and best practices and lessons learned in the promotion and protection of the rights of people in vulnerable situations, and also decides that the panel discussion will have international sign interpretation and captioning;

11. *Also decides* to incorporate into its annual programme of work, beginning in 2023, sufficient time, at a minimum a panel discussion, to discuss different specific themes on the adverse impacts of climate change on human rights, and further decides that the panel discussion will have international sign interpretation and captioning;

12. *Invites* the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including academic experts, and civil society organizations to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

13. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a summary report on the panel discussion to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-second session, and to make the report available in accessible formats, including in plain language and easy-to-read versions;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to submit to the Human Rights Council at its fiftieth session a report on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of people in vulnerable situations, and also requests the Secretary-General to make the report available in accessible formats, including plain language and easy-to-read versions;

15. *Encourages* the continued discussions among States and relevant stakeholders on the possible creation of a new special procedure addressing the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights;

16. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly the rights of people in vulnerable situations, within their respective mandates;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion and the summary report thereon;

18. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

39th meeting
14 July 2021

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 46 to 0, with 1 abstention. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Eritrea, Fiji, France, Gabon,

Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Libya, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Abstaining:

Russian Federation]



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Human Rights Council

Fiftieth session

13 June–8 July 2022

Agenda item 3

Promotion and protection of all human rights: civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 7 July 2022

50/9. Human rights and climate change

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its commitment to leave no one behind, including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,

Reaffirming the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming also that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all previous Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹ and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations with regard to human rights, including the right to food, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, peasants, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, including people living in small island developing States and least developed

¹ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



countries, and in conditions of water scarcity, desertification, land degradation and drought, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Reaffirming the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention, including in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty and end hunger, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Stressing the importance of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impact of climate change,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports and special reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and indigenous peoples', peasants' and local communities' knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries to achieve sustained economic growth, eradicate poverty and end hunger,

Recognizing that poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is one of the greatest global challenges, and that eradicating poverty and ending hunger are critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change resilience and the promotion and protection of human rights, inter alia the full realization of the right to food, particularly of people living in small island developing States, least developed countries and other climate-vulnerable countries, who are disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of climate change,

Stressing that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, thereby promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, that can increase with greater global warming, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to work and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Noting with concern the findings contained in the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in

terrestrial ecosystems,² noting also with concern the findings contained in the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on the ocean and cryosphere in a changing climate,³ and noting further with concern the findings contained in the sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel,⁴

Concerned that the adverse impacts of climate change, including changes in the global hydrological cycle, and natural disasters, are harming agricultural productivity, food production and cropping patterns, thus contributing to food availability shortfalls, and that such impacts are expected to increase in the future with climate change, and recognizing the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security, improving nutrition and ending hunger,

Emphasizing that the adverse impact of climate change threatens global food security and nutrition and puts at risk the agrifood systems which currently feed and nourish the great majority of the world population and support the livelihoods of more than 1 billion people,⁵ and stressing that the adverse impact of climate change will increasingly put pressure on food production and access to food, especially in vulnerable regions, undermining food security and nutrition and the realization of the right to food,⁶

Emphasizing also that unequal food systems disproportionately affect women and girls, making them more vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition, which is exacerbated, inter alia, by climate change, environmental degradation and disasters,

Noting that the Special Rapporteur on the right to food has asserted that climate change has a long-term and deep impact on global food insecurity, and has recommended that increasing finance to support developing countries in tackling climate change impacts, through adaptation and by averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage, is essential,⁷

Expressing its deep concern at the number and the scale of natural disasters, diseases and pest infestations, as well as the negative impacts of climate change, and their increasing impacts in recent years, which have resulted in substantial loss of life and livelihoods and have threatened agricultural production and food security and nutrition, in particular in developing countries,

Recognizing that women and girls may be disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change, inter alia concerning the realization and enjoyment of their human rights, and stressing the importance of the participation of women, including older women, and girls in climate action,

Welcoming the contribution of Working Group II to the sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, entitled *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, and extremely concerned that climate change poses an existential threat to some countries, with an irreversible adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments unless urgent climate action is taken,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status where applicable, national or social origin, birth or other status, and disability,

Recognizing that climate change, and biodiversity loss and other types of environmental degradation, in particular sea level rise, and ocean habitat degradation, put

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change and Land: An IPCC Special report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems* (United Nations publication, 2019). Available at www.ipcc.ch/srccl/.

³ See <https://unfccc.int/documents/66462>.

⁴ See www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/.

⁵ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change and Land*.

⁶ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* (United Nations publication, 2022). Available at www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/.

⁷ See A/HRC/37/61.

added pressure on the environment, which adversely affect the production and distribution of food from agriculture and fisheries, seriously affecting the availability, accessibility, adequacy and sustainability of food, which are the key elements of the right to food,

Expressing concern that multiple challenges and adverse impacts arising from climate change have serious consequences on the full realization of the right to food for all people, especially with respect to the production, distribution, availability, accessibility, adequacy and sustainability of food,

Emphasizing that sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events cause significant loss and damage to vulnerable populations, especially in developing countries, and seriously affect the access by people in vulnerable situations to food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, health-care services and medicines, social protection, education and training, adequate housing, transportation and decent work,

Reaffirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights and food security,

Expressing concern that developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, lacking the resources to implement their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies, may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events in both rural and urban areas,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to mitigation, adaptation and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Framework Convention and ensure the greatest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to minimize the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Recalling the outcomes, including the Glasgow Climate Pact, adopted at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, held in Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in November 2021, and noting the commitments made at both conferences,

Looking forward to the adoption of more ambitious commitments at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, to be held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022,

Noting the commitments made by Governments and private sector leaders at the virtual Climate Adaptation Summit 2021, hosted by the Government of the Netherlands in January 2021, to accelerate, innovate and scale up global efforts to adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change, and at the virtual Leaders Summit on Climate, held in Washington, D.C., in April 2021, especially its associated Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, which underscored the urgency and economic benefits of stronger global climate action,

Recognizing the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change,

Noting the importance of some elements of the concept of “climate justice” when taking action to address climate change,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in highlighting the need to respond to the global challenge of climate change, including by reaffirming the commitments to ensure effective climate action while advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to food,

Welcoming the convening of a panel discussion on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by people in vulnerable situations,

Taking note of the report on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of people in vulnerable situations, prepared by the Secretary-General pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 47/24 of 14 July 2021,⁸

Noting that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States and other duty bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and respect, as would be appropriate, human rights, including the right to food, when taking action to address the adverse effects of climate change,

Recalling the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, focusing on the right to food in the context of natural disasters⁹ and on the impact of climate change on the right to food,¹⁰ the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, focusing on climate change and human rights¹¹ and on air pollution and human rights,¹² and the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, on climate change and poverty,¹³

Recalling also the establishment of the mandate of Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, and the appointment of the Special Rapporteur,

Welcoming the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which asserts that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and noting its Midnight Climate Survival Deadline for the Climate initiative calling for enhanced nationally determined contributions under the mechanism of the Framework Convention,

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting also the establishment and work of regional, subregional and other initiatives, such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway) on addressing the adverse impact of climate change,

1. *Expresses concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these adversely affect the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the urgent importance of continuing to address, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, the adverse consequences of climate change for all, particularly in developing countries and for the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change;

3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

4. *Urges* States that have not yet ratified the Paris Agreement to do so;

⁸ A/HRC/50/57.

⁹ A/HRC/37/61.

¹⁰ A/70/287.

¹¹ A/HRC/43/53 and A/74/161.

¹² A/HRC/40/55.

¹³ A/HRC/41/39.

5. *Recognizes* the impact of climate change and of extreme weather and extreme climate phenomena, including the El Niño phenomenon, on agricultural production, food security and nutrition around the world and the importance of designing and implementing actions to reduce their effects, in particular on vulnerable populations, such as rural women, bearing in mind the role that they play in supporting their households and communities in achieving food security and nutrition, generating income and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being;

6. *Also recognizes* the importance for all countries of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow-onset events, and the role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage, and in that regard looks forward to the further operationalization of the Santiago Network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, and encourages the Parties to constructively engage in the Glasgow Dialogue to discuss the arrangements for the funding of activities to avert, minimize and address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, in the context of relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and article 8 of the Paris Agreement;

7. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated, gender-responsive, age-inclusive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impact and human rights challenges that climate change presents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all;

8. *Calls upon* States to enhance international cooperation and assistance, in particular in financing, the transfer of technology and capacity-building, for mitigation and adaptation measures to assist developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;

9. *Also calls upon* States to better promote the human rights of people in vulnerable situations and their access to livelihoods, food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, social protection, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work, clean energy, science and technology, and ensure that services can be adapted to emergency and humanitarian contexts;

10. *Further calls upon* States to develop, strengthen and implement policies for the protection of the rights of people in vulnerable situations in response to climate change, as appropriate, by, among other actions, the inclusion of their rights, specific risks, needs and capabilities in climate action plans and other relevant policies or legislation, the mainstreaming of climate change action into resilient and adaptive social and health care, and the provision of information on climate change and disaster preparedness response and planning through all accessible means of communication;

11. *Urges* States to strengthen and implement policies aimed at enhancing international cooperation based on human rights to realize the right to food for all, despite the adverse effects of climate change, and consistent with national and international efforts to combat climate change, and to pursue the right to development, including by addressing inequalities in food distribution and access, ensuring food security, supporting sustainable agriculture and aquatic food production from the oceans, and enhancing more equitable, predictable, transparent and human rights-based forms of food systems governance at the global and national levels;

12. *Reaffirms* its commitment to advocate for combating climate change and addressing its adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, and recognizes the importance of climate action in the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms in a regular, systematic and transparent manner;

13. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work for the fifty-third session, on the basis of the different elements contained in the present resolution, a panel discussion focusing on the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food

for all people and ways forward to address the challenges thereto, as well as on best practices and lessons learned, including science-based approaches and local and indigenous knowledge, and also decides that the panel discussion will have International Sign interpretation and captioning;

14. *Also decides* to incorporate into its annual programme of work, beginning in 2023, at a minimum a panel discussion, with sufficient time to discuss different specific themes on the adverse impacts of climate change on human rights, including means of implementation for climate action as a mainstreamed element, and further decides that the panel discussion will have International Sign interpretation and captioning;

15. *Invites* the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, within their respective mandates, and other relevant stakeholders with appropriate expertise, including academic experts, and civil society organizations to contribute actively to the panel discussion;

16. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to present a report to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-fifth session identifying the necessary measures for minimizing the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food, taking into account the panel discussion and the interactive dialogue held at the fifty-third session on this matter, to be followed by an interactive dialogue, and to make the report available in accessible formats, including in plain language and easy-to-read versions;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the Committee on World Food Security, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to submit to the Council at its fifty-third session a report on the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food, to be followed by an interactive dialogue, and also requests the Secretary-General to make the report available in accessible formats, including plain language and easy-to-read versions;

18. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change to highlight the adverse impacts of climate change on the full realization of the right to food in his work and reports, taking into consideration the challenges of developing countries, including small island developing States, least developed countries and other climate-vulnerable countries;

19. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly the rights of people in vulnerable situations, within their respective mandates;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all the human, technical and financial assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion, reports and interactive dialogues;

21. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

39th meeting
7 July 2022

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Fifty-third session**

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 12 July
2023****53/6. Human rights and climate change***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its commitment to leave no one behind, including, inter alia, its Goal 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,

Reaffirming the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming also that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recalling all previous Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹ and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations with regard to human rights, including the right to food, the right to health, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, peasants, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and persons in vulnerable situations, including people living in small island developing States and least

¹ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.



developed countries, and in conditions of water scarcity, desertification, land degradation and drought, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity,

Reaffirming the commitment to realize the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention, including in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, end hunger and malnutrition and promote livelihood resilience, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Stressing the importance of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impact of climate change,

Noting with serious concern the findings contained in the synthesis report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report and the findings from the contribution of Working Group III to the Assessment Report, which set out that limiting warming to around 1.5°C requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and to be reduced by 43 per cent by 2030 relative to 2019 levels, to achieve net zero by 2050,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions, and acknowledging also that article 2, paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 77/276 of 29 March 2023, in which the Assembly requested an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States in respect of climate change, and Assembly resolution 76/300 of 28 July 2022, on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,

Noting the importance of the work of the scientific community and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including its assessment reports and special reports, in support of strengthening the global response to climate change, including considering the human dimension, and Indigenous Peoples', peasants' and local communities' knowledge,

Acknowledging that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding an adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries to achieve sustained economic growth, eradicate poverty, end hunger and malnutrition, and achieve livelihood resilience in the face of loss and damage brought about by extreme weather and slow-onset events,

Recognizing that poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is one of the greatest global challenges, and that eradicating poverty and ending hunger and malnutrition are critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change resilience and the promotion and protection of human rights, inter alia the full realization of the right to an adequate standard of living, and maintaining resilient livelihoods, particularly of people living in developing countries, including small island developing States and least developed countries, and other climate-vulnerable countries who are disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of climate change,

Stressing that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international, regional and national policymaking in the area of climate change, thereby promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

Emphasizing that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, that increase with greater global warming, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination, the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to work and the right to development, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Expressing concern that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the adverse effects of climate change are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, race, ethnicity, indigenous or minority status where applicable, national or social origin, birth or other status, and disability, among others,

Expressing extreme concern that climate change poses an existential threat to some countries, and has already had an adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments,

Noting with serious concern the findings contained in the synthesis report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report and the findings from the contribution of Working Group II to the Assessment Report, entitled *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, in which the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated that human-induced climate change had caused widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people affecting livelihoods through, inter alia, destruction of homes and infrastructure, loss of property and income, human health and food security, which has a negative impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of persons living in affected areas,

Noting with grave concern that soft adaptation limits have been reached in some ecosystems and that without deep, rapid and sustained mitigation and accelerated adaptation actions, losses and damages will continue to increase, including projected adverse impacts in Africa, least developed countries, small island developing States, Central and South America, Asia and the Arctic, disproportionately affecting the human rights of persons in the most vulnerable situations,

Expressing concern that loss and damage to livelihoods caused by sudden- and slow-onset events directly and disproportionately affect women and girls, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, persons living in poverty and others in vulnerable situations, undermining their well-being and their enjoyment of a whole of range of human rights,

Recognizing that the erosion of livelihoods through, inter alia, the destruction of homes and infrastructure, loss of property and income, human health and food security, partly caused by the adverse effects of climate change, is a push factor for displacement and migration, especially from rural to urban areas, and may contribute to increased risk of exploitation, including trafficking in persons on the move, in particular women and girls,

Emphasizing that social security is a human right and a potent tool in the promotion of social inclusion and human dignity, especially the most marginalized, and underscoring that efforts to realize the right to social security should be inclusive and accessible to all,

Expressing concern at the inadequate social protection schemes for workers in the informal economy and low coverage and penetration of crop insurance schemes in vulnerable farming populations, which would provide income security in the event of contingency,

Recognizing that women and girls are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change, inter alia, concerning the realization and enjoyment of their human rights, and stressing the importance of the participation of women, including older women, Indigenous women and girls, in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policy and decision-making processes,

Reaffirming the need for the continuing implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference

on Disaster Risk Reduction, and its references to human rights, livelihood protection and food security,

Expressing concern that developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, lacking the resources to implement their adaptation plans and programmes of action and effective adaptation strategies, may suffer from higher exposure to extreme weather events in both rural and urban areas,

Taking into account the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities,

Emphasizing the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change regarding mitigation, adaptation and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries, and emphasizing also that realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement would enhance the implementation of the Framework Convention and help to ensure the greatest possible adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to avert, minimize and address loss and damage from the adverse impact of climate change on present and future generations,

Recalling the outcomes adopted at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt in November 2022, and noting the commitments made at both conferences,

Welcoming the decision adopted at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to establish new funding arrangements to assist developing countries, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, in responding to economic and non-economic loss and damage, by providing and assisting in mobilizing new and additional resources, and that these new arrangements complement and include sources, funds, processes and initiatives both under and outside the Convention and the Paris Agreement,

Looking forward to the adoption of more ambitious commitments at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 12 December 2023,

Looking forward also to the convening of the Climate Ambition Summit and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit by the Secretary-General in September 2023, ahead of the completion of the global stocktake,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in highlighting the need to respond to the global challenge of climate change, including by reaffirming the commitments to ensure effective climate action while advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Welcoming the convening of a panel discussion, held pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 50/9 of 7 July 2022, on the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food for all people and ways forward to address the challenges thereto, as well as on best practices and lessons learned, including science-based approaches and local and Indigenous knowledge,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 50/9,²

² A/HRC/53/45.

Noting that the human rights obligations and responsibilities as enshrined in the relevant international human rights instruments provide roles for States as duty bearers and responsibility bearers, including businesses, to promote, protect and respect, as would be appropriate, human rights, when taking action to address climate change and the adverse effects thereof,

Noting with appreciation the work of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, and taking note of the mandate holder's most recent reports,³ and recalling the reports of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, focusing on addressing the gender dimensions of trafficking in persons in the context of climate change, displacement and disaster reduction,⁴ the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, focusing on the right to food in the context of natural disasters⁵ and on the impact of climate change on the right to food,⁶ the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, focusing on climate change and human rights⁷ and on air pollution and human rights,⁸ and the report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, on climate change and poverty,⁹

Welcoming the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, which asserts that climate change is a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and taking note of its Traffic Light Assessment of nationally determined contributions,¹⁰

Noting the importance of facilitating meaningful interaction between the human rights and climate change communities at both the national and international levels in order to build capacity to deliver responses to climate change that respect and promote human rights, taking into account the Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action and other similar efforts,

Noting also the establishment and work of regional, subregional and other initiatives, such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway) on addressing the adverse impact of climate change,

Noting further the importance for some of the concept of "climate justice" when taking action to address climate change,

Affirming that prioritizing equity, climate justice, social justice, inclusion and just transition processes can enable adaptation and ambitious mitigation actions and climate-resilient development,

1. *Expresses grave concern* that climate change has contributed and continues to contribute to the increased frequency and intensity of both sudden-onset natural disasters and slow-onset events, and that these adversely affect the full enjoyment of all human rights;

2. *Emphasizes* the importance of continuing to address urgently, as they relate to States' human rights obligations, climate change and its adverse consequences for all, particularly in developing countries and for the people whose situation is most vulnerable to climate change;

3. *Calls upon* States to consider, among other aspects, human rights within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

4. *Urges* States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Paris Agreement to do so;

5. *Recognizes* the importance for all countries of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow-onset events, and the role of sustainable development in

³ A/HRC/53/34 and Add.1 and A/77/226.

⁴ A/77/170.

⁵ A/HRC/37/61.

⁶ A/70/287.

⁷ A/HRC/43/53 and A/74/161.

⁸ A/HRC/40/55.

⁹ A/HRC/41/39.

¹⁰ https://thecvf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/CVF_PTLAReport_2022.pdf.

reducing the risk of loss and damage, and in that regard looks forward to the further operationalization of the Santiago Network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, and encourages the Parties to constructively engage in the Glasgow Dialogue and to support the work of the Transitional Committee to operationalize expeditiously the new funding arrangements, including a fund for assisting developing countries, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, in responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, in the context of relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement;

6. *Calls for* deep and rapid cuts in global emissions to avert, minimize and address loss and damage from sudden and slow-onset climate events that have an adverse impact on the enjoyment of human rights;

7. *Calls upon* States to enhance international cooperation and reiterates the urgency of scaling up action, in particular in financing, the transfer of technology and capacity-building, for mitigation and adaptation measures and to assist developing countries in averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;

8. *Calls upon* all States to adopt a country-driven, comprehensive, integrated, gender-responsive, age-inclusive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objective and principles thereof, to address efficiently the economic, cultural and social impact and human rights challenges that climate change presents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all;

9. *Calls upon* States to better promote the human rights of persons in vulnerable situations, their inclusion in risk reduction decision-making and their access to livelihoods, food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, social protection, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work, clean and low-emission energy, science and technology, including digital technology and early warning systems, and ensure that services can be adapted to emergency and humanitarian contexts;

10. *Urges* States to develop and effectively implement policies that promote sustainable agriculture, forest management, fisheries, aquaculture practices and marine environment management in order to enhance the adaptive capacities and livelihood resilience of communities for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights;

11. *Recognizes* the link between the adverse impacts of climate change, including on livelihoods, and displacement and migration, and the need for adaptation measures that benefit the most vulnerable, facilitate safe and voluntary movement, minimize forced movement and address human rights protection gaps in order to, inter alia, reduce the risk of trafficking and exploitation of people on the move, especially women and girls;

12. *Urges* States, consistent with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, to uphold the principle of corporate responsibility to respect human rights, including the responsibility to avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through business activities that may harm the environment and the climate system;

13. *Calls upon* business enterprises, both transnational and others, to meet their responsibility to respect human rights, including in the context of climate change and the environment;

14. *Reaffirms* its commitment to advocate for combating climate change and addressing its adverse impact on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, and recognizes the importance of the safe and meaningful participation of civil society in climate action and the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms in the context of climate change, conducted in a regular, systematic and transparent manner;

15. *Recalls* the decision to incorporate into its annual programme of work, beginning in 2023, at a minimum a panel discussion, and decides that the annual panel discussion to be held at the fifty-sixth session shall focus on ensuring livelihood resilience in

the context of the risk of loss and damage relating to the adverse effects of climate change for achieving progressively the full realization of all human rights and ways forward to address the challenges thereto on the basis of equity and climate justice, and also decides that the panel discussion will have International Sign interpretation and captioning;

16. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a summary report on the panel discussion held at the fifty-sixth session to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-eighth session, and to make the report available in accessible formats, including in easy-to-read versions;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with and taking into account the views of States, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, the International Organization for Migration, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and other relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other stakeholders, to conduct an analytical study on the impact of loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, exploring equity-based approaches and solutions to addressing the same, and to submit the study to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-seventh session, to be followed by an interactive dialogue, and also requests the Secretary-General to make the report available in accessible formats, including in easy-to-read versions;

18. *Encourages* relevant special procedure mandate holders to continue to consider the issue of climate change and human rights, including the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly the rights of persons in vulnerable situations, within their respective mandates;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all the human, technical and financial assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned panel discussion, reports and interactive dialogue;

20. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*34th meeting
12 July 2023*

[Adopted without a vote.]



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Nineteenth session

Agenda item 3

Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council*

19/4

Adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living in the context of disaster settings

The Human Rights Council,

Reaffirming all previous resolutions of the Human Rights Council, as well as those adopted by the Commission on Human Rights on the issue of adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, including Council resolution 15/8 of 30 September 2010,

Recalling all previous resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights on the issue of women's equal rights to ownership of, access to and control over land and the equal rights to own property and to adequate housing, including resolution 2005/25 of 15 April 2005,

Reaffirming that international human rights law instruments, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, entail obligations and commitments of States parties in relation to access to adequate housing,

Reaffirming also the principles and commitments with regard to adequate housing enshrined in the relevant provisions of declarations and programmes adopted by major United Nations conferences and summits and at special sessions of the General Assembly and at their follow-up meetings, inter alia, the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements and the Habitat Agenda,¹ and the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, adopted at the twenty-fifth special session of the Assembly and annexed to its resolution S-25/2 of 9 June 2001,

* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its nineteenth session (A/HRC/19/2), chap. I.

¹ A/CONF.165/14.

Reaffirming further the importance of implementing the Hyogo Declaration² and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,³ adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005,

Concerned that any deterioration in the general housing situation disproportionately affects persons living in conditions of poverty, low-income earners, women, children, persons belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, migrants, internally displaced persons, tenants, the elderly and persons with disabilities, and increases the need for them to be supported against extreme natural disasters,

Noting the work of the United Nations treaty bodies, in particular the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in the promotion of the rights relating to adequate housing, including its general comments Nos. 4, 7, 9, 16 and 20,

Expressing its deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters and extreme climate and weather events and their increasing impact in the context of climate change and urbanization, as well as other factors that might affect the exposure, vulnerability and capacity to respond to such disasters, which have resulted in massive loss of life, homes and livelihoods, together with forced displacement and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for all societies throughout the world,

Recognizing that vulnerable persons are disproportionately susceptible to recurring displacement, evictions without adequate remedies and exclusion from meaningful consultation and participation during disaster risk reduction, prevention and preparedness, as well as in all phases of disaster response and recovery, to the detriment of their enjoyment of the right to adequate housing,

Recognizing also that the integration of a human rights-based approach into the framework of disaster risk reduction, prevention and preparedness, as well as in all phases of disaster response and recovery, represents an important factor into the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing, and underlining in this regard the principles of participation and empowerment,

1. *Acknowledges* the work of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, including the undertaking of country missions;

2. *Welcomes* the reports presented by the Special Rapporteur to the General Assembly⁴ and to the Human Rights Council,⁵ and takes note with appreciation of the framework presented to comprehensively respect, protect and fulfil the right to adequate housing in the context of post-disaster settings;

3. *Encourages* States and relevant actors to respect, protect and fulfil the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living in their broader disaster risk reduction, prevention and preparedness initiatives, as well as in all phases of disaster response and recovery;

4. *Urges* States, in the context of post-disaster settings, and recognizing that short-term humanitarian response and early recovery phases are based on needs, to respect, protect and fulfil the right to adequate housing without discrimination of any kind as to

² A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1.

³ Ibid., resolution 2.

⁴ A/66/270.

⁵ A/HRC/16/42.

race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and, in this regard:

(a) To ensure that all affected persons, irrespective of their pre-disaster tenure status and without discrimination of any kind, have equal access to housing that fulfils the requirements of adequacy, namely the criteria of accessibility, affordability, habitability, security of tenure, cultural adequacy, suitability of location, access to essential services and respect for safety standards aimed at reducing damage in cases of future disasters;

(b) To integrate, in post-disaster settings, including where temporary shelter is required as an interim response, the right to adequate housing as a key component of planning and implementation of humanitarian, reconstruction and development responses;

(c) To give due priority to the realization of the right to adequate housing for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable persons through housing reconstruction and the provision of alternative housing, especially by respecting the principles of non-discrimination and gender equality, and by integrating a gender perspective into policies, strategies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, prevention and preparedness, as well as into all phases of disaster response and recovery;

(d) To ensure that accessibility for persons with disabilities is taken into account during all phases of reconstruction, in accordance with international law and standards;

(e) To aim to ensure access to information and meaningful consultation and participation of affected persons and communities in the planning and implementation of shelter and housing assistance;

(f) To ensure that the tenure rights of those without individual or formally registered property ownership are recognized in restitution, compensation, reconstruction and recovery programmes, giving particular consideration to the most vulnerable persons and by taking measures to support their repossession of or alternative access to adequate housing or land;

(g) To support the voluntary return of displaced persons or groups to their former homes, lands or places of habitual residence, in safety and dignity, based on a free, informed choice, and to ensure that relocation and local integration conditions for displaced persons are in accordance with international human rights law and standards as reflected in the guidelines pertaining to adequate housing, evictions and displacement, in particular the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

(h) To ensure that cases of permanent relocation are kept to a minimum and are only carried out after all alternative and less disruptive options have been exhausted, and, where there is a clear issue of public safety, that the relocation is done in accordance with international law;

(i) To ensure that appropriate measures are taken to make available adequate alternative shelter to those unable to provide for themselves;

(j) To make accessible appropriate remedies, including access to legal counsel and legal aid, and to guarantee a fair hearing to all persons threatened with or subject to eviction;

5. Welcomes the cooperation extended to the Special Rapporteur by States and other relevant actors in the context of post-disaster response and recovery, and calls upon them to continue to cooperate with her on this issue, to share good practices in this regard and to respond favourably to her requests for information and visits;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human rights to provide all assistance necessary to the Special Rapporteur for the effective fulfilment of her mandate;

7. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this matter under the same agenda item.

*52nd meeting
22 March 2012*

[Adopted without a vote.]

**Human Rights Council****Fortieth session**

25 February–22 March 2019

Agenda item 3

**Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 21 March 2019****40/11. Recognizing the contribution of environmental human rights defenders to the enjoyment of human rights, environmental protection and sustainable development**

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other relevant instruments,

Guided also by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome and informed by other instruments, such as the Declaration on the Right to Development,

Recalling also the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 and its outcome document entitled, “The Future We Want”, which reaffirmed the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 53/144 of 9 December 1998, by which the Assembly adopted by consensus the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, commonly referred to as the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, and the continued validity and application of all its provisions, and reiterating the importance of the Declaration and its promotion and full and effective implementation,

Recalling all other previous resolutions on this subject, including Human Rights Council resolutions 22/6 of 21 March 2013, 31/32 of 24 March 2016 and 34/5 of 23 March 2017, and General Assembly resolutions 68/181 of 18 December 2013, 70/161 of 17 December 2015 and 72/247 of 24 December 2017, and recalling also Council resolutions on human rights and the environment, the most recent of which are resolutions 31/8 of 23 March 2016, 34/20 of 24 March 2017 and 37/8 of 22 March 2018,

Reiterating that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and should be promoted and implemented in a



fair and equitable manner, without prejudice to the implementation of each of those rights and freedoms,

Reaffirming that States have the primary responsibility and are under the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons, and welcoming the steps taken by many States to create a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders,

Reaffirming also the importance of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and its full and effective implementation, and that promoting respect, support and protection for the activities of human rights defenders, including women and indigenous human rights defenders, is essential to the overall enjoyment of human rights and for the protection and conservation of the environment, including the rights to life, to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food and housing, safe drinking water and sanitation, and cultural rights,

Recognizing the positive, important and legitimate role played by human rights defenders in the promotion and protection of human rights as they relate to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and deeply concerned that human rights defenders working in environmental matters, referred to as environmental human rights defenders, are among the human rights defenders most exposed and at risk,

Underscoring that more than 150 States have recognized some form of a right to a healthy environment in, inter alia, international and regional agreements, their constitutions, legislation or policies,

Recognizing that the twenty-fourth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2018 operationalized the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, adopted as part of decision 1/CP.21 on the Paris Agreement, in order to recognize their climate actions, their role in climate policy, and strengthening the role of traditional knowledge in mitigating and adapting to climate change,

Recognizing also the importance of gender equality, the empowerment of women and the role women play as managers of natural resources and agents of change in the safeguarding of the environment, as well as the multiple and intersecting forms of violence and discrimination against women human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, children, persons belonging to minorities and rural and marginalized communities,

Recognizing further that, while the human rights implications of environmental damage are felt by individuals and communities around the world, the consequences are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations, and that the specific nature of indigenous peoples and rural and local communities can aggravate their vulnerability, as they can be located in isolated areas without communication access or network support, and recognizing also that indigenous peoples are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change owing to their dependence upon and close relationship with the environment and its resources,

Taking note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples,¹ and noting with concern her findings with regard to attacks against and the criminalization of indigenous human rights defenders, and calling upon all States to consider the recommendations contained in the report,

Alarmed by the increasing rate of killings, violent acts, including gender-based violence, threats, harassment, intimidation, smear campaigns, criminalization, judicial harassment, forced eviction and displacement of environmental human rights defenders, including indigenous and women human rights defenders, and human rights defenders addressing issues relating to land rights, their family members, communities, associates and legal representatives, as reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and other special procedures,

¹ A/HRC/39/17.

Cognizant that the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment has called for States to prioritize action to protect environmental human rights defenders,²

Recognizing the need to develop protection mechanisms for environmental human rights defenders, taking into account the intersectional dimensions of violations against women human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, rural and marginalized communities, and persons belonging to minorities, and to take concrete steps to prevent and stop the use of legislation to hinder or limit unduly the ability of human rights defenders to exercise their work, including by reviewing and, where necessary, amending relevant legislation and its implementation in order to ensure compliance with international human rights law,

Noting with appreciation international instruments, such as the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (the Escazú Agreement), for the protection of environmental human rights defenders,

Recognizing that the protection of environmental human rights defenders is inherently linked to the protection of their communities and can only be fully achieved in the context of a holistic approach that includes the strengthening of democratic institutions, the fight against impunity, a reduction in economic inequality and equal access to justice,

Underscoring that the legal framework within which human rights defenders work peacefully to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms is that of national legislation consistent with the Charter and international human rights law,

Gravely concerned that national security and counter-terrorism legislation and other measures, such as laws regulating civil society organizations, are in some instances misused to target human rights defenders or have hindered their work and endangered their safety in contravention of international law, and mindful that domestic law and administrative provisions and their application should not hinder but enable the work of human rights defenders, including by avoiding any criminalization, stigmatization, impediments, discrimination, obstructions or restrictions thereof contrary to the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law,

1. *Expresses grave concern* at the situation of environmental human rights defenders around the world, and strongly condemns the killing of and all other human rights violations or abuses against environmental human rights defenders, including women and indigenous human rights defenders, by State and non-State actors, and stresses that such acts may violate international law and undermine sustainable development at the local, national, regional and international levels;

2. *Stresses* that human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders, must be ensured a safe and enabling environment to undertake their work free from hindrance and insecurity, in recognition of their important role in supporting States to fulfil their obligations under the Paris Agreement and to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the pledge that no one will be left behind and to reach the furthest behind first;

3. *Urges* all States to take all measures necessary to ensure the rights, protection and safety of all persons, including environmental human rights defenders, who exercise, inter alia, the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association, online and offline, which are essential for the promotion and protection of human rights and the protection and conservation of the environment;

4. *Welcomes* the work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, including his reports presented to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, and strongly encourages all States to cooperate with and to assist the Special Rapporteur;

² See A/HRC/40/55, para. 82.

5. *Recognizes* that democracy and the rule of law are essential components for the protection of human rights defenders, and urges States to take measures to strengthen democratic institutions, safeguard civic space, uphold the rule of law and combat impunity;

6. *Urges* States to acknowledge, through public statements, policies, programmes or laws, the important and legitimate role of human rights defenders in the promotion of all human rights, democracy and the rule of law as essential components of ensuring their protection, including by respecting the independence of their organizations and by avoiding the stigmatization of their work, including with regard to the environment;

7. *Calls upon* States to ensure that all legal provisions and their application affecting human rights defenders are clearly defined, determinable and non-retroactive in order to avoid potential abuse, to the detriment of fundamental freedoms and human rights, and specifically to ensure that the promotion and the protection of human rights are not criminalized, and that human rights defenders are not prevented from enjoying universal human rights owing to their work, whether they operate individually or in association with others;

8. *Urges* States to take concrete steps to prevent and put an end to arbitrary arrest and detention, including of human rights defenders, and in this regard strongly urges the release of persons detained or imprisoned, in violation of the obligations and commitments of States under international human rights law, for exercising their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

9. *Also urges* States to develop and appropriately resource protection initiatives for human rights defenders, to ensure that human rights defenders are meaningfully consulted in the provision and implementation of protection measures, and also to ensure that the measures are holistic, including both individual and collective protection aspects, and that these measures also function as early warning and rapid response mechanisms that enable human rights defenders, when threatened, to have immediate access to authorities that are competent and adequately resourced to provide effective protective measures, taking into account the intersectional dimensions of violations and abuses against women human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, children, persons belonging to minorities, and rural and marginalized communities;

10. *Calls upon* States to combat impunity by conducting prompt, impartial and independent investigations and pursuing accountability for all attacks and threats by State and non-State actors against any human rights defender, or against lawyers and legal representatives, journalists and media workers covering these issues, as well as against their family members and their associates, and by condemning publicly all cases of violence, discrimination, intimidation and reprisal, underlining that such practices can never be justified;

11. *Continues to express particular concern* about systemic and structural discrimination and violence faced by women human rights defenders of all ages, including sexual and gender-based violence, and calls upon States to take appropriate, robust and practical steps to protect women human rights defenders and to integrate a gender perspective into their efforts to investigate threats and attacks against human rights defenders, and to create a safe and enabling environment for the defence of human rights, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolutions 68/181 and 72/247;

12. *Reaffirms* the right of everyone, individually and in association with others, to unhindered access to and communication with international bodies, in particular the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights, including the Human Rights Council and its special procedures, the universal periodic review mechanism and the treaty bodies, as well as regional human rights mechanisms;

13. *Strongly condemns* reprisals and violence against and the targeting, criminalization, intimidation, arbitrary detention, torture, disappearance and killing of any individual, including human rights defenders, for their advocacy of human rights, for reporting and seeking information on human rights violations and abuses or for cooperating with national, regional and international mechanisms;

14. *Calls upon States:*

(a) To respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including in all actions undertaken to address environmental challenges, including the rights to life and to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, to an adequate standard of living, to adequate food and housing, safe drinking water and sanitation, and cultural rights, and to human rights as they relate to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

(b) To adopt and implement strong and effective laws or policies ensuring, among other things, the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs and in cultural life, the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and equal access to justice, including to an effective remedy, in the field of the environment;

(c) To facilitate public awareness of and participation in environmental decision-making, implementation, monitoring and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including of civil society, women, children, youth, indigenous peoples, rural and local communities, peasants and others who depend directly on biodiversity and the services provided by ecosystems, by protecting all human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, both online and offline;

(d) To implement fully their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights without distinction of any kind, including in the application of environmental laws and policies;

(e) To provide a safe and empowering context for initiatives organized by young people and children to defend human rights relating to the environment;

(f) To promote a safe and enabling environment in which individuals, groups and organs of society, including those working on human rights and environmental issues, including biodiversity, can operate free from violence, threats, hindrance and insecurity;

(g) To provide for effective remedies for human rights violations and abuses, including those relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in accordance with their international obligations and commitments;

(h) To establish or maintain effective legal and institutional frameworks to regulate the activities of public and private actors in order to prevent, reduce and remedy harm to biodiversity, taking into account human rights obligations and commitments relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

(i) To take into account human rights obligations and commitments relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment in the gender-responsive implementation of and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the integrated and multi-sectoral nature of the latter;

15. *Also calls upon States* to promote and enable public participation, and to promote transparency, accountability and effective governance, in the prevention of and the fight against corruption involving State officials, business representatives and other non-State actors, and in raising public awareness regarding the existence, causes and gravity of and the threat posed by corruption, including all possible impact on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, and further calls upon all States to respect, promote and protect the freedom of everyone to seek, receive, publish and disseminate information concerning corruption, including by protecting the actors doing so, including environmental human rights defenders;

16. *Urges States* to bear in mind the importance of the empowerment and capacity-building of indigenous peoples, including their full and effective participation in decision-making processes in matters that affect them directly, and of consultations in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent, and the important role indigenous human rights defenders play in this regard, and encourages States to work towards achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and also encourages those States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Indigenous and Tribal

Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization to consider doing so;

17. *Encourages* States to ensure that information held by public authorities, including that relating to environmental, land, natural resources and development issues, is proactively disclosed and not unnecessarily classified or otherwise withheld from the public, and calls upon all States to adopt transparent, clear and expedient laws and policies that provide for the effective disclosure of information held by public authorities and a general right to request and receive information, for which public access should be granted, except within narrow, proportionate, necessary and clearly defined limitations;

18. *Encourages* all States to ensure to the maximum extent possible that the competent authorities generate, collect, publicize and disseminate environmental information relevant to their functions in a systematic, proactive, timely, regular, accessible and comprehensible manner, and periodically update that information and encourage the disaggregation and decentralization, where appropriate, of environmental information at the subnational and local levels;

19. *Underlines* the value of national human rights institutions, established and operating in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), in the continued engagement with human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders;

20. *Recognizes* the important and legitimate role of human rights defenders in identifying and raising awareness of human rights impacts, the benefits and risks of development projects and business operations, including in relation to workplace health, safety and rights, and natural resource exploitation, environmental, land and development issues, by expressing their views, concerns, support, criticism or dissent regarding government policy or action or business activities, and underlines the need for States to take the measures necessary to safeguard space for such public dialogue and its participants;

21. *Calls upon* all States to implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, including to develop a national action plan or other such framework, and to encourage all business enterprises to carry out human rights due diligence, including with regard to human rights relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean and healthy environment and by conducting meaningful and inclusive consultations with potentially affected groups and other relevant stakeholders;

22. *Underscores* the responsibility of all business enterprises, both transnational and others, in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, to respect human rights, including the rights to life, liberty and security of person of human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders, and their exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and participation in public affairs, which are essential for the promotion and protection of all human rights, and the importance that business enterprises establish or participate in effective and accessible operational-level grievance mechanisms for individuals and communities who may be adversely impacted;

23. *Encourages* all business enterprises, as part of their human rights due diligence in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, to share and exchange best practices in this regard, and to communicate in an accessible form on how they address their adverse human rights impacts, particularly when concerns are raised by or on behalf of affected stakeholders, including by environmental human rights defenders;

24. *Encourages* States to avail themselves of technical assistance in follow-up to the present and previous resolutions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the protection, individually and collectively, of human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders, such as through collaboration, based on mutual consent, with national human rights institutions, regional organizations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and relevant special procedures, and other relevant international agencies and organizations, and with other States;

25. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders,³ in which he called for the development of a more coherent and comprehensive approach to support the Declaration by the United Nations, and also of the environmental defenders policy launched by the United Nations Environment Programme in 2018 as a positive example, and encourages other agencies to do the same;

26. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner, in consultation with the Special Rapporteurs and other special procedures, to continue to compile and share information on best practices and challenges in this regard, and also encourages the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders to continue to address the situation of human rights defenders, including good practices and challenges, in his work and reporting, including through collaboration and coordination with relevant United Nations agencies, organizations and mechanisms, the treaty bodies and other relevant special procedures, in accordance with the mandate;

27. *Invites* the Secretary-General to draw attention to the present resolution in the United Nations system and to continue to include alleged acts of intimidation and reprisal against human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders, who seek to cooperate, are cooperating or have cooperated with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights, including against their family members, associates and legal representatives, in his annual report on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights;

28. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*52nd meeting
21 March 2019*

[Adopted without a vote.]

³ A/73/230.



Human Rights Council**Forty-fifth session**

14 September–7 October 2020

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 7 October 2020****45/30. Rights of the child: realizing the rights of the child through a healthy
environment***The Human Rights Council,*

Emphasizing that the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitutes the international legal foundation for the respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child, bearing in mind the importance of the Optional Protocols to the Convention, and calling for their universal ratification and effective implementation,

Recalling all previous resolutions on the rights of the child of the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, the most recent being Council resolutions 40/14 of 22 March 2019 and 43/22 of 22 June 2020, and Assembly resolution 74/133 of 18 December 2019,

Welcoming the convening of commemorative events to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the progress made over the years in safeguarding the rights of the child,

Recalling all other relevant international human rights treaties, in particular the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

Reaffirming that the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, participation, survival and development, provide the framework for all actions concerning children,

Reaffirming also that the Convention on the Rights of the Child requires States parties to pursue the full implementation of the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by taking measures to, inter alia, combat disease and malnutrition, including through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental



pollution, and that States parties have agreed that the education of the child shall be directed to, among others, the development of respect for the natural environment,

Recalling the 2016 day of general discussion of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which focused on the contents and the implications of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with regard to environmental matters, and taking note of its outcome report and recommendations,

Welcoming the attention paid by the special procedures of the Human Rights Council to the rights of the child in the context of their respective mandates, in particular the work of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, as well as the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed conflict, and notes with appreciation their most recent reports submitted to the Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the Assembly adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching, indivisible and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and the commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner and to realizing the human rights of all, leaving no one behind and reaching those furthest behind first, and recognizing that the realization of the rights of the child through a healthy environment is crucial to achieving the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, namely human rights for all, well-being and a sustainable planet,

Noting the Secretary-General’s “A Call to Action for Human Rights”, which calls for, inter alia, creating space for young people to participate in shaping the decisions that will affect their future, including but not limited to environmental protection, protecting human rights defenders and environmental activists, particularly young people, women and girls, and raising awareness and enhancing education that prepares young people for the future they face, including climate change-related curricula at all levels of primary and secondary education,

Reaffirming that States have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including in all actions undertaken to address environmental harm, such as loss of biodiversity, climate change, pollution and exposure to hazardous substances and wastes, and to take measures to protect the rights of all, including the rights of the child, and that additional measures for those who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental harm should be taken,

Recalling States’ obligations and commitments under multilateral environmental instruments and agreements, including on climate change,

Recalling also that article 2, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement states that the Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances, while stressing that the principle does not apply to States’ human rights obligations,

Profoundly concerned that children in many parts of the world remain negatively affected by the adverse impact of environmental harm, including climate change, persistent drought and extreme weather events, environmental disasters, land degradation, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification,

Expressing concern that millions of children worldwide continue to grow up deprived of parental care, separated from their families for many reasons, including due to natural disasters, the adverse impacts of climate change and different forms of environmental harm,

Reaffirming that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, that the best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his or her nurture and protection, and that families' and caregivers' capacities to provide the child with care and a safe environment should be promoted, including in the context of natural disasters, the adverse impacts of climate change or other forms of environmental harm,

Recognizing the particular vulnerability of children, due to their unique metabolism, physiology and developmental needs, to the effects of environmental harm, especially to pollution of the air, soil and water, and exposure to hazardous substances and wastes, and that exposure to those effects can have a lifelong impact on children, as their health outcomes, well-being and development are compromised from early age,

Deeply concerned that, each year, more than 1.7 million children under the age of 5 lose their lives as a result of avoidable exposure to the effects of environmental harm, while 12 million children in developing countries experience permanent brain damage due to lead poisoning and approximately 85 million children worldwide work in hazardous conditions and are regularly exposed to toxic substances, which cause brain damage and disease and an array of other forms of harm, some of which can result in irreversible and lifelong effects, such as impairment,

Recognizing that environmental harm, including climate change, exacerbates environmental disasters, which can deprive affected persons of essential livelihoods and generate displacement and migration, including of unaccompanied children and young persons,

Deeply concerned that the effects of environmental harm may undermine the full enjoyment of a vast range of the rights of the child, inter alia the right to life, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, the right to education, the right of the child to be cared for by his or her parents, the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities, and the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development,

Recognizing that close interlinkages exist between intersecting forms of discrimination and the inequalities faced by children and their level of exposure to the effects of environmental harm, and the unequal exposure to environmental health risks across countries and regions, with a higher burden in developing countries,

Recognizing also that girls may be disproportionately affected by the effects of environmental harm, inter alia concerning the enjoyment of their rights to education and of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, and stressing the importance of protecting them from violence, exploitation and harmful practices, including, inter alia, child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and of ensuring their full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making affecting their lives, in accordance with the evolving capacities of the child,

Recalling that discrimination against girls violates the principle of equality, and that all measures designed and implemented to prevent and address environmental harm should adhere to the principles of substantive equality and non-discrimination, including by taking into account and addressing pre-existing gender inequalities,

Recognizing that children with disabilities may be disproportionately affected by the effects of environmental harm and that specific measures may be required to ensure their protection and safety on an equal basis with others, while recognizing also the need to support the participation and inclusion of children with disabilities, and their representative organizations, in the development of and decision-making processes relating to such measures,

Recalling that every child has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, which includes States taking measures to combat and prevent disease and its impact on health and to ensure access to health-care services, and inter

alia to prevent and reduce exposure to harmful substances or environmental conditions that directly or indirectly affect their health,

Expressing concern that epidemics and pandemics, and the unintended consequences of public health measures to combat them, can undermine the rights of the child, especially of children that are already in a vulnerable situation due to environmental harm, while underscoring that a healthy environment is an effective way to prevent epidemics and pandemics and to protect human rights, including the rights of the child,

Expressing concern also that children continue to be exposed to pollution, waste and hazardous substances, whether on their own or in mixtures, including through secondary products and processes related to business and industrial activities and nearby small- and large-scale mining activities, as well as through the use of pesticides to combat undesirable organisms, including in agriculture, and that approximately 73 million children are engaged in hazardous labour related to these activities, with the number of youngest children in hazardous labour increasing, thereby seriously affecting children's health, well-being and development,

Acknowledging ongoing discussions in the International Law Commission on the toxic remnants of war, and concerned at the possible threat that they pose to the full enjoyment of the rights of the child,

Recalling that, while States shall respect, protect and fulfil human rights and have the duty to take the necessary measures to prevent the exposure of children to pollution, hazardous substances and wastes, business enterprises have a responsibility to respect the rights of the child, including by conducting human rights due diligence appropriate to their size and circumstances, the risk of severe impact and context of their operation, with a view to preventing or mitigating adverse impacts on the rights of the child through actions directly linked to their operations, products or services by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts, and to remediating contamination,

Expressing concern that children impacted by the effects of environmental harm are often unable to fully exercise their rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, or to have access to an effective remedy, and underscoring that States have a duty to ensure effective remedies for violations of the rights of the child, that children have access to information in child-friendly formats, and that every child capable of forming his or her views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child, including in environmental decision-making processes that may be relevant to his or her life,

Recognizing the importance of public access to environmental information and education to enable children to understand environmental risks and the effects of environmental harm on the enjoyment of their rights, and the crucial nature of accessible and age-, gender- and disability-responsive information in this respect,

Recognizing also the positive, important and legitimate role played by children and by child- and youth-led movements that defend human rights relating to a healthy environment, and deeply concerned that they may be among those most exposed and at risk, and recognizing the need to protect them,

Underscoring the importance of protecting children from the adverse impact of environmental harm through decisive climate action, including through mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, pollution mitigation, the sound management of hazardous chemicals throughout their life cycle and the safe disposal of wastes, the disclosure of information and improved and affordable water, sanitation and hygiene,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on realizing the rights of the child through a healthy environment;¹

¹ A/HRC/43/30.

2. *Urges* States to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child, without discrimination of any kind, including in efforts to implement their obligations and commitments under multilateral environmental instruments and agreements, and to achieve the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3. *Acknowledges* the vital importance of ensuring that every child of present and future generations can enjoy an environment adequate to their health and well-being, and that preventing environmental harm is the most effective way to fully protect children from its effects;

4. *Urges* States to take the necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to protect them from the effects of environmental harm through effective regulation and enforcement mechanisms, including by:

(a) Ensuring that the best interest of the child is a primary consideration in environmental decision-making by adopting a child rights-based approach and by recognizing the critical importance of child rights impact assessments of relevant laws, standards and policies to evaluate their actual impact on the rights of the child;

(b) Committing to take precautionary action whenever there are threats of serious or irreversible damage to children from the effects of environmental harm, while noting that a lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-efficient measures to prevent such threats;

(c) Considering recognizing a right to a healthy environment in national legislation in order to promote justiciability, strengthen accountability and facilitate greater participation, improving environmental protection and performance and ensuring rights for present and future generations;

(d) Enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation and strengthening regulatory agencies and ministries responsible for overseeing standards relevant to the rights of the child implicated by exposure to pollution, hazardous substances and wastes, climate change and the loss of biodiversity with a view to ensuring that sufficient monitoring of laws, policies and implementation mechanisms are in place to protect children from the effects of such environmental harm;

(e) Strengthening efforts to monitor childhood exposure by collecting information on the impact of environmental harm on children, in particular exposure to hazardous substances, wastes and pollution, and ensuring that child-rights impact assessments take into account the ways in which environmental harm affects girls and boys differently, making such information publicly available and accessible while ensuring it is available also in age-responsive language and formats;

(f) Taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour and to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including hazardous child labour, and putting an end to child labour in all its forms, inter alia through the enforcement of the fundamental principles and rights at work and by eliminating work by children where they are exposed to hazardous substances and wastes, while ensuring that children who have been subjected to such exposure have access to the necessary treatment and compensation;

(g) Integrating gender-responsive measures into their laws, policies and programmes relevant to the protection of children from the effects of environmental harm, including by addressing sexual and gender-based violence risks;

5. *Also urges* States to ensure the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, without discrimination of any kind, including sexual and reproductive health, throughout their life course, by inter alia:

(a) Ensuring the availability, quality, accessibility and acceptability of health information and goods, and of health-care services;

(b) Taking measures to ensure that the underlying determinants of health, such as food, water and housing, are free from hazardous substances;

(c) Identifying and eliminating sources of exposure of children to indoor and outdoor air pollution and substances of high concern, such as heavy metals and endocrine disrupting chemicals;

(d) Ensuring that all children, in particular girls, are guaranteed protection from occupational exposure to hazardous substances and wastes;

(e) Taking all necessary measures to protect children from the health, social, and economic consequences of epidemics and pandemics by integrating the rights of the child into national contingency and recovery plans;

6. *Further urges* States to take effective measures to ensure that all children in vulnerable situations can exercise their rights on an equal basis with other children, and that the effects of environmental harm do not affect them disproportionately, including by strengthening the collection of disaggregated data, by requiring that childhood exposure monitoring and children's rights impact assessment procedures take fully into account the impact of proposed policies, programmes and projects on those in the most vulnerable situations, including their gender dimensions, and by providing children at particular risk and their parents, or primary caregivers and legal guardians, with assistance in accessing effective remedies;

7. *Urges* States to ensure that children have access to justice and timely, effective, inclusive and gender-, disability- and age-responsive remedies when exposed to violations or abuse of their rights through the effects of environmental harm, including by providing relevant information concerning violations and reparation mechanisms, access to effective assistance for children and, where relevant, for and through their parents, caregivers and legal guardians, independent complaints procedures that are child sensitive, and by ensuring effective and prompt reparation of harm suffered and prevention of future violations, inter alia through the remediation of contaminated sites, the cessation of the acts or inaction that give rise to negative impacts, the provision of necessary medical and psychological services and care, the enacting of regulations to stop the production and sale of harmful products and by providing adequate compensation;

8. *Calls upon* States to consider ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto, and calls also for renewed efforts towards their full implementation by all parties;

9. *Urges* States to create opportunities for children's inclusive and meaningful participation, in accordance with their evolving capacities, in environmental decision-making processes that are likely to affect their development and survival, including by ensuring girls' meaningful participation in such processes on an equal basis with boys, by:

(a) Taking affirmative action to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child to freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly;

(b) Developing consultative mechanisms and ensuring that mitigation and adaptation measures are developed with the best interest of the child as a primary consideration, based upon participatory, evidence-based decision-making processes that take into account the views of children;

(c) Providing a safe and empowering context for initiatives organized by children and child- and youth-led movements that defend human rights relating to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment, and ensuring their protection from all acts of intimidation, harassment and abuse;

(d) Providing for environmental education throughout the educational process of pupils to increase their awareness and understanding of environmental issues and their respect for the natural environment, and to strengthen their knowledge and capacity to respond to environmental challenges, while at all stages of such education taking into account children's culture, language and environmental situation and by considering the adoption of environmental education strategies and curricula;

(e) Providing training on environmental issues to school teachers as to allow them to carry out effective teaching on environmental issues and challenges;

(f) Ensuring the availability and accessibility of adequate and age- and disability-responsive information on the effects of environmental harm, including pollution, hazardous substances and wastes, the loss of biodiversity and climate change on their impact and adaptive responses, and about appropriate lifestyle choices for sustainable development, including consumption behaviours;

(g) Increasing public awareness to promote community engagement and child creativity and knowledge, and strengthening cooperation, joint efforts and knowledge exchange to engage all stakeholders and to create partnerships to respond collectively to environmental challenges;

10. *Also urges* States to take all necessary, appropriate and reasonable measures to prevent businesses from causing or contributing to children's rights abuses, including by:

(a) Regularly monitoring business activities' environmental impacts and ensuring that they comply with all applicable health and safety, labour, environmental and consumer laws and standards, and where relevant strengthening regulation to ensure enforcement of the rights of the child in the context of business activities and environmental harm;

(b) Requiring businesses to undertake child rights due diligence appropriate to their size, the risk of severe impact and the context of their operations, and ensuring that businesses meet their obligation to respect the rights of the child throughout their operations;

(c) Developing and updating national action plans on business and human rights that include consideration of the effects of environmental harm, particularly the adverse impact of business activities on the rights of the child through exposure to pollution and hazardous substances and wastes;

(d) Taking steps to ensure, through judicial, administrative, legislative or other appropriate means, that, when abuses of the rights of the child occur within their territory and/or jurisdiction, those affected have access to an effective remedy, without fear of reprisals;

11. *Calls upon* all business enterprises to meet their responsibility to respect the rights of the child by undertaking child rights due diligence, appropriate to their size, the risk of severe impact and the context of their operation, to identify risks and to prevent children from being exposed to the effects of environmental harm through their activities, and to prevent and mitigate exposure through their business relationships, as outlined in the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its general comment No. 16 (2013), the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the International Labour Organization Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy and the Children's Rights and Business Principles;

12. *Calls upon* States to increase cooperation to address the effects of environmental harm on the rights of the child, including by sharing information on the hazardous properties of chemicals, such toxicity and other characteristics of concern, and of products containing them, by ensuring that international trade in chemicals and waste is in full compliance with the relevant environmental treaties, and by adhering to their human rights obligations;

13. *Urges* States to ensure that considerations of the rights of the child are integrated in their environmental, climate, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian and development activities, monitoring and reporting, and also to ensure policy coherence in these fields in order to establish a coherent approach to sustainable development that benefits all persons, particularly children and future generations;

14. *Calls upon* States to develop ambitious mitigation measures to minimize the future negative impacts of climate change on children to the greatest extent possible by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and by pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, to develop adaptation plans and to make finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development, in accordance with the commitments undertaken by each State under the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and to consider their respective obligations

regarding the rights of the child and intergenerational equity in their climate change adaptation and mitigation and environmental strategies;

Follow-up

15. *Encourages* the special procedures and other human rights mechanisms of the Human Rights Council to continue to integrate a child rights perspective while implementing their mandates, and to include in their reports information, qualitative analysis and recommendations on the rights of the child, paying attention to the adverse impact of environmental harm on the full enjoyment of those rights;

16. *Invites* all human rights treaty bodies to continue to integrate the rights of the child into their work, in particular in their concluding observations, general comments and recommendations, paying attention to the adverse impact of environmental harm on the full enjoyment of their rights;

17. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question of the rights of the child in accordance with its programme of work and its resolutions 7/29 of 28 March 2008 and 19/37 of 23 March 2012, and to focus its next annual full-day meeting on the theme “the rights of the child and the Sustainable Development Goals”, and requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to make the discussion fully accessible to persons with disabilities and to prepare a summary report on the annual day discussion, and to present it to the Human Rights Council at its forty-eighth session;

18. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a report on the rights of the child and family reunification, in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including States, the United Nations Children’s Fund, other relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, relevant special procedure mandate holders, regional organizations and human rights bodies, national human rights institutions and civil society, including through consultations with children themselves, and to present the report to the Human Rights Council at its forty-ninth session with a view to providing information for the 2022 annual day of discussion on the rights of the child, and requests the Office of the High Commissioner to make the discussion fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

*38th meeting
7 October 2020*

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Forty-eighth session**

13 September–11 October 2021

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 8 October 2021****48/13. The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment***The Human Rights Council,**Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,**Reaffirming* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and recalling the Declaration on the Right to Development, the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (the Stockholm Declaration), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, relevant international human rights treaties and other relevant regional human rights instruments,*Reaffirming also* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the Assembly adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets,*Recalling also* States’ obligations and commitments under multilateral environmental instruments and agreements, including on climate change, and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, and its outcome document entitled “The future we want”,¹ which reaffirmed the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,*Recalling further* all its resolutions on human rights and the environment, the most recent of which are resolutions 45/17 of 6 October 2020, 45/30 of 7 October 2020 and 46/7 of 23 March 2021, and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly,*Recognizing* that sustainable development, in its three dimensions (social, economic and environmental), and the protection of the environment, including ecosystems, contribute to and promote human well-being and the enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to life, to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, to an adequate standard of living, to adequate food, to housing, to safe drinking water and sanitation and to participation in cultural life, for present and future generations,

¹ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.



Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation, on the basis of mutual respect, in full compliance with the principles and purposes of the Charter, with full respect for the sovereignty of States while taking into account national priorities,

Recognizing that, conversely, the impact of climate change, the unsustainable management and use of natural resources, the pollution of air, land and water, the unsound management of chemicals and waste, the resulting loss of biodiversity and the decline in services provided by ecosystems interfere with the enjoyment of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and that environmental damage has negative implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of all human rights,

Recognizing also that, while the human rights implications of environmental damage are felt by individuals and communities around the world, the consequences are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations, including indigenous peoples, older persons, persons with disabilities, and women and girls,

Recognizing further that environmental degradation, climate change and unsustainable development constitute some of the most pressing and serious threats to the ability of present and future generations to enjoy human rights, including the right to life,

Recognizing that the exercise of human rights, including the rights to seek, receive and impart information, to participate effectively in the conduct of government and public affairs and in environmental decision-making and to an effective remedy, is vital to the protection of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,

Reaffirming that States have the obligation to respect, protect and promote human rights, including in all actions undertaken to address environmental challenges, and to take measures to protect the rights of all, as recognized in different international instruments and reflected in the framework principles on human rights and the environment, prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment,² and that additional measures should be taken for those who are particularly vulnerable to environmental harm,

Recalling the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which underscore the responsibility of all business enterprises to respect human rights, including the rights to life, liberty and security of human rights defenders working in environmental matters, referred to as environmental human rights defenders,

Acknowledging the importance of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as critical to the enjoyment of all human rights,

Recalling all of the reports of the Special Rapporteur (formerly the Independent Expert) on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment,³

Noting that more than 155 States have recognized some form of a right to a healthy environment in, inter alia, international agreements or their national constitutions, legislation or policies,

Noting also “The highest aspiration: a call to action for human rights”, which the Secretary-General presented to the Human Rights Council on 24 February 2020 and in which, inter alia, he called upon the United Nations to increase support to Member States at the field level for laws and policies that regulated and promoted the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and for effective individual access to justice and effective remedies for environment-related concerns,

Noting further the joint statement to the Human Rights Council on 9 March 2021 by 15 United Nations entities, including the United Nations Environment Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Entity

² A/HRC/37/59, annex.

³ A/73/188, A/74/161, A/75/161, A/76/179, A/HRC/22/43 A/HRC/25/53, A/HRC/28/61, A/HRC/31/52, A/HRC/31/53, A/HRC/34/49, A/HRC/37/58, A/HRC/37/59, A/HRC/40/55, A/HRC/43/53 A/HRC/43/54 and A/HRC/46/28.

for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization, and the letter dated 10 September 2020 and signed by more than 1,100 civil society, child, youth and indigenous peoples' organizations, urgently calling for global recognition, implementation and protection of the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment,

1. *Recognizes* the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right that is important for the enjoyment of human rights;

2. *Notes* that the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is related to other rights and existing international law;

3. *Affirms* that the promotion of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment requires the full implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements under the principles of international environmental law;

4. *Encourages* States:

(a) To build capacities for the efforts to protect the environment in order to fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments, and to enhance cooperation with other States, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the rest of the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional organizations, agencies, convention secretariats and programmes, and relevant non-State stakeholders, including civil society, national human rights institutions and business, on the implementation of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in accordance with their respective mandates;

(b) To continue to share good practices in fulfilling human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, including by exchanging knowledge and ideas, building synergies between the protection of human rights and the protection of the environment, bearing in mind an integrated and multisectoral approach and considering that efforts to protect the environment must fully respect other human rights obligations, including those related to gender equality;

(c) To adopt policies for the enjoyment of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as appropriate, including with respect to biodiversity and ecosystems;

(d) To continue to take into account human rights obligations and commitments relating to the enjoyment of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in the implementation of and follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals, bearing in mind the integrated and multisectoral nature of the latter;

5. *Invites* the General Assembly to consider the matter;

6. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*43rd meeting
8 October 2021*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 43 to 0, with 4 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Eritrea, Fiji, France, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Libya, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Abstaining:

China, India, Japan and Russian Federation]



Human Rights Council**Fifty-first session**

12 September–7 October 2022

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 6 October 2022****51/17. Youth and human rights***The Human Rights Council,**Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,*

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Recalling also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, in which it is stated that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Recalling further Human Rights Council resolutions 32/1 of 30 June 2016, 35/14 of 22 June 2017 and 41/13 of 11 July 2019 on youth and human rights, and resolution 48/12 of 8 October 2021 on the human rights implications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on young people,

Recalling all previous relevant resolutions, including the most recent, namely General Assembly resolution 76/137 of 16 December 2021, on policies and programmes involving youth, Assembly resolution 50/81 of 14 December 1995, by which the Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, and its subsequent resolution 62/126 of 18 December 2007,

Acknowledging that the World Programme of Action for Youth provided a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people,

Recalling the holding of the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in Lisbon, in August 1998, and the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth 2019 and Youth Forum Lisboa+21, also in Lisbon, in June 2019, and recalling also with appreciation their Declarations on Youth Policies and Programmes, especially with regard to empowering youth and their representatives, the commitment to protect, respect and fulfil



the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all young people, protecting the most disadvantaged and those in vulnerable situations and contributing to the creation of indicators to assess the impact of youth policies and programmes,

Recalling also the serious and continuing threat to global health posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and that its consequences disproportionately affect the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by young people, in particular young women and persons in vulnerable situations, including with regard to their right to work, right to an inclusive, equitable and quality education and right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

Encouraging States to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and reaffirming the need to develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere, including those in vulnerable situations, real opportunities to enable their full, effective and meaningful participation in society, in relevant decision-making processes and monitoring in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres, including in designing and implementing policies, programmes and initiatives, in particular those for implementing the 2030 Agenda,

Recalling the high-level event held by the General Assembly on 29 May 2015 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, which offered an important opportunity for States and other relevant stakeholders to take stock of the progress made in its implementation and to identify gaps and challenges and the way forward for its full, effective and accelerated implementation,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 76/6 of 15 November 2021 on the follow-up to the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”,¹

Welcoming also General Assembly resolution 76/306 of 8 September 2022 on the establishment of the United Nations Youth Office as a dedicated office for youth affairs in the Secretariat, integrating the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth,

Welcoming further the intersessional seminar focused on the challenges and opportunities of young people in the field of human rights, held in April 2021, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 41/13, and taking note with appreciation of the report on the seminar prepared by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,² which provides an overview of the challenges and discrimination faced by young people in the realization of their rights, youth mainstreaming in human rights mechanisms and next steps on youth and human rights at the international level,

Taking note with appreciation of the report prepared by the High Commissioner on the human rights implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 48/12,³ and encouraging States to consider adopting an approach to COVID-19 recovery that gives a proper place to the human rights of young people and is implemented in partnership with them,

Recognizing the contribution of the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which focuses on youth, to the advancement of human rights education and training with, by and for youth globally,

Noting with appreciation the United Nations Youth Strategy entitled “Youth 2030: working with and for young people” as a tool for the empowerment of young people and the advancement of their rights, launched at the high-level event held in September 2018 at United Nations Headquarters,

Noting the inputs from recent relevant conferences, forums and global initiatives relating to youth at the international, regional and subregional levels, inter alia, the World Youth Forums held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2022,

¹ A/75/982.

² A/HRC/49/32.

³ A/HRC/51/19.

Encouraging contributions by the High Commissioner, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies, and other relevant international and regional human rights mechanisms, as well as the United Nations Youth Office and the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, in identifying and addressing obstacles to the enjoyment of all human rights by youth,

Underlining the important role that youth can play in the promotion of peace and security, sustainable development and human rights and in the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda, and the importance of the active, meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in decision-making,

Conscious that today's generation of youth is the largest that the world has ever witnessed, and therefore encouraging States to make further efforts to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights for young people, including all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, given that lack of participation and opportunity has adverse consequences for communities and societies,

Affirming that youth unemployment figures have increased globally since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and that job losses for youth in 2020 were 8.7 per cent higher than for other workers, with unprecedented global employment losses of 114 million jobs compared with 2019,

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly affected young workers and those transitioning from education to employment, compounding already existing problems and increasing instability, and that youth have disproportionately faced precarious employment conditions, reduced employment hours and income, a lack of decent work, unemployment, limited or no social security support, and limited or no new job or self-employment opportunities,

Recalling that, in its resolution 76/137, the General Assembly urged Member States to take all measures necessary to combat all forms of discrimination, neglect and abuse of, and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, against young people and to address the barriers to their social integration and adequate participation, bearing in mind that the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms empowers them to contribute as active members of society to the political, civil, economic, social and cultural development of their countries,

Emphasizing the need to empower youth in order to achieve sustainable development, including poverty eradication, and stressing in this regard the commitment made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training and to develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment,

Expressing concern that young people face specific challenges that require integrated responses by States, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, and that further work is needed to continue to mainstream their rights throughout the United Nations human rights mechanisms,

Noting that civic education and engagement is one important way to facilitate knowledge of how public institutions work, while also noting the lack of equal access of young people to civic education programmes,

Noting also that human rights education for youth, with special emphasis on equality and non-discrimination, contributes to building inclusive and peaceful societies,

Noting further that digital technology can also provide an opportunity for all young people, including persons with disabilities, to fully realize their human rights, including the right to education and to participate in civic engagement and in relevant decision-making processes, while also noting the need to make digital spaces safer for youth,

Emphasizing the need to give each young person effective and meaningful access to digital tools, the Internet, accessible and inclusive public services, equitable and inclusive distance-learning solutions and virtual vocational training, to promote digital and media literacy and to work with all relevant stakeholders to bridge the digital divides, including gender, age, geographical, linguistic and socioeconomic digital divides,

1. *Welcomes* the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on youth, and recalls its report⁴ and its recommendations to strengthen the promotion and protection of the rights of young people;

2. *Stresses* the fundamental importance of equal opportunities, education, including digital literacy, and technical and vocational training, and that lifelong learning opportunities and guidance for youth are necessary for the realization of all human rights for young people;

3. *Welcomes* the decision of the General Assembly to convene a one-day high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, at the level of Heads of State and Government and with the full and effective participation of youth, during the general debate of the eightieth session of the General Assembly, in 2025, to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, with a view to addressing the challenges still faced by young people in the realization of their full potential and human rights;

4. *Recognizes* that the participation and representation of youth in institutional political processes and policymaking are low compared with those of other age groups, and that young people are not proportionately represented in political institutions, such as parliaments, political parties and public administrations;

5. *Urges* States, in consultation with youth-led and youth-focused organizations, to promote new initiatives for the full, effective, structured, sustainable and meaningful participation of young people in relevant decision-making processes and monitoring, in political, economic, social and cultural spheres, including in designing and implementing policies, programmes and initiatives, in particular, while implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

6. *Calls upon* all States to promote and to ensure the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for youth, including by taking measures to combat age discrimination, neglect, abuse and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, and to address issues relating to barriers to social integration and adequate participation, bearing in mind that the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by young people empowers them to contribute as active members of society to the political, civil, economic, social and cultural development of their countries;

7. *Urges* States to promote equal opportunities for all, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against young people, including that based on age, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status;

8. *Calls upon* all States to guarantee a safe and enabling environment for meaningful youth participation that fully respects the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the rights of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in accordance with relevant and applicable international human rights instruments;

9. *Also calls upon* all States to take the steps necessary to ensure that the right of young people to freedom of expression and their safety are respected online, including by better educating them on the digital environment and by developing youth-friendly digital tools, as well as by protecting young people effectively against online threats;

10. *Calls upon* all States and other relevant stakeholders to develop initiatives on human rights education for youth, in accordance with the plan of action for the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, and to engage youth as key partners in those efforts;

11. *Urges* States to address the challenges faced by girls and young women, as well as gender stereotypes that perpetuate all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and young women, including harmful practices, both online and offline, and the stereotypical roles of women and men that hinder social development, by reaffirming the commitment to the empowerment of women and gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls, and to engage, educate, encourage and support men and boys to take

⁴ A/HRC/39/33.

responsibility for their behaviour in this regard, including their sexual and reproductive behaviour;

12. *Encourages* States to conduct their coherent youth-related policies through inclusive and participatory consultations with youth and relevant youth-led and youth-focused stakeholders and social development partners in the interest of developing integrated, holistic and inclusive youth policies and programmes, as well as coherent cross-sectoral efforts, based on the World Programme of Action For Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in which human rights are mainstreamed, and to evaluate them regularly as part of the follow-up action on and implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels;

13. *Urges* States to consider addressing, through the universal periodic review and the treaty bodies, issues pertaining to the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights of youth, and to share the best practices that they have developed in dealing with the realization of the human rights of young people;

14. *Encourages* States, United Nations bodies, especially the Human Rights Council, and the Office of the High Commissioner, to collaborate broadly with the United Nations Youth Office and the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth in implementing the United Nations Youth Strategy and other youth-focused activities in order to guarantee the empowerment of young people and the full enjoyment of their human rights;

15. *Decides* to incorporate into its programme of work a biennial panel discussion, fully accessible to persons with disabilities, which will be held during the September session of the Council as of its fifty-fourth session, and requests the Office of the High Commissioner to organize the panel discussion following consultations with young people, youth and youth-led organizations and to prepare a summary report on the panel discussion for consideration at the subsequent session;

16. *Also decides* that the theme of the panel discussion to be held during the fifty-fourth session will be young people's engagement with climate change and global environmental decision-making processes;

17. *Requests* the High Commissioner, in consultation with States and relevant stakeholders, including relevant United Nations agencies, the treaty bodies, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, national human rights institutions, civil society and representatives of youth organizations, to conduct a detailed study on the solutions to promote digital education for young people and to ensure their protection from online threats, and to submit the study to the Council for consideration prior to its fifty-seventh session;

18. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*41st meeting
6 October 2022*

[Adopted without a vote.]



General Assembly

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Human Rights Council

Fifty-first session

12 September–7 October 2022

Agenda item 8

Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 7 October 2022

51/31. National human rights institutions

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and other relevant instruments,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing and that all human rights must be treated in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis,

Recalling all relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, including most recently Council resolution 45/22 of 6 October 2020 and Assembly resolution 76/170 of 16 December 2021,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the Assembly adopted the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and pledged that no one would be left behind,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recalling that the 2030 Agenda is guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter, grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and informed by other instruments, such as the Declaration on the Right to Development, and recognizing, inter alia, the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and are based on respect for all human rights, effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and transparent, effective and accountable institutions,

Reaffirming the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights,

Reaffirming also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and reaffirming also its statement of the important and constructive role played by national human rights



institutions, in particular in their advisory capacity to the competent authorities, and their role in preventing, remedying and assisting victims to find remedies to human rights violations and abuses, in the dissemination of human rights information and education in human rights,

Recalling the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), welcoming the forthcoming thirtieth anniversary, in 2023, of the adoption of the Paris Principles, and recalling the establishment of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions,

Reaffirming the importance of, and welcoming the rapidly growing interest and progress throughout the world in, establishing and strengthening independent, pluralistic national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles,

Recalling that the existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles is a global indicator of progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16, taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals,¹ including this indicator, and calling upon all States to accelerate progress under this indicator,

Reaffirming the important role that such national human rights institutions play, and will continue to play, in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, including of human rights defenders, strengthening participation, in particular of civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples, persons belonging to minorities, minority groups and persons in vulnerable situations, promoting the rule of law, developing and enhancing public awareness of those rights and fundamental freedoms and contributing to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses,

Encouraging greater efforts to investigate and respond to increasing reports of acts of intimidation and cases of reprisal against national human rights institutions, their members and staff and those who cooperate or seek to cooperate with them,

Recognizing the important role that national human rights institutions can play in preventing and addressing acts of intimidation and cases of reprisal as part of supporting the cooperation between States and the United Nations in the promotion of human rights, including by contributing, as appropriate, to follow-up actions and to recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms, and in this regard recalling the Marrakech Declaration adopted at the thirteenth International Conference of National Human Rights Institutions,

Welcoming the strengthening in all regions of regional and cross-regional cooperation among national human rights institutions, and between national human rights institutions and other regional human rights forums,

Commending the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and regional networks of national human rights institutions, including the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions, the Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Americas, the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions, for their important work in support of the development and strengthening of independent and effective national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles,

Welcoming efforts to strengthen United Nations system-wide coordination in support of national human rights institutions and their networks, including the tripartite partnership between the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the High Commissioner and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions,² and encouraging further cooperation in this regard between United Nations mechanisms and processes and with national human rights institutions, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and its regional networks,

¹ E/2022/55.

² General Assembly resolution 70/163, para. 19.

Welcoming also the valuable participation and contribution of national human rights institutions and their networks, including their contribution to national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up, and with regard to follow-up to recommendations and relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, in accordance with their respective mandates, including the Human Rights Council and its universal periodic review mechanism and the special procedures, the treaty bodies, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, and their continuing efforts in support of the 2030 Agenda, and encouraging further efforts in this regard,

Emphasizing the importance of human rights in shaping the response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, for both the public health emergency and the broader impact on people's lives and livelihoods,

Recognizing the important role of national human rights institutions in highlighting the human rights implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, including offering guidance to States in ensuring a human rights-compliant response to the pandemic, examining and monitoring the situation, raising public awareness, including the provision of accurate and timely information, working to protect groups and persons in vulnerable situations and cooperating with civil society, rights holders and other stakeholders, and encouraging States to cooperate with their national human rights institution and to ensure that they can effectively discharge their mandate and functions, including by ensuring the allocation of adequate resources,

Conscious that change in the Earth's climate, and the ensuing adverse effects, have led to economic, social, cultural and environmental consequences and have negative implications, both direct and indirect, for the enjoyment of human rights and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing that climate change and its impact are among the greatest challenges of the day, directly and indirectly affecting the full enjoyment of human rights, that States should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations with regard to human rights to ensure more sustainable and effective climate action, and that the impact of climate change affects individuals and communities around the world, especially in developing countries, in particular small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, and in different ways, owing to factors such as geography, economic condition, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, where applicable, national or social origin, birth or other status and disability,

Recognizing also that Indigenous Peoples are in particularly vulnerable situations and are already suffering the impact of climate change, owing to their close relationship with natural ecosystems, and encouraging contributions of their traditional knowledge and their full and effective participation in decision-making processes that affect them, including the principle of free, prior and informed consent before adoption and implementation of legislative or administrative measures that may affect them,

Recalling the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, with regard to the importance of technical assistance, capacity-building, international cooperation and financial resources in support of national efforts, actions and measures to address the adverse impact of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights,

Recalling also resolution 48/13 of 8 October 2021, in which the Human Rights Council encouraged States to enhance cooperation with other States, the Office of the High Commissioner, the rest of the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional organizations, agencies, convention secretariats and programmes, and relevant non-State stakeholders, including civil society, national human rights institutions and business, in accordance with their respective mandates,

Recognizing the important role of national human rights institutions in monitoring, reporting to and advising government bodies and other stakeholders in relation to climate mitigation and adaptation, in accordance with their respective mandates and in line with human

rights obligations and the principles of non-discrimination, participation, access to justice and accountability,

Welcoming the role of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and its regional networks in supporting national human rights institutions to fulfil their mandate with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic and the support provided by the Office of the High Commissioner, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme,

Acknowledging the contribution that many national human rights institutions have made and continue to make in promoting human rights in the context of climate action, and noting the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions Caucus on Human Rights and Climate Change, which brings together national human rights institutions from all regions to work together on human rights and climate change,

Reaffirming that, as recognized in the 2030 Agenda, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, combating inequality within and among countries, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion are linked to each other and interdependent,

Stressing that the ability of all individuals to participate fully, equally and meaningfully in national, political, cultural, religious, economic and social processes in their societies is crucial to their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights,

Bearing in mind that the promotion and upholding of tolerance, respect, pluralism and diversity are essential for the promotion and protection of human rights in multicultural contexts and, in particular, for combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,

Acknowledging that the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and recognizing that the 2030 Agenda contains a pledge to leave no one behind and envisages a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination,

Recognizing the importance of the independent voice of national human rights institutions in promoting and protecting all human rights, including, in accordance with their mandates, economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, particularly in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, whose aim is to realize the human rights of all,

Welcoming the Mérida Declaration on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, noting that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is a priority under the current strategic plan of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, and acknowledging the efforts that national human rights institutions are making to connect their work, in accordance with their respective mandates, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

Recalling the Belgrade principles on the relationship between national human rights institutions and parliaments,³

1. *Welcomes* the most recent reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Human Rights Council on national human rights institutions⁴ and on the activities of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles);⁵

2. *Encourages* States to establish effective, independent and pluralistic national human rights institutions or, where they already exist, to strengthen them to enable the effective fulfilment of their mandate to promote and protect human rights and fundamental

³ A/HRC/20/9, annex.

⁴ A/HRC/51/51.

⁵ A/HRC/51/52.

freedoms for all, as outlined in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and to do so in accordance with the Paris Principles;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the financial and administrative independence and the stability of national human rights institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, notes with satisfaction the efforts of those States that have provided their national human rights institutions with more autonomy and independence, including by giving them an investigative role or enhancing such a role, and encourages other Governments to consider taking similar steps;

4. *Also stresses* that national human rights institutions and their respective members and staff should not face any form of reprisal or intimidation, including political pressure, physical intimidation, harassment or unjustifiable budgetary limitations, as a result of activities undertaken in accordance with their respective mandates, including when taking up individual cases or when reporting on serious or systematic violations, and calls upon States to promptly and thoroughly investigate cases of alleged reprisal or intimidation against members or staff of national human rights institutions or against individuals who cooperate or seek to cooperate with them and to bring perpetrators to justice;

5. *Encourages* all relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, in accordance with their respective mandates, including the Economic and Social Council, including the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development and related global and regional processes, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, to further enhance the participation of national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles and to allow for their contribution to these United Nations mechanisms and processes, bearing in mind the relevant provisions dealing with their participation contained in General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 of 18 June 2007, 5/2 of 18 June 2007 and 16/21 of 25 March 2011 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005;

6. *Welcomes* the important role of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, in close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in assessing conformity with the Paris Principles and in assisting States and national institutions, when requested, to strengthen national human rights institutions in accordance with such principles, also welcomes the continuing number of national institutions seeking accreditation status through the Global Alliance, and encourages relevant national institutions, including ombudsman institutions, to seek accreditation status;

7. *Encourages* the Secretary-General and all United Nations human rights mechanisms and relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, working within their respective mandates, to continue to give high priority to requests from States for assistance in the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions, to work with States and national human rights institutions in the protection and promotion of human rights, and to strengthen United Nations system-wide coordination in support of national human rights institutions;

8. *Recognizes* the contribution that national human rights institutions have made to the promotion and protection, and prevention of violations, of human rights by exercising their mandates and functions consistent with the Paris Principles, and encourages them to continue to do so, including by:

(a) Independently assisting, advising and engaging with the State, and other stakeholders, in the prevention of violations and abuses of human rights;

(b) Encouraging the ratification, and ensuring the implementation, of international human rights treaties;

(c) Promoting legal, policy and procedural reforms, including to promote and ensure the harmonization of national laws and practices with the international human rights instruments to which a State is a party, and their effective implementation;

(d) Cooperating with the United Nations system, including by contributing, as appropriate, to follow-up actions to the recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms;

(e) Conducting and promoting at all levels practical and relevant human rights training and education, and raising public awareness and advocacy about the promotion and protection of human rights and efforts to combat all forms of discrimination;

(f) Working with non-governmental organizations devoted to promoting and protecting human rights and economic and social development, combating racism and protecting groups subject to particular vulnerabilities, marginalization or intersecting forms of discrimination, or specialized areas;

(g) Preparing and publicizing reports on the national situation with regard to human rights, drawing the attention of the Government to situations in any part of the country in which human rights are violated, making proposals to put an end to such situations and, where necessary, expressing an opinion on the positions and reactions of the Government;

(h) Supporting transparent and meaningful engagement by States in regional and international human rights forums by making contributions, in accordance with their independent mandates, to the reports that States are required to submit to United Nations bodies and committees and to regional institutions pursuant to their treaty obligations;

(i) Enhancing their work in the context of climate change by studying and identifying how the adverse effects of climate change, including sudden and slow-onset disasters, directly and indirectly affect the full and effective enjoyment of human rights, and considering challenges to addressing and preventing these adverse effects when making recommendations to strengthen the integration of human rights concerns into policymaking, legislation and plans addressing climate change;

(j) Continuing to monitor, report to and advise government bodies and other stakeholders on the implementation of human rights, including in the context of the design and implementation of mitigation and adaptation policies, practices, investments and other projects on climate change;

9. *Acknowledges* that, in the performance of their key functions, in accordance with their mandates and with the Paris Principles, national human rights institutions are supporting the establishment and maintenance of inclusive societies, and in doing so are contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including by:

(a) Assisting States to adopt effective frameworks to promote and protect human rights, which are applied equally to protect the rights of all individuals without discrimination on any grounds, including race, colour, gender, age, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status;

(b) Contributing to building the capacity of States to prevent and reduce discrimination and violence through effective national-level legislation, regulation, policies and programmes, including those that guarantee equal access, rights and opportunities for all, including equal access to justice and participatory decision-making;

(c) Contributing to the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights for all;

(d) Contributing to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls and of sexual and gender-based violence;

(e) Contributing to the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related intolerance, all forms of hate speech, and religious intolerance and its manifestations, including hate crimes and incitement to hatred, and fostering cohesive societies that respect and celebrate diversity and multiculturalism;

(f) Contributing to addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that can increase the vulnerability to violence and discrimination of persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, refugees and migrants, persons who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and other individuals in vulnerable situations or belonging to marginalized groups;

(g) Working with businesses to fulfil their commitment to respect human rights in accordance with human rights law, and to support initiatives aimed at protecting victims of human rights abuses, including through the dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;

10. *Encourages* all States and national human rights institutions to continue to take appropriate steps to maintain a legislative or policy framework compliant with the Paris Principles and to promote cooperation, the exchange of information, the sharing of experience and the dissemination of best practices concerning the establishment and effective operation of national human rights institutions, including their contribution to the establishment and maintenance of inclusive societies and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

11. *Invites* national human rights institutions to include in their cooperation the exchange of best practices on strengthening their liaison role between their Governments and civil society, Indigenous Peoples, persons belonging to minorities, minority groups and persons in vulnerable situations;

12. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue and to strengthen its work with national human rights institutions, including through technical cooperation, capacity-building activities and advice, urges the High Commissioner to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made and budgetary resources are provided to continue and further extend activities in support of national human rights institutions, including through increased support for the work of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and its regional networks, and invites Governments to contribute additional voluntary funds to that end;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Human Rights Council, at its fifty-seventh session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution that includes examples of best practices among national human rights institutions, prepared in consultation with States, national human rights institutions and other relevant stakeholders, and a report on the activities of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles.

*44th meeting
7 October 2022*

[Adopted without a vote.]



Human Rights Council**Fifty-second session**

27 February–4 April 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 4 April 2023****52/23. The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment***The Human Rights Council,**Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,**Reaffirming* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and recalling the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the Declaration on the Right to Development, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, relevant international human rights treaties and other relevant regional human rights instruments,*Reaffirming also* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,*Recalling* all its resolutions on human rights and the environment, the most recent of which are resolutions 45/17 of 6 October 2020, 45/30 of 7 October 2020 and 46/7 of 23 March 2021, and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly,*Welcoming* the adoption of Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 on 8 October 2021 and General Assembly resolution 76/300 on 28 July 2022, recognizing the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,*Reaffirming* General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the Assembly adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets,*Recalling* States’ obligations and commitments under multilateral environmental instruments and agreements and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, and its outcome document entitled “The future we want”,¹ which reaffirmed the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,

¹ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.



Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation on the basis of mutual respect, in full compliance with the principles and purposes of the Charter, with full respect for the sovereignty of States, while taking into account national priorities,

Reaffirming also that the promotion of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment requires the full implementation of multilateral environmental agreements under the principles of international environmental law,

Recalling the outcomes of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held online on 22 and 23 February 2021, and subsequently in Nairobi and online from 28 February to 2 March 2022, and noting its reaffirmation that a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is important for the enjoyment of human rights and for sustainable development in all its dimensions, and that the well-being of humanity depends on nature,

Welcoming the outcomes of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fourth Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 6 to 20 November 2022, including the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, which acknowledge that climate change is a common concern of humankind, and that Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations with regard to human rights, the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the right to health, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, migrants, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and persons in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and intergenerational equity,

Welcoming also the outcomes of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Montreal, Canada, from 7 to 19 December 2022, and welcoming further that the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted at that session, should follow a human rights-based approach, respecting, protecting, promoting and fulfilling human rights, and that the framework acknowledges the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,

Taking note of the information note entitled “What is the Right to a Healthy Environment?” of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme,

Recalling all of the reports of the Special Rapporteur (formerly the Independent Expert) on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment,²

Welcoming the latest report of the Special Rapporteur, on the issue of women, girls and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,³ and recognizing the intersectional forms of discrimination that women and girls face, the importance of gender equality, gender-responsive action to address climate change and environmental degradation, and the empowerment, leadership, decision-making and meaningful participation of women and girls and their role as managers, leaders, environmental human rights defenders and agents of change in conserving, protecting and restoring the environment,

Recognizing that environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity often result from and reinforce existing patterns of discrimination, and that environmental harm can have disastrous and at times geographically dispersed consequences for the quality of life of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, peasants and others who rely directly on the products of forests, rivers, lakes, wetlands and oceans for their food, fuel and medicine, resulting in further inequality and marginalization,

Recognizing also that, conversely, the impacts of climate change, the unsustainable management and use of natural resources, the pollution of air, land and water, the unsound

² A/73/188, A/74/161, A/75/161, A/76/179, A/77/284, A/HRC/22/43 A/HRC/25/53, A/HRC/28/61, A/HRC/31/52, A/HRC/31/53, A/HRC/34/49, A/HRC/37/58, A/HRC/37/59, A/HRC/40/55, A/HRC/43/53, A/HRC/43/54, A/HRC/46/28, A/HRC/49/53, A/HRC/52/33 and A/HRC/52/44.

³ A/HRC/52/33.

management of chemicals and waste, the resulting loss of biodiversity and the decline in ecosystem services may interfere with the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and that environmental damage can have negative implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of all human rights,

Recognizing further that, while the human rights implications of environmental damage are felt by individuals and communities around the world, the consequences are felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations, such as people facing desertification, land degradation, sea level rise, drought and water scarcity, as well as women and girls,

Recalling that all people on Earth depend directly or indirectly on the ocean and cryosphere, and that communities living in close connection with polar, mountain or coastal environments are particularly exposed to the current and future hazards of ocean and cryosphere change, including sea level rise, ocean warming, acidification and deoxygenation, ice sheet and glacier mass loss, and permafrost degradation,

Recognizing the benefits of seeking to mitigate and minimize the negative effects of pollution and other forms of environmental degradation and the importance of the environmentally sound management and disposal of chemicals and waste, including in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict contexts, and expressing its deep concern at the threats posed to the effective enjoyment of human rights, particularly to those of children, women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and persons in vulnerable situations,

Recognizing also that the exercise of human rights, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, to participate safely and effectively in the conduct of government and public affairs, to have access to justice and the right to an effective remedy, is vital to the respect, protection and promotion of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment,

Reaffirming Human Rights Council resolution 40/11 of 21 March 2019, in which the Council recognized the contribution of human rights defenders working in environmental matters, referred to as environmental human rights defenders, to the enjoyment of human rights, environmental protection and sustainable development,

Recalling the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which underscore the responsibility of all business enterprises to respect human rights, including the rights to life, liberty and security of environmental human rights defenders,

Mindful that the growing risk of emerging infectious diseases of zoonotic origin may be caused by human actions that damage ecosystems and biodiversity, stressing that biodiversity is important for the enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, expressing concern that the loss of biodiversity caused by human activities can be threatening to the enjoyment of those rights and have a major impact on health and livelihoods, and stressing that human rights-based environmental action is essential to reduce the risk of future pandemics,

Recognizing the positive, important and legitimate role played by children and by child- and youth-led movements that defend human rights relating to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and welcoming the work of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment in engaging and consulting with children,

Recognizing also the particular vulnerability of children to the effects of environmental harm, including to air pollution, water pollution, climate change, exposure to chemicals, toxic substances and waste, and loss of biodiversity, and that environmental harm may interfere with the full enjoyment of a vast range of the rights of the child, and noting that the Committee on the Rights of the Child is drafting a general comment on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change,

Reaffirming that States have the obligation to respect, protect and promote human rights, including in all actions undertaken to address environmental challenges, and to take measures to protect the rights of all, as recognized in different international instruments and

reflected in the framework principles on human rights and the environment,⁴ and that additional measures for those who are particularly vulnerable to environmental harm should be taken,

1. *Welcomes* the work undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, including in the implementation of his mandate, the comprehensive, transparent and inclusive consultations conducted with relevant stakeholders, his thematic reports, and the undertaking of country visits;

2. *Also welcomes* the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the issue of human rights and the environment, including its collaboration with the Secretary-General, the United Nations Environment Programme and other key partners, and its engagement with multilateral environmental agreements, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity;

3. *Further welcomes* the work undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in support of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, and in helping to clarify the relationship between human rights and the environment;

4. *Calls upon* States:

(a) To respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including in all actions undertaken to address environmental challenges;

(b) To adopt and implement strong laws ensuring, among other things, the rights to participation, to access to information and to justice, including to an effective remedy, in environmental matters;

(c) To facilitate public awareness and participation in environmental decision-making, including of civil society, women, children, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, peasants, older persons, persons with disabilities and others who depend directly on biodiversity and ecosystem services, by protecting all human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;

(d) To implement fully their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights without discrimination of any kind, including in the application of environmental laws and policies;

(e) To promote a safe and enabling environment in which individuals, civil society organizations, including environmental human right defenders and those working on human rights and environmental issues can operate free from threats, hindrance and insecurity;

(f) To provide for effective remedies for human rights violations and abuses, including those relating to the enjoyment of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in accordance with their international obligations;

(g) To establish, maintain and strengthen effective legal and institutional frameworks to regulate the activities of public and private actors in order to prevent, reduce and remedy harm to biodiversity and ecosystems, taking into account human rights obligations and commitments relating to the enjoyment of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

(h) To take into account human rights obligations and commitments relating to the enjoyment of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in the implementation of and follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals, bearing in mind the integrated and multisectoral nature of the latter;

(i) To increase funding and support for, and collaboration with, grass-roots women's organizations working on environmental and human rights issues, and for the implementation of gender action plans under multilateral environmental agreements;

⁴ A/HRC/37/59, annex.

5. *Encourages* States:

(a) To adopt integrated, intersecting and holistic national and local policies and an effective legal framework for the enjoyment of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

(b) To address compliance with human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in the framework of human rights mechanisms, including the universal periodic review, and the submission of State party reports to relevant United Nations human rights treaty bodies;

(c) To build capacities for efforts to protect the environment in order to fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments, and to enhance cooperation with other States, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the rest of the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional organizations, agencies, convention secretariats and programmes, and relevant non-State stakeholders, including civil society, national human rights institutions and business, on the further development and implementation of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in accordance with their respective mandates;

(d) To explore ways to incorporate information on human rights and the environment in school curricula, in order to teach current and future generations to act as agents of change, including by taking into account the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples;

(e) To seek to ensure that projects supported by environmental finance mechanisms respect all human rights;

(f) To collect disaggregated data on the effects of environmental harm, including the loss of biodiversity and the decline of ecosystem services, on persons in vulnerable situations;

(g) To promote and accelerate human rights-based environmental action that is gender-responsive and includes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and takes into consideration the vulnerability of ecosystems and the needs of persons and communities in vulnerable situations;

(h) To continue to share good practices in fulfilling human rights obligations relating to the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment through the good practices database maintained by the Special Rapporteur;

(i) To facilitate expert exchange of knowledge and ideas, building synergies between the protection of human rights and the protection of the environment, and to promote coherence among different policy areas, bearing in mind an integrated and multisectoral approach and considering that efforts to protect the environment must fully respect other human rights obligations, including those relating to gender equality;

(j) To strengthen their efforts to protect biodiversity, including by updating and implementing their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(k) To build capacity within the judicial sector to understand the relationship between human rights and the environment;

(l) To foster a responsible private business sector and to encourage corporate sustainability reporting while respecting the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and environmental standards, in accordance with relevant international agreements;

6. *Recognizes* the important role played by individuals and civil society organizations, including human rights defenders and environmental human rights defenders, in the promotion and protection of human rights as they relate to the enjoyment of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, including biodiversity and ecosystems;

7. *Also recognizes* the important role of national human rights institutions to support and promote the enjoyment of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

8. *Encourages* relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, other international organizations, treaty bodies, academia and civil society organizations to promote the implementation of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

9. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur, in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner:

(a) To convene, before the end of 2023, a one-day expert seminar on the responsibility of business enterprises to respect the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, informed by the findings of the mandate holder;

(b) To invite States and other relevant stakeholders, including academic experts, civil society organizations, business and finance representatives, to participate actively in the seminar;

(c) To invite relevant experts of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies, other international organizations and conventions to participate in the seminar;

(d) To submit to the Human Rights Council, at its fifty-fifth session, a summary report on the above-mentioned seminar, including any recommendations stemming therefrom, for consideration of further follow-up action;

10. *Stresses* the need for enhanced cooperation among States, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Office of the High Commissioner, the World Health Organization, the International Organization for Migration, the International Labour Organization and other relevant international and regional organizations, agencies, conventions and programmes, in accordance with their respective mandates, including by regularly exchanging knowledge and ideas and building synergies for the respect, promotion and protection of the human right to a clean healthy and sustainable environment, bearing in mind an integrated and multisectoral approach;

11. *Calls upon* all States to conserve, protect and restore healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and to ensure their sustainable management and use by applying a human rights-based approach that emphasizes participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability in the management of natural resources;

12. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter, in accordance with its annual programme of work.

*56th meeting
4 April 2023*

[Adopted without a vote.]
