

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 50th SESSION

### Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change

23 June 2022

In his opening remarks, **Mr. Ian Fry, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change**, expressed that the climate crisis is the greatest challenge facing humanity. For his first three years of mandate, from 2022 to 2025, he will prioritise six strategies. These include: the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of mitigation, adaptation and financial actions to address climate change, with particular emphasis on loss and damage; addressing the human rights implications of climate change displacement including legal protection of people displaced across international borders; exploring approaches to enhance climate change legislation, supporting climate change litigation and advancing the principal of intergenerational justice; corporate accountability with respect to human rights and climate change; the protection of human rights through just transition for workers in industries that contribute to climate change; and finally, exploring the impacts of new technologies associated with climate change mitigation on human rights.

He also remarked he had already started to work on the first priority and was looking forward to member states' contributions. In addition, he mentioned he wants to avoid overlaps or repetition of work that has been undertaken by other mandate holders. To achieve this, he held a bilateral meeting with the members of the Working Group on business and human rights and an expert consultation organized by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. He highlighted that his work will be gender-responsive, age-sensitive, disability-inclusive and includes risk-informed approaches to human rights and climate change. Additionally, he will focus on reaching out to indigenous peoples through country visits, online dialogues and interaction at various forums.

#### Interactive dialogue

**The majority of the countries** expressed their support for the new mandate holder and to its aspiration for enhanced collaboration with other special procedure mandate holders and civil society organizations. Most countries highlighted the importance of strengthening the voice and participation of all persons, including women and girls and those persons in most vulnerable situations when tackling climate change. Numerous countries also supported the mandate's priority area of mobilising finance for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and expressed this resources should be grant based, so that countries are not further indebted by a crisis they contribute little to. In this sense, many countries referred to the importance of helping the most affected countries who contribute the least to climate change (Africa, for example), and further highlighted the importance of climate justice and the need to avoid the duplication of work of this mandate with other UN mandates and mechanisms.

The **EU** highlighted its role as a global leader on climate change and how it remains the world's largest provider of climate financing. **Viet Nam (on behalf of the ASEAN)** called upon developed country Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement to enhance international cooperation and assistance for mitigation and adaptation measures, with particular emphasis on loss and damage experienced disproportionately by developing countries. **Jordan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States)** urged to consider innovation and solutions in the field of energy and urban systems, and in sectors such as agriculture, forestry, land use and buildings, transportation and industry. It also highlighted the need to build the capacities of countries and regional stakeholders to strengthen the necessary institutional frameworks that respond to climate-related challenges that affect water, energy and food security. **Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the GCC)** stressed the importance of thinking about new tools to enhance the response to climate change, including reliance on modern technologies and industries as well as legal frameworks and accompanying legislation. The **U.S.** highlighted the importance of protecting climate change activists and other environmental defenders; and consideration of different national frameworks for addressing climate-related migration.

**Venezuela** said climate change is a direct consequence of the unsustainable patterns of production and consumption in developed countries, and above all of the lack of political will to fulfill the commitments and obligations to protect the environment. The **Russian Federation** expressed its support for increasing the effectiveness of existing international legal mechanisms in the environmental sphere. However, it convinced that such work should be carried out through the relevant specialized bodies of the UN system and specialized organizations. **Cuba** said that technology transfer, capacity building and the mobilization of unconditional financial resources for mitigation and adaptation is imperative. **China** stressed that countries should provide enough finance and technical support to others in order to achieve relevant environmental goals. It also expressed its commitment to the green economy.

**Most NGOs** welcomed the appointment of the new SR and expressed their support. They also expressed the need to enhance financial support to provide redress for those whose rights are adversely affected by the impacts of climate change. They encouraged paying specific attention to non-economic losses such as the need to remedy threats to cultural rights and the right to land. Similarly, called to consider how human rights obligations apply in the context of intergenerational justice. Additionally, discussions on the topic should include persons with disabilities, women, young people, minorities and members of other disempowered and marginalised groups. Others stressed the importance of making financing available for developing nations to adapt to climate change. This requires the provision of climate financing by developed countries who are the ones that contaminate the most. Other topics mentioned include analysis of regions and aspects of climate-induced displacement, indigenous territories and mobility more generally, that do not receive enough attention in the media and international debates. Some also expressed concern for country-specific cases: Batwa in the Democratic Republic of Congo where very little consultation with local communities takes place, and indigenous peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent is not at all respected; deep-seated marginalization of minority communities such as Afro-descendants in the Americas, Dalits in South Asia and Roma in Europe who often live precariously in informal settlements at risk of landslides.

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (83 country delegations):

*European Union, Viet Nam (on behalf of the ASEAN), Lithuania (on behalf of a group of countries), Jordan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Bahamas (on behalf of a group of countries), Marshall Islands (on behalf of a group of countries), Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the GCC), Timor-Leste (on behalf of a group of countries), Ghana (on behalf of a group of countries), Costa Rica (on behalf of a group of countries), Cote D'Ivoire (on behalf of African Group), Switzerland, Peru, Slovenia, Qatar, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Philippines, Austria, France, Ecuador, Libya, Spain, Senegal, Mauritius, Iraq, Luxembourg, Cuba, Bangladesh, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Bahrain, Namibia, Cameroon, Russian Federation, Ethiopia, Maldives, Australia, Malaysia, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, China, India, Viet Nam, Republic of Korea, Uruguay, Nepal, Holy See, Kenya, Togo, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Pakistan, Benin, Germany, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Poland, United Republic of Tanzania, Panama, Fiji, Guyana, Cambodia, United States of America, New Zealand, Indonesia, Jordan, Samoa, Niger, Cyprus, Barbados, Mauritania, Albania, Tunisia, South Sudan, Mexico, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Vanuatu, Botswana, Georgia, Sierra Leone.*

NHRIs and NGOs that took the floor (10):

*Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Earthjustice, Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Franciscans International (Joint Statement), Lutheran World Federation (Joint Statement), Minority Rights Group, Sikh Human Rights Group, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Edmund Rice International Limited, FIAN International e.V. (Joint Statement).*

International organizations (2): UN Women, UNESCO

To watch full meeting refer to [UN Web TV](#)