



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

## UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

### Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

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#### PRESENTATION OF THE THEMATIC REPORT

**Mr. Pedro ARROJO-AGUDO, Special Rapporteur (SR) on the Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation**

The SR introduces his [thematic report](#) dedicated to the water and energy nexus. **Energy is essential** to ensure access to safe drinking water, while water is fundamental to energy production. However, market-driven energy models and strategies for privatisation and commodification of water prioritise economic profit over environmental integrity and human rights. We need a just transition for both water and energy, focused on human rights, the protection of aquatic ecosystems, and the fight against climate change.

Large dams, new large dams, for hydroelectric power generation often flood inhabited valleys and cause severe environmental impacts. Thermal power stations, in addition to contributing significantly to climate change, emit sulphur and nitrogen oxides and cause acid rain. Nuclear power plants require large reserves of water and pose severe risks that make it unacceptable to use the downstream flows to supply safe drinking water.



Even the development of **clean alternative energies**, such as wind, solar, biofuel, and green hydrogen, depends on the limited availability of non-renewable raw materials, generates severe social impacts in the extraction of critical minerals, and poses risks to food production. Furthermore, the unlimited growth in energy demand outlines an unsustainable future in terms of climate change and the degradation of aquatic ecosystems. Regarding water, we face serious problems of **overexploitation of aquifers**, which should be our strategic reserve for managing increasingly frequent extraordinary droughts.

On the other hand, **systematic toxic pollution** is progressively poisoning hundreds of millions of people every day. In 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 2 billion people lacked guaranteed access to safe drinking water, the vast majority of whom are not properly thirsty people without water in their living environment, but impoverished people who live alongside rivers or on top of contaminated aquifers, or whose water is hoarded by powerful actors for their productive activities.

In terms of energy, around 1 billion people still lack access to electricity, and more than 1.5 billion rely on solid biomass as fuel for unhealthy cooking, which caused an estimated **6.7 million deaths** in 2020, disproportionately affecting women and children. In response to arguments about scarcity to justify these figures, the SR insists that guaranteeing the human right to drinking water requires **less than 5% of the water we extract from nature**, and similarly, the clean and sustainable energy needed to ensure a decent life represents only a small fraction of total energy demand.

We need to prioritise human rights and basic needs for all, while curbing unsustainable growth in demand for water and energy. The uncontrolled and unregulated development of **mega data centres** under unacceptable opacity and secrecy is extremely worrying, as it is causing a dramatic increase in electricity consumption and significant new demand for water. Regarding water, the most worrying aspect is the **lack of transparency** in the contracts it signalled, which likely obscures the fact that these users could have top priority in times of scarcity over needs and functions of high social or environmental value.

However, without a doubt, the most significant risks arise from **electricity consumption**, which is already outpacing the development of alternative sources such as wind and solar that can be used to power these mega data centres instead of being used for the energy transition. In fact, the large corporations involved declare they need more and more energy, and are relaunching nuclear power, large hydroelectric dams, and thermal power plants with the corresponding impacts on aquatic ecosystems and human rights linked to water management, while undermining agreed climate change mitigation plans.

In this context, we need a dual, **just transition in water and energy**. The massive emission of greenhouse gases, particularly CO<sub>2</sub>, requires that the energy transition be the central axis of mitigation strategies. However, the main social risks and impacts materialise through the water cycle, which necessitates adaptation strategies guided by a water transition. To develop this dual transition, in addition to applying the principles of sustainability, we must ensure a just transition based on the principle of equity, adopting a human rights-based approach that pays special attention to those living in most vulnerable situations.



The energy transition, beyond changing supply sources and improving efficiency, must also include a change in consumption patterns that slows down the growth in demand. Concerning water, ensuring a sustainable future requires restoring and preserving the health of aquatic ecosystems, respecting the limits imposed by the natural order under the horizon outlined by climate change in relation to the water cycle. Promoting a just dual transition from a human rights perspective requires regulating and even **decoupling the right to water and energy from market logic**, so that even those who struggle to pay the tariff can have access to them.

Prioritise public budgets and available resources to ensure the progressive realisation of these rights for all. An adequate regulation that guarantees transparency, social participation and public accountability in both water and energy management. To this end, based on the recognition of the human right to water and sanitation, recognising the human right to energy would provide a normative basis for moving toward alternative models of energy governance.

Within the framework of the report's recommendation, the SR encourages the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and all related UN agencies, as well as the 2026 UN Water Conference, to promote this dual water and energy transition by explicitly aligning with human rights treaties and mechanisms, including financial mechanisms.

Finally, given the alarming development of **megadata centres**, the SR recommends promoting a moratorium and provide clear information on water and energy demands, so that the sector can be regulated on this basis, prioritising the principles of sustainability, equity and respect for human rights.

### **PRESENTATION OF COUNTRY VISIT REPORTS**

The SR presents the report on his visit to **Guinea-Bissau** carried out from 10 to 19 March 2025 and extends its gratitude to the government for the invitation and for its cooperation.

As a small country which is very vulnerable to climate change, most of the population live in extreme poverty. Its tropical climate has a rainy season and a dry season. The population **depends mainly on groundwater**, but as the sea rises, salination takes place, meaning certain communities have to move. The SR recommends developing strategies to collect and store rainwater during the rainy season, and to recharge the aquifers during the rainy season.

The main problem is **biocontamination of groundwater**, because of the lack of sanitation and chlorination. Even in the capital, the water is not chlorinated. The SR was shocked to learn that children in Corubal river communities have blood in their urine because of water which is allegedly contaminated by mining. The SR saw how an upstream dam in Senegal had caused a river basin to dry up.

The most **precious treasure of Guinea-Bissau is its aquifers**, but the country has also social treasures, community organisations, cities such as Bafatá which also have civil society organisations. In his final report, Mr. Pedro ARROJO-AGUDO recommends strengthening community organisations and having a programme to develop sanitation and chlorination based on the network of schools and health centres and supporting women in driving the programme.



## US GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS

Mr. Pedro ARROJO-AGUDO unconditionally denounces the US government sanctions against his colleague **Ms. Francesca ALBANESE**, Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestine territory, and expresses his full solidarity with her. Sanctioning a Special Rapporteur appointed by the UN Human Rights Council violates international law. This is a direct attack on the integrity of the UN human rights system, including UNHRC Special Procedures. Mr. Pedro ARROJO-AGUDO calls on all states to act decisively to denounce these sanctions and refuse to carry them out. The SR further calls on the United States to immediately withdraw these illegal sanctions.

## REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mr. Pedro ARROJO-AGUDO informs the Council that he is travelling to **Brussels** the next day to discuss about the water resilience strategy, upon invitation by the EU Economic and Social Council. The SR also appreciates the **African group** for qualifying water as a common good that must be protected from the markets. This is his priority in Africa, given that 2026 is the year of water thanks to the 2026 Water Conference. On the latter, the SR welcomes the support of Germany and Spain and the attention paid to the gender perspective in water and energy

The SR carried out a specific study on **transboundary basins**. In this connection, the SR emphasises his recommendation to strengthen and implement the UN Water Convention. The SR further welcomes the priority attention given to **rural areas**, emphasising the role played by women and the need to provide them with adequate support to ensure their participation on an equal footing in implementing the double water and energy transition.

The SR praises Mexico for giving priority to **Indigenous peoples** and the attention paid to **Palestine**. Once more, the SR expresses his solidarity, not only in the context of the ongoing genocide, which uses water, food, and basic energy as weapons of war, but also the US government's **denial of visas** to the Palestinian delegation seeking to participate in the UN General Assembly in New York.

Turning to the raison d'être of his thematic report, the SR stresses that **water is the soul of life**. Water is needed for communities to live together. For energy, it is vital as well to ensure a decent life. Recalling human settlements from the earliest times, the SR explains that they were based around water and fire. Nowadays, water and energy continue to be at the heart of **social cohesion**. Drinking water and basic, clean, sustainable energy, these are crucial for a decent life, not for luxury.

Addressing climate change requires mitigation strategies preceded by transition, but also adaptation preceded by a water transition to overcome the risks and impacts affecting those in the most vulnerable situations. A **double water and energy transition** must also be a fair transition with a focus based on human rights, leaving nobody behind. Turning to **recommendations**, the SR suggests considering access to basic quotas of sustainable energy for a decent life as a human right, with arguments similar to those the UN General Assembly recognised for the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation in 2010.

In accomplishing his last year as mandate holder, Mr. Pedro ARROJO-AGUDO is grateful for the honour and privilege that was granted him, and expresses hope that the mandate on water and



sanitation will long continue with necessary resources. The SR will focus his efforts on the **2026 Water Conference**, and thanks the UNHRC for the support to the resolution last year, through which the Council requested the SR to work on a human rights-based approach and a broad social participation in the Water Conference. The SR believes that with countries' support the mistakes and limitations of the previous conference in 2023 can be overcome.

Thanking **Senegal** and the **United Arab Emirates** for their support to the mandate and their cooperation as co-organisers of the 2026 Water Conference, the SR welcomes the fact that the first interactive dialogue of the Conference will be **human rights-centric** and this will be a cross-cutting focus in the interactive dialogues. The 2026 Conference, unlike the previous one, will have representatives of the Indigenous peoples and social movements, rightsholders, human rights defenders, and water defenders. They will be all taken into account in the preparation of dialogues and will be part of the panels.

### **VIEWS EXPRESSED BY GUINEA-BISSAU AS CONCERNED COUNTRY**

The delegation of **Guinea-Bissau** expresses its gratitude for the work of the SR which reflects the realities of the country, particularly in rural areas, where access to safe water and adequate sanitation is a challenge. The data presented reflect the fact that a small amount of the population has access to safe drinking water. It reflects a lack of infrastructure and ongoing basic human rights violations of the rights to water, sanitation and hygiene. Guinea-Bissau recognises the recommendations made, and believes it is urgent to build resilient infrastructures with governance and institutional support to protect the national water resources.

With the National Integrated Plan on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, with clear goals and participation by local communities, this plan will cover the most vulnerable areas, with programmes of education and universal access to water and sanitation. Likewise, it is crucial to support the implementation of the recommendations ensuring access to water and sanitation. This is a human right for all of the population. In closing, Guinea Bissau appreciates the important work of the SR and his team aimed at raising awareness of the country's challenges. Guinea-Bissau believes this will be a catalyst for positive change.

### **INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE**

#### **Views Expressed by State Delegations**

**Algeria on behalf of Arab group** takes note of the SR's thematic report on the water-energy nexus. Despite the fact that this right is well anchored in the international human rights architecture, the Arab group notes with concern that this right is often violated. Many people around the world do not have suitable access to water and sanitation. There are challenges related to climate change which has a negative impact on access to drinking water, and the promotion of other rights such as the right to health and the right to food. The water-energy nexus should be looked at from a human rights perspective. When there are renewable energy sources such as hydroelectric power, the quality of water should be guaranteed to avoid any measure which may adversely affect the quality of water. The Arab group appreciates the fact that the 2026 UN Water Conference will put the human rights and the implementation of SDG 6 and the other relevant goals at the very centre of all multilateral efforts.





**Azerbaijan** has established a strong legal framework including the Water Code and the Law on Water Supply and Wastewater to ensure the sustainable use and protection of water resources. Energy protection is regulated to safeguard water quality with hydropower projects subject to strict environmental standards. The National Strategy for the Efficient Use of Water Resources adopted in 2024 aims to further increase water availability, improve safe water supply and modernise management. Azerbaijan is also investing in green energy. Liberated Karabakh and East and Eastern regions, as well as the Nakhichevan region, have been declared green energy zones in Azerbaijan. Environmental protection and ecosystem restoration set as key priorities in the reconstruction of liberated territories. Recognising the importance of water management, Azerbaijan recently hosted the second Baku Water Week, an international platform to attract technologies and investment, strengthen international cooperation and advance sustainable water resource management. Azerbaijan continues to support a balanced and sustainable approach to water and energy, mindful of their importance to both environmental resilience and the well-being of people.

**Benin** on behalf of the LCDs/SIDS Trust Fund beneficiaries, which allows these countries to participate actively in the UNHRC's vital mechanism. In the sphere of water and sanitation, these states are facing multiple challenges, such as an insufficient access to drinking water and limited sanitation; the creation of mechanisms which might divert water from those most in need; and often, a lack of a system of reservoirs in rural areas. These challenges have a direct impact on the health and dignity and safety of our populations. Therefore, Benin calls upon the international community, including UNHRC mechanisms, to bolster national policies to guarantee universal and fair access to drinking water and sanitation, to protect water resources from threats linked to pollution, climate change and over exploitation. Commending the efforts undertaken by the UN under the auspices of the 2023 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Benin places emphasis on the right to safe water as a source of life. It is a vital right for the enjoyment of all human rights. Lastly, Benin urges states to implement the advisory opinion to prevent environmental harm.

**Bolivia** converges with the SR on the need to adopt a human rights-based approach in water and energy, and given the multiple crises. These issues need to be addressed in a global and coordinated way. Bolivia appreciates the recommendations guiding states towards an energy transition that prioritises human rights, without losing sight of the fact that developing countries that have contributed the least to climate change require support to develop capacities, technology transfer, and effective finance mechanisms. Taking note of the SR's reference to extractive industries, Bolivia stresses that its national lithium industry is committed to appropriate management of water in the different phases of production. In spite of the challenges and barriers, it has rolled out an environmental policy in the use of national water resources that promote the environment and the neighbouring communities.

**Cabo Verde** considers that water and energy are fundamental pillars for the realisation of human rights, having a direct impact on people's health, food security and dignity. The absence or insufficiency of these essential resources disproportionately affects women, rural communities and vulnerable groups around the world. In this context, states and regional and international organisations have a responsibility to guarantee access to safe drinking water and clean, adequate and sufficient energy as fundamental rights and catalysts for sustainable development. Cabo Verde is facing the worst series of droughts in 40 years. Water scarcity, exacerbated by



extreme weather events, is compromising the capacity to store and mobilise groundwater resources. Therefore, water and energy remain at the heart of national public policy. The country has invested in desalination, water collection and treatment, as well as in the regulation and integrated management of river basins. In 2019, for example, around 72% of households had access to the public network, with consumption of 42.8 litres per day per capita. In the energy sector, progress has been remarkable, with strategic investments in renewable energies - solar, wind, as well as planned projects in green hydrogen and marine energy. Cabo Verde aims to have a secure, inclusive and sustainable energy system by 2030, and strongly supports the idea of explicitly recognising the right to energy as a human right essential to a dignified life.

**Cameroon** appreciates the SR's thematic report highlighting the close link between access to water, access to energy and the realisation of human rights. This integrated approach is particularly relevant at a time when our societies are facing interrelated challenges in terms of sustainability, equity and social justice. Cameroon recognises that energy is an essential vector for the effective enjoyment of the right to drinking water and sanitation, particularly for pumping, distribution, treatment and infrastructure maintenance. In this regard, Cameroon has launched several structural initiatives such as the project to supply drinking water to the city of Yaoundé and its surroundings, fed by the Sanaga River, which includes dedicated power lines, completed in April 2024; the project to improve drinking water supply in nine major cities, based on water-energy interconnection solutions, currently underway; and the rural electrification programme, which supports efforts to provide access to water in rural areas, with a view to integrated infrastructure. Cameroon fully endorses the SR's call for better coordination of public water and energy policies, incorporating the principles of equal access, community participation and environmental sustainability. The country remains to strengthening technical cooperation to support the implementation of innovative and equitable solutions for the benefit of the population.

**Costa Rica on behalf of a cross-regional group** of countries recalls that, in its advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice has unequivocally concluded that 'under international law, the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is essential for the enjoyment of other human rights<sup>1</sup>.' This authoritative language strengthens the legal foundation to treat environmental protection as integral to human dignity and to the fulfilment of the human rights to water and sanitation. The right to a healthy environment comprises substantive elements, namely clean air; a safe climate; access to safe water and adequate sanitation; healthy and sustainably produced food; non-toxic environments; and healthy biodiversity and ecosystems; together with procedural guarantees of information, participation and access to justice<sup>2</sup>. The SR's report on the water-energy nexus underscores these interdependencies and that a just and sustainable energy future is inseparable from a just and sustainable water future and the imperative that States prioritise human rights, sustainability and participatory governance to secure the rights to water and sanitation. The cross-regional group reiterates its support for the SR's focus on restoring aquatic ecosystems and protecting communities in vulnerable situations, while noting that these measures stem naturally from the ICJ's guidance. The group urges states

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<sup>1</sup> Para. 393. ICJ Advisory Opinion of 23 July 2025.

<sup>2</sup> See thematic reports A/HRC/40/55, A/74/161, A/75/161, A/HRC/46/28, A/76/179, A/HRC/49/53.



to implement the Advisory Opinion to prevent environmental harm, align energy and water policies with human rights and sustainability limits, and to ensure that water and sanitation are guaranteed as components of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

**Costa Rica** points to the ICJ's advisory opinion of 25 July 2025, in which the Court conclusively ruled that the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a prerequisite for the enjoyment of many human rights, such as the right to health and an adequate standard of living, including access to water. Costa Rica considers it important that public policies place environmental protection at the centre of strategies to guarantee water and sanitation for all. Therefore, Costa Rica urges states to take concrete and immediate measures to recognise and implement standards that prioritise universal, affordable and sustainable access to water and sanitation; to protect ecosystems and aquifers from extractive projects; and to ensure the effective participation of communities, Indigenous Peoples and women. The SR's report offers valuable recommendations for a just transition with a human rights-based approach.

**Djibouti** recognises that the transition to renewable energy, while essential, is likely to reproduce social and environmental inequalities, given that it is based on extractive practices and market logic. Furthermore, Djibouti believes that, in order to be fair and sustainable, the energy transition must respect human rights, preserve ecosystems, particularly aquatic ecosystems, and involve communities in energy governance. Djibouti considers that equitable and sustainable water management is crucial to ensuring the availability of this resource, which is essential to life. This requires a holistic approach that combines equity in access and distribution of resources with long-term environmental sustainability. Given the impossibility of achieving the goal of universal access to drinking water by 2030 and the accumulated delay in improving water, sanitation and hygiene services globally, Djibouti asks the SR to recommend concrete measures that states and international actors could take to intensify efforts, particularly in favour of the most vulnerable communities.

**Dominica on behalf of the CARICOM group** appreciates the SR's insightful report on the water-energy nexus. The findings of this report speak directly to the realities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean, where the interdependence of water and energy, combined with the adverse impacts of climate change, threatens reliable and affordable access, and in turn places the enjoyment of human rights at risk. The CARICOM group supports the call for a dual transition of water and energy systems that prioritises human rights, ecological integrity and participatory governance. This vision is consistent with existing regional frameworks such as the CARICOM Environment and Natural Resources Policy Framework (CENRPF) and the CARICOM Energy Policy, which together promote integrated approaches to sustainable resource management and energy system transformation. Building on this foundation, the region has undertaken forward-looking measures that seek to strengthen access to water and energy for all, while advancing sustainable development and resilience. These include initiatives to integrate renewable energy into critical water infrastructure, such as the establishment of solar and wind-powered water treatment plants and distribution systems. In closing, the CARICOM group remains committed to advancing a rights-based, inclusive and sustainable transition of their water and energy systems that builds climate resilience and secures the people's wellbeing. The group also looks forward to forging partnerships that complement and reinforce ongoing efforts.





**Egypt** extends sincere appreciation for the SR's efforts to highlight the human rights perspective of water cycle. As a country suffers from water scarcity and heavily reliant on a singular freshwater source, Egypt is acutely aware that the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation are fundamental human rights crucial for sustaining life and ensuring the enjoyment of other rights such as the right to life, food, health, and an adequate standard of living. The interdependence between water and energy includes various aspects, highlighting the importance of optimizing this connection to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation, without violating it. Egypt emphasizes the pressing need to mitigate any adverse effects of hydroelectric power generation on water quantity and quality, and prioritizing water use for essential life needs. Egypt agrees with report's recommendation that emphasises the importance of abstaining from constructing new giant dams or initiating new projects without the prior consent of affected communities. The advancement and safeguarding of the rights to safe drinking water and sanitation require a holistic approach encompassing, among other things, effective water cycle management, intensified climate actions, and sustainable and efficient governance of transboundary water resources. These efforts are critical to ensuring people's access to clean, while also upholding the rights of the communities affected by water ecological projects that may have direct or indirect effects on the enjoyment of these right.

**El Salvador** shares the SR's vision that an energy transition is inextricably connected to a transition to a just legal system. In El Salvador, water is seen, along with sanitation, as an indivisible and inalienable right, alongside a raft of norms that enshrines the right to drinking water and explicitly prohibits its privatisation. The country agrees with the concept of participatory governance underpinning this. In El Salvador, services of water, drinking water and sanitation are progressing towards universal access. The expansion of access in rural areas is key to this, recognising that energy availability, which is reliable, is key to this. Finally, El Salvador reiterates that the protection of ecosystems and sustainable management of water resources are key pillars to guarantee a future where the right to water and sanitation is fully enjoyed, in balance with a fair energy transition, as outlined in the SR's thematic report.

**Estonia on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic countries** appreciates the SR's comprehensive report and recognise the interconnectedness of energy and water systems and the vital role in upholding human rights. The Nordic-Baltic countries share the SR's view on the importance of a fair and inclusive shift towards alternative energy sources with meaningful participation of local communities. The Nordic-Baltic countries are already advancing this transition by developing and implementing modular and decentralised solutions in both water and energy sectors, for example, smart grids, small-scale renewable energy installations, and localised water treatment systems. They deployed efforts to align themselves with the SR's goal to advance circular economy strategies that reduce water and energy use, strengthen community ties to ecosystems, and promote sustainable resource management. In closing, the Nordic-Baltic countries reaffirm their commitment to a green and circular economy transition. Their businesses are increasingly adopting circular business models that contribute to both value creation, resource efficiency, and environmental sustainability. Lastly, the Nordic-Baltic countries ask the SR to explain how he intends to advance the recognition of a possible new human right to energy.

**Germany jointly with Spain** reaffirm their commitment to the mandate and appreciate the report's focus on the urgent need for a global double-just transition of water and energy systems,



which should be grounded in human rights, gender equality, the protection of aquatic ecosystems and participatory governance. It also shows that technological developments and the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence pose specific risks to water availability and sustainability. The response to such challenges must incorporate a human rights perspective and make sure to leave no one behind. Access to safe drinking water and sanitation for all remains vital globally, especially given the increasingly drastic effects of climate change. In order to further promote the realization of these rights, Germany and Spain support the participation of the SR in the upcoming UN Water Conferences in 2026 and in 2028. These conferences aim to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6, enhance global water governance, and environmental sustainability. Ensuring safe, equitable and affordable access to drinking water and sanitation is a vital need and constitutes an essential aspect of human dignity. In light of the dual water and energy transition suggested by the SR, Germany and Spain ask how to square the circle between water-intensive technologies, such as lithium batteries needed for electric vehicles, and the energy transition.

**Ghana on behalf of African group** praises the SR for the quality of his report on the water-energy nexus. Acknowledging that energy is essential to guarantee access to safe drinking water and that water is indispensable for energy production, the African group regrets that current energy models based on market logic and unsustainable exploitation of water resources violate human rights, degrade the environment, exacerbate social inequalities and intensify conflicts. For the African Group, a dual water and energy transition, equitable and based on a human rights approach is more than necessary. Water and energy are common goods of humanity, must be excluded from mercantilist logic. To this end, in line with the Agenda 2063 adopted by the African Union (AU), the AU's Strategy and Action Plan for Energy Transition (ETSAP) and the AU's Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032) have been adopted in response to Africa's energy and water challenges. These policy documents will, on the one hand, guarantee Africa's access to adequate, affordable, sustainable and drinking water and sanitation services, and on the other hand, accelerate the transition to modern energy sources and ensure access to clean and affordable energy.

**Ghana** shares the report's deep concern that current models of development often amplifies inequalities and ecological degradation. The report rightly highlights how extractive practises threaten aquatic ecosystems. Ghana is confronted with a phenomenon of illegal mining which has severely damaged our rivers with chemicals such as mercury and cyanide. Ghana recognises that this contamination violates the human right to safe drinking water in a healthy environment for our citizens. In direct response, the government has launched a comprehensive initiative that includes a ban on toxic chemicals in all processes and mandates site rehabilitation in all mining licences. As part of Ghana's broader commitment to a right-based approach, the National Water Policy and Environmental Sanitation Policy have been designed to prioritise basic human needs which includes promoting climate resilient sanitation solutions to protect water quality at its source. Furthermore, Ghana is integrating renewable energy solutions, particularly solar power, into our water infrastructure, thereby directly strengthening the critical water-energy link. In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its dedication to achieving universal access to safe water, sanitation, and sustainable energy as fundamental human rights, ensuring a dignified life for all Ghanaians.



**Iraq** agrees with the SR's assertion that water and energy systems must support each other without violating human rights and while taking into account the preservation and safety of the environment. Water is a public good and must be managed on the basis of shared responsibility. States that share water bodies must preserve the ecosystems and cultural and natural heritage of those bodies. The marshlands of Iraq have suffered from the adverse effects of climate change, such as water scarcity and desertification, and the negative impacts of dam projects on water sources, which affect the quantity and quality of water and damage ecosystems, leading to the migration of their inhabitants. At the national level, Iraq has worked to implement national measures to promote sustainability, including the launch of the National Climate Investment Plan 2025-2030, the expansion of low-emission water and energy projects, and the implementation of pilot projects for the desalination of marsh water to support agriculture and fish farming. With regard to recommendation at paragraph 97 of the report, Iraq asks about the ways in which states can prevent the transboundary movement of pollutants in shared water bodies and how to avoid water resource shortages.

**Kuwait on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** reaffirms the importance of the rights to drinking water and adequate sanitation services as one of the fundamental pillars of human rights, and emphasise its important role in addressing the growing challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation. The GCC countries attach great importance to innovation and investment in sustainable solutions, including the development of renewable energy sources, improving water use efficiency, and developing desalination and recycling technologies. They also believe that sharing experiences and strengthening international cooperation in these areas contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goals. In this context, the GCC countries emphasise the importance of the UN Water Conference, to be hosted by the United Arab Emirates and Senegal in December 2026, as a key milestone in accelerating action towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 and mobilising international efforts to ensure access to water and sanitation for all and their sustainable management. The GCC countries also affirm that the effectiveness of relevant international policies requires taking into account the diversity of environmental and climatic conditions in different countries, so that policies and solutions are built on this basis, while emphasising the priority of ensuring equitable and non-discriminatory access to clean water.

**Lesotho** states that the SR's thematic report bears testimony to the fact that climate change is altering patterns of weather and water around the world, thereby causing shortages and droughts in some areas and floods in others, and also impacting access to energy. Given the importance of water and energy services, the sector needs extra support, especially from government, in order to guarantee that everyone, especially in the hard-to-reach areas, has access to at least a minimum level of clean water and energy. Lesotho is committed to the human rights to clean water and energy as affirmed by its policies and international partnerships. However, significant challenges remain, including water scarcity due to climate change and inadequate infrastructure for both water and energy access for Lesotho. Efforts are focused on sustainable water resource management, improving sanitation, and developing reliable energy services to ensure these rights are met for all citizens. In conclusion, the human right to clean water is recognised as essential for life and dignity, which requires governments to ensure that access to clean and

affordable water, and as well as energy, is clearly a component of a decent standard of living and a healthy environment. Both rights are crucial for sustainable development.

The **Maldives** strongly condemns the brutal unprovoked attacks carried out by the Israeli occupation forces against the sovereignty and security of the state of Qatar on 9 September. The Maldives rejects this path of destruction and stands unwavering in defence of human dignity, justice and the right to live free from oppression and occupation. From Palestine to Yemen, from Syria to Lebanon and now in Qatar, Israel has acted with arrogance, impunity and contempt for the very foundations of international law. Yet Israel is shielded by double standards that undermine the very foundations of international law. The Maldives condemns Qatar's vital and constructive role in facilitating mediation efforts including its work towards achieving a ceasefire. Qatar's steadfast commitment to dialogue, diplomacy and peace has alleviated suffering and earned the profound respect of the international community. Standing in solidarity with the government and people of Qatar, the Maldives reiterates its call on the international community to uphold its responsibility to maintain international peace and security and to hold Israel accountable for its continued violations. The Maldives further urges the international community to make immediate effective measures to deter Israel from committing further violations of international law.

**Mali** highlights that the water-energy nexus is a matter of concern for many countries because current energy systems are often the subject of a number of human rights violations, notably the degradation of ecosystems and the exacerbation of social inequalities. To address this, the government of Mali has implemented, with a number of partners, projects and programmes to improve access to water, energy, and food, including interactions between these sectors and synergies and exchanges to guarantee sustainable management of resources. Mali is seeing a return of solar energy and water in energy production, currently dominated 70% by thermal energy, and this responds to a desire to transform the national energy system, drawing on renewable energy with a view to reducing greenhouse gases. Lastly, Mali fully agrees with the SR that the promotion of circular economies should be promoted.

The **Marshall Islands** states that the relationship between water security and energy production is a pressing challenge for small island developing states at the forefront of a climate crisis. The Marshall Islands have made significant efforts towards a just double transition of water and energy systems. In particular, the addressing climate vulnerability in the water sector project integrates climate change risks into water governance processes so that management of climate change risks are coordinated, effective, participatory, equitable, and sustainable. These efforts demonstrate the Islands' commitment to protecting their rights and their ecosystems. However, the continued use of fossil fuel-based energy systems by major emitters places a disproportionate burden on countries such as the Marshall Islands that contributed the least to global emissions. Their actions rapidly accelerate climate change, triggering more frequent and extreme weather events, rising seas, prolonged droughts, or saltwater intrusion. The Marshall Islands fully supports the conclusion that a new energy system is urgently needed, one that does not reproduce the injustices of the past. This thematic report shows that a just transition which prioritises water access and human rights is within reach. In closing, the Marshall Islands urges all countries to bring forward updated and ambitious emissions commitments this year and redouble their efforts to face off fossil fuels.



**Mexico** agrees with the SR on the need to adopt a human rights-based approach that is sustainable and integrated for managing water and energy, including equal participation of women and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples. Through Mexico's 2024-2030 national water plan, it is striving to guarantee the human right to water, making its domestic and urban use a priority over and above any extractive and energy activities. Mexico is implementing the justice plan for the Yaqui people in Sonora, which recognises the right to use 50% of the water of the river Yaqui, and through which the government is committed to not granting mining concessions in this area. In addition, the constitutional reform of September 2024 recognises Indigenous peoples as rightsholders with their own legal personality and their own property. Furthermore, in 2024, Mexico reformed the Mining Law to establish lithium as a property of the nation, reserving its exploration, exploitation, benefits and profits for the Mexican people.

**Mongolia** appreciates the SR's thematic report on the water-energy nexus. As a country facing pronounced climate vulnerability, water scarcity and energy transition challenges, Mongolia resonates with the report's findings. The interdependence between energy production and water security is a reality the country confronts daily, particularly in the context of urban growth, extractive industries and the needs of nomadic and rural communities. Equitable and non-discriminatory accessible services are essential to sustainable development and to dignity of all people, especially the most vulnerable. Mongolia is taking steps to address this nexus through expanding clean and affordable energy sources, upgrading water infrastructure in urban areas, supporting decentralised energy and water access solutions in rural regions, strengthening clean and environmental safeguards and attracting investment. Mongolia reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that all people, especially those in vulnerable situations, have equitable access to clean water and reliable energy.

**Morocco** praises the SR's report which rightly underscores the structural interdependence between the rights to water and sanitation and access to sustainable, affordable and equitable energy. In a global context marred by escalating climate challenges to the depletion of natural resources and widening social inequalities, Morocco considers the realisation of these rights to be a matter of human security, stability and territorial sovereignty. Morocco has made a firm and strategic choice grounded in the triptych human rights, sustainability, social justice, placing vulnerable territories and at-risk populations at the core of its national priorities. Within this framework, the National Water Plan 2020-2050, the cornerstone of Morocco's water strategy, gives high priority to seawater desalination projects powered by renewable energy, particularly in our southern provinces and coastal regions. This policy seeks not only to ensure water security but also to strengthen ecosystem resilience, reduce disparity in access and guarantee equitable distribution of resources in a spirit of territorial justice and social cohesion. Morocco also ensures that the principles of citizen participation, equity and sustainability are mainstream throughout its public policies relating to water governance, placing women, rural communities and arid zones at the heart of local decision-making processes. In this spirit, Morocco reaffirms its commitment to the vision outlined by the SR where the nexus between water and energy must serve as a driver of dignity, equity and sustainable development role.

**Mozambique** welcomes the SR's thematic report and commends the continued effort to advance the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation. Mozambique underscores the importance of the water-energy nexus, which reflects a vital interdependence. Energy is essential





for ensuring access to safe water, while water is indispensable for energy production. However, preventing energy systems often undermine human rights, harm ecosystems, and reinforce social inequalities. A market-driven approach too often prioritises poverty over people and the planet, marginalising vulnerable communities. Mozambique supports the call for a double-just transition in both water and energy systems grounded in human rights, ecological sustainability, and inclusive participatory governance. Firmly believing that a just and sustainable future in one domain cannot be achieved without progress in the other, Mozambique reaffirms that the realisation of the human rights to water and sanitation must go hand-in-hand with climate justice and energy equity in order to uphold the dignity of human rights of all.

**Nepal** thanks the SR for his thematic report. As water is life, Nepal considers access to safe drinking water as a fundamental human right. The realisation of human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation requires both the availability of water and reliability of energy for the distribution, storage, treatment and sanitation. The Constitution of Nepal guarantees every citizen's right to clean drinking water and sanitation. In Nepal, Ministry of Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation, Ministry of Water Supply and Water and Energy Commission work together to ensure access to safe drinking water and reliable supply of hydropower in the country. While the discourse around just energy transitions is gaining wider momentum, the water transition systems and the intersection with the energy systems merit equal attention. A just transition in both the energy and water sectors is vital to fostering a sustainable future for humanity. In this context, Nepal would appreciate to hear from the SR which measures could be adopted to align water and energy sector transitions with a human rights-based approach.

**Nigeria** appreciates the SR's insightful report on the critical nexus between reliable energy and water, and shares the concerns raised therein, particularly the impact of unreliable energy on the right to safe drinking water and sanitation and concur that energy is essential for ensuring access to safe water, just as water is vital for energy production. In line with the universal expression 'water is life', the Nigerian government affirms that water is also a human right. For this reason, at all levels of government and through various agencies, Nigeria is investing heavily in renewable mini-grids, hydropower and solar bottles to ensure that the life-giving promise of water reaches all Nigerians. For example, in Adamawa State, under the Northeast Multisectoral Crisis Recovery Project, the Yola Urban Water Supply Project has been rehabilitated. In the WASH programme, significant progress has been made through the construction of numerous hand pumps, solar-powered bottles, small-town water supply schemes, and ventilated improved sanitation facilities across the state. Finally, Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to the human rights of water and sanitation as a pillar of our national development plan and our strategy for achieving the SDG 6, and will continue to strengthen energy infrastructure and partnerships to achieve these goals.

**Oman** places the right to water at the heart of its development policies, as part of its commitment to a human rights-based approach and its recognition of the importance of this right in ensuring health, dignity and equality. Based on this commitment, Oman has adopted national strategies for water resource management, focusing on desalination using clean sources, encouraging reuse, and ensuring equitable access to water in all regions. In the context of promoting water justice, Oman pays particular attention to the participation of local communities in decision-making, as well as promoting transparency and accountability in resource management, which is clearly in line with the SR's recommendations outlined in his thematic report. As water



sustainability is closely linked to energy availability, Oman recognises the importance of energy as a supporting element, both for the operation of desalination plants and for the expansion of the infrastructure necessary for water distribution, especially in remote areas. Despite the challenges posed by climate change and increasing pressure on resources, the State continues its efforts to find sustainable and affordable solutions that ensure the continuity of these vital services in a fair and efficient manner. Lastly, Oman seeks the SR's opinion on whether the large-scale transfer of technology and the easing of cost-related restrictions is a necessary condition for achieving sustainability in water services, especially in countries that rely heavily on desalination and lime-intensive energy systems.

**Pakistan** concurs with the SR that difficulties in upholding the right to drinking water are not the result of technical or resource constraints, but a consequence of inequalities within and across countries. Yet another factor is the instrumentalization of water flows in cross-boundary rivers for geopolitical motives. In the region, the decision by an upper-riparian state to obstruct flows of water in contravention of the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 threatens to have dire consequences for people living downstream in Pakistan. In addition to their rights to water and sanitation, the rights of people in Pakistan to food and environment, among others, are also directly threatened. At a time when climate change-induced floods are wreaking havoc, agreements that ensure predictable water flows and exchange of hydrological data are ever more important. States cannot abdicate their responsibility under customary international norms of transboundary water use, such as the duty to coordinate, avoid significant harm and peacefully settle differences. Pakistan sees merit in the SR's call for regional cooperation for adaptation. It is equally important to emphasise the need for faithful implementation of transboundary water cooperation agreements. International cooperation should continue to govern the management of shared water resources. Pakistan would welcome the SR's insights on human rights responses to ensure these guardrails are not breached.

**Portugal on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Language Countries (CPLP)** is grateful to the SR for his thematic report dedicated to the water and energy nexus. Water is a fundamental element for the production of energy, and energy is essential to guarantee access to safe and quality water. Both of these aspects is crucial for a sustainable environment. The CPLP and its member states are actively working for the proper management of water resources. Situations such as extreme droughts or floods, as well as pollution of aquifers, are some of the obstacles to the right to water. The members of CPLP are actively working towards a resilient, sustainable and inclusive energy transition. Recalling that human rights are interdependent, the countries stress the right to water and sanitation is crucial to protect the right to a clean, healthy, sustainable environment. Combating climate change and inequalities must take place on the basis of a human rights approach that respects legislation and supports those who are most vulnerable.

**Saudi Arabia** notes that ensuring the right to safe drinking water and sanitation services is inseparable from the availability of sustainable and reliable energy. This interdependence calls for an approach that guarantees access for all to basic water, sanitation and energy services, while protecting natural resources for future generations. Saudi Arabia affirms that the right to safe drinking water and sanitation is a fundamental human right and is committed to its Vision 2030, which places this right at the heart of its national plans. In the context of strengthening international cooperation, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince launched the World Water



Organisation in Riyadh, after signing its founding Charter with the participation of a number of countries. This Organisation aims to develop and integrate the efforts of countries and organisations to address water challenges, sustain water resources and promote access for all. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia will host the 11th World Water Forum in 2027, in a clear demonstration of its global leadership role in addressing water challenges, in cooperation with the World Water Council. In conclusion, Saudi Arabia affirms its support for international dialogues that promote cooperation and solidarity in water resource management, in a manner that reinforces respect for human rights and preserves the sustainability of ecosystems.

**Senegal** underlines that the rights to drinking water and sanitation as cornerstones of human development remain at the heart of Senegal's commitments to the furtherance of human rights and SDG 6. For Senegal, these rights are a national priority. Today, 98.8% of urban areas and 91% of rural have access to improved drinking water. In spite of this progress, however, challenges remain, and these relate to quality, availability and safety of water, demographic pressures and the effects of climate change, as well as the continuity of partnerships and resilience of our services. Senegal, which will co-organise with the UAE, the UN Conference on Water in 2026, reaffirms its commitment to build a fair, energetic water transition based on equity, participation and solidarity. In this spirit, Senegal calls for strengthened international cooperation so that each home can benefit in the long term with these fundamental rights, leaving no one behind.

The **State of Palestine** thanks the SR for the important report which makes clear that water is essential for energy, and energy is vital for access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Yet almost half the world's population still lacks safe water. This is not a technical problem, it is a political failure. The SR recommends recognition of sustainable energy as a right. While supporting this call, the real issue is not recognition but enforcement. International law, once meant to guarantee rights, has too often become a tool of injustice, applied selectively to protect the interests of powerful States, rooted in colonial legacies, at the expense of people and the planet. This failure is particularly stark in Palestine. Under Israel's illegal occupation, water has long been allocated in a discriminatory way, favouring settlers while denying Palestinians, a clear system of apartheid. In Gaza, where Israel is committing genocide, the situation defies words. All basic infrastructure has been destroyed. The little water that remains is polluted to levels unimaginable to most of us, causing disease and death on a massive scale. This is not merely a humanitarian crisis; it is part of an ongoing genocidal project aimed at erasing the Palestinian people. If the international system cannot prevent such atrocities, if law bends to political and economic interests instead of defending the vulnerable, then what credibility does it have left? And what choices remain for those whose rights are systematically denied?

**Timor-Leste** appreciates the SR's insightful report on the water and energy nexus and its human rights implications. As a small island developing state, Timor-Leste understands the vital link between energy and access to safe water. Yet, technical solutions alone are insufficient. This nexus must be addressed through a human rights-based and environmental disaster approach. Timor-Leste fully supports the call for a double transition in both water and energy systems. Access to clean water and energy must be treated as rights, not commodities. Market-based models have too often excluded rural communities and degraded ecosystems. In Timor-Leste, river forests and coasts are under increasing threat due to climate change and unsustainable practises. For these reasons, Timor-Leste calls for inclusive, community-led governance and



international support in terms of funding, technology transfer, and capacity-building, which are essential for countries such as Timor-Leste striving for sustainable development. Finally, the country launches an appeal for regional and global solidarity, thereby stressing that challenges linked to climate and resources are shared globally. Only by working together with human rights and environmental protection at the core can we secure a just and sustainable future for all.

The **United Arab Emirates** thanks the SR for his thematic report focussing on the nexus between water and energy and its human rights implications. The UAE emphasizes that the right to safe drinking water and sanitation is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone for achieving the SDGs. In this spirit, the UAE has adopted the National Water Security Strategy 2036, which aims to ensure the sustainability of water resources, enhance their efficiency, and secure them for current and future generations. This commitment is demonstrated by investments in water desalination using clean and renewable energy as well as the expansion of treated water reuse projects, solar and other sustainable energy sources as part of the country's efforts to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The UAE firmly believes that international and multilateral cooperation is the best way to address the common challenges associated with water and energy. In this context, the 2026 United Nations Water Conference represents a pivotal and historic opportunity to correct the course and launch a global, integrated approach that is rapid in implementation, efficient in coordination and sustainable in results. This can only be achieved by harnessing investment, stimulating innovation and strengthening international and regional partnerships for a secure and sustainable water future for all.

**Viet Nam** stresses that clean water and sanitation are constant priorities. The rate of household using hygiene water source reached 98.3% in 2022, achieving the goal of Viet Nam's SDG Implementation Roadmap for 2030. Viet Nam shares the SR's view on the water-energy nexus, which is aligned with Viet Nam's priorities on sustainable water management and just energy transition, while preserving environment and ensure the well-being of its people. In Viet Nam's view, the promotion and protection of the rights to clean water and sanitation can be strengthened through three key measures. First, enhancing sustainable water management policies, especially in vulnerable and rural areas. Second, enhancing investment in water and sanitation infrastructure to leveraging domestic and international funding. Third, strengthening transboundary water cooperation to ensure people sharing water sources can fully enjoy their right to clean water and sanitation. Viet Nam looks forward to further discussion and elaboration on this important issue at the 2026 UN Water Conference.

**Zimbabwe** appreciates the SR's report on the important and complex interlinkage between water and energy. Zimbabwe, like many developing countries, faces challenges in both supply of safe drinking water and sustainable supply of energy, especially in rural areas. The scarcity of water and energy in the face of climate change intensifies household vulnerability. Added to this nexus is the issue of food security, which is a vital human right. The challenges Zimbabwe is facing today require a holistic approach to manage resources sustainably and ensure sustainable access and availability. Drawing awareness on the water-energy-food nexus is essential from the onset so as to have a cross-sector convergence and coherence in resource management. Zimbabwe reaffirms its commitment to progressively realise the right to safe drinking water, food security, and sufficient energy through stronger institutions, transparent regulation, climate-resilient infrastructure, and inclusive service delivery.



### Views Expressed by Intergovernmental Organizations and UN Entities

The **European Union** appreciates the SR's thematic report which emphasizes the compelling need for a double energy and water transition firmly grounded on a human rights-based approach. The increasingly devastating effects of climate change often lead to energy and drinking water supply disruptions as well as water-related inequalities. The EU 2025 Water Resilience Strategy aims precisely at restoring the water cycle, building a water-smart economy, and ensuring access to clean and affordable water to all. In particular, this Strategy aims at improving governance, enhancing public and private investments, and boosting innovation. Ahead of next year's UN Water Conference, the EU has reinforced commitments to the Water Action Agenda, prioritising access to safe drinking water and sanitation as human rights. Only through concrete actions for ensuring water access and security and building global resilience to water stress, can we achieve SDGs. As the UN Agenda 2030 is a strongly integrated one, the water, energy, food and ecosystems nexus approach is needed for cross-sectoral progress. Given the fact that the SR's thematic report emphasises risks posed by the growing water and energy demand of mega data centres, the EU asks the SR whether he sees benefit opportunities arising from new technologies for the water-energy nexus.

The **Sovereign Order of Malta** appreciates the SR's insightful report and its call for a just, double water and energy transition, which deeply resonates with the Order's 900-year mission to serve the most vulnerable through healthcare, humanitarian aid, and advocacy. The report powerfully underscores what the Sovereign Order witnesses daily - water and energy are human rights, not mere commodities, and it strongly supports the SR's focus on the following three priorities. First, community-led, decentralized solutions. Empowering local communities and modular technologies is key. The Order's WASH Guidelines promote concrete Participatory Learning and Action methods (PLA) for water policy, which it also adopts in its projects. They range from solar-powered clinics in Africa to water purification in conflict zones, showing how local ownership transforms lives. Second, protecting the most vulnerable. The Sovereign Order urges states to conduct free, prior and informed consultations with affected communities and reconsider all projects that may result in human rights violations, taking into account the principles enshrined in the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement. Third, bridging policy and action. The Sovereign Order stands ready to help translate the SR's recommendations into reality by advocating for energy rights, transparency, and climate-resilient WASH programs. Finally, the report highlights the rising demand for water and energy from emerging technologies, risking basic needs.

**UNICEF** welcomes the SR's timely report on the water-energy nexus and echoes his call for a double-just transition that places human rights at the center of water and energy governance. Children bear the greatest costs when systems fail: without reliable, affordable energy, utilities cannot pump, treat or safely store water; schools and health facilities cannot provide safe water and sanitation services; and girls shoulder greater unpaid care and water-collection burdens. The report rightly underscores that a sustainable energy future is inseparable from a sustainable water future and urges recognition of the human right to clean and sustainable energy alongside the rights to water and sanitation. UNICEF urges States to: prohibit disconnections that deny children and their families a minimum essential water and energy for life, health and education; prioritize financing for climate-resilient, low-emission water services,





including solarized pumping for communities, schools and clinics; and integrate child-sensitive safeguards in planning, environmental and social standards. It also supports the report's emphasis that meeting basic human needs requires only a small fraction of total water and energy use; equity, not scarcity, is the binding constraint. UNICEF stands ready to work with member States and partners to operationalize the recommendations made in the report, so that every child can enjoy safe drinking water, sanitation, and the enabling energy services that make those rights real.

### Views Expressed by National Human Rights Institutions

The **Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine** is gravely concerned over Israel's systematic denial of water to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. In Gaza, over 97 percent of water is unsafe. The Israeli occupation forces have destroyed wells, pipelines, and desalination plants, leaving 91 percent of the population without safe water. Civilians have even been killed while seeking water. Starvation and dehydration are being used as weapons of war, amounting to collective punishment. In the West Bank, Israel and its settlers control most water resources, consuming three times more per capita than Palestinians, while sewage dumping further contaminates Palestinian lands. The Commission calls on the SR to highlight these violations, demand immediate and equitable access to safe water, hold the occupying power accountable, and urges the international community to urgently restore water infrastructure and end the use of water deprivation as a tool of collective punishment.

The **National Human Rights Council of Morocco** shares the SR's views on the need to move from management centred in increased offer to new perspectives based on the management of demand and the preservation of water ecosystems. This same idea was advanced by the Moroccan Council in its published research on the right to water included 51 recommended outcomes. The Moroccan Council further welcomes the considerable efforts being made in connection with renewable energy and the launching of a number of different projects aimed at rationalising the use of water resources in Morocco. It also emphasises the recommendations concerning the protection and promotion of the right to water, in particular the requirement to carry out a detailed inventory of water resources; to ensure that they are protected from pollution; and to guarantee an equitable distribution among generations. The Moroccan Council also calls for a generalisation of safe sanitation services in line with the 2030 Agenda and a review of the agricultural model and policies on water distribution. Finally, the Moroccan Council invites the SR to involve all stakeholders in fair equitable governance around human rights, energy and water. NHRIs can also play a key role as a mechanism to ensure water is properly managed.

### Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

**Iuventum e.V.** congratulates the SR on his thematic report, which addresses the management of the water and energy nexus. The recommendations, grounded in accurate observations and deep insights, should serve as a guideline for policy-making aimed at the balanced advancement of the rights to water and energy. Heat pollution from nuclear power plants and data centers is an increasing concern, alongside traditional chemical contamination. The negative impacts of nuclear contamination extend beyond our lifetimes. We must choose honest and sustainable energy sources. Uncontrolled industrial demand for water and energy threatens environmental



integrity. A human rights-based approach is essential to protect the rights of vulnerable persons. Polluters of drinking water sources must be held accountable. Only participatory, transparent, and publicly accountable governance of water and energy can safeguard against industrial greed. Public awareness of water quality and management systems is vital for sustainable development. The UPR process for each state should include the consideration of water-related rights.

The **Institute of Sustainable Development** asks the Council to imagine *Maria*, a seven-year-old girl, walking through the ruins of Gaza. She carries a broken plastic bottle, searching for clean water. Where homes, streets, and once olive groves full of life stood, now there is only rubble. She steps carefully, surrounded by dirty water and the constant sound of nearby explosions. For Maria and thousands of other children, the right to safe water has almost disappeared. Since October 2023, the destruction of Gaza's water and sanitation systems has cut access to drinking water by 96 percent. Every day, more than 108,000 cubic meters of sewage flood the ruins, polluting what little water remains and spreading disease. As a result, diarrhea among children has doubled. Restrictions on the entry of vital materials have blocked efforts to rebuild. This denies Palestinians their basic human right to water and sanitation, rights guaranteed under international law and the Geneva Conventions. How can we stand by while Maria risks her life amid these deadly ruins for a drop of clean water? Do Gaza's children not deserve the safety and dignity we cherish?

The **Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH)** denounces that nearly two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are deprived of consistent access to clean and safe water. Israel's destruction of Gaza's water supply systems and aquifers, combined with its ongoing blockade that prevents fuel and humanitarian aid from entering the Strip, has pushed Palestinians into catastrophic sanitary conditions, often forcing them to choose between water to drink or water to clean themselves. In his report, the SR has emphasized that water is not merely a technical resource, but a matter of governance and human rights. The SR has also stressed the water-energy nexus: without electricity or fuel, people cannot pump, treat, or desalinate water. Today in Gaza, energy restrictions imposed by Israel have collapsed water services and wastewater treatment, leaving families exposed to disease and hunger. In the occupied West Bank, the pattern is equally alarming. State-backed settlers regularly sabotage water pipes that supply Palestinian villages such as Um al-Kheir in the South Hebron Hills. In July, Palestinian activist and father of three, Awdah Hathaleen, was killed by a settler while defending his community's only water pipe. Such attacks illustrate a phenomenon that the SR has qualified as the 'weaponization of water' - a strategy that denies people their basic human rights and endangers entire communities. Whether through deliberate bombardment of infrastructure during Israel's genocide on Gaza, or settler terrorism in the West Bank, Palestinians are being killed for trying to access or defend their right to water. This systematic denial of water is not accidental, it is part of a decades-long policy of using water as a weapon against the Palestinian people. MIFTAH urges the SR to recommend to the UNHRC the establishment of an independent monitoring mechanism focused on water and sanitation in situations of armed conflict, including Gaza; put pressure on member states and humanitarian agencies to ensure fuel and spare parts for water pumping, desalination, and sewage treatment in Gaza are prioritized and monitored as life-saving aid; and recommend that such deliberate deprivation be explicitly documented as a potential war crime in the next thematic or country-specific report.



**VIVAT International** and Edmund Rice International ring the alarm on the situation of Lough Neagh, the largest freshwater lake in Ireland and the UK, which is experiencing an ecological crisis due to severe blue-green algae pollution for the third consecutive summer. This pollution, primarily caused by phosphorus and nitrogen - 62% from agriculture, 24% from wastewater treatment, and 12% from septic tanks, has turned the Lough Neagh into a dumping ground for pollutants. Toxic blooms are killing local wildlife, crippling fisheries, and threatening drinking water supplies. In 2025 alone, 139 instances of algae growth were recorded, triple last year's amount. Urgent action is needed. The 2024-2027 Programme for Government has promised 37 actions, yet only 14 have been implemented. We must act now to reverse this destruction before it is too late. VIVAT International and Edmund Rice International calls for bold, united action from all levels of government to protect this irreplaceable water source. Lough Neagh's survival is not negotiable - Northern Ireland's environment, economy, and people's health depend on it.

**PRATYeK**, Edmund Rice International, and the young voices of the NINEISMINE campaign call urgent attention to India's water and sanitation crisis. Despite notable progress, one in four citizens still lacks safe drinking water, and an alarming 3.4 billion people endure poor sanitation, with 354 million forced into open defecation. While government programs like the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and the National Rural Drinking Water Program have brought hope - expanding rural tap water coverage from 17% in 2019 to over 80% by March 2025 - millions remain excluded. This transformation proves that bold policies work, but deep challenges persist: shrinking groundwater, polluted sources, inadequate sanitation, rapid urban growth, and climate change. To secure every child's right to clean water and dignity, urgent, sustained action is needed. The time to act is now, because safe water and sanitation are not privileges, they are fundamental human rights. the organizations urge the government of India to improve sanitation infrastructure by ensuring that toilets are functional, well-maintained, and accessible to all; conduct nationwide awareness campaigns on handwashing, safe sanitation practices, and hygiene education, especially targeting children and schools; ensure child-friendly public toilets, designed with safety, accessibility, and dignity in mind. Prioritizing these recommendations will help India move closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Iranian Short Statured Adults** states that water is life. Yet today, for millions in Gaza, it has been turned into a weapon of war. As the UN Special Rapporteur on water has been warned, Israel's attacks on water infrastructure amount to '*silent but deadly bomb*'. These words are tragically confirmed: in Gaza, per-capita access has fallen to just five liters a day - one third of the bare minimum for survival. Over 97% of groundwater is undrinkable; families queue for hours for a few liters, while children die from waterborne diseases. This is not collateral damage. It is collective punishment. The assault is not confined to Gaza. About three months ago, Israel bombed water facilities in Tehran's Tajrish Square. The strike ruptured a main water pipeline, flooding the streets, killing 12 civilians, including a pregnant woman and her child, and injuring more than 50. Thousands endured days without safe water. The deliberate targeting of water constitutes a war crime under international law. The Organization urges the SR to demand immediate accountability, to ensure unimpeded access to safe water in Gaza, and to prevent further attacks on civilian water infrastructure everywhere.

The **Association pour la défense des droits de l'homme et des revendications démocratiques/culturelles du peuple Azerbaïdjanais-Iran (ARC)** states that the situation of



water and the environment in Iran, especially in the Azerbaijani provinces, reflects a deep crisis in the Iranian governance and management that directly impacts human rights and ecological sustainability. Despite the UN recognition of water as a fundamental human right under resolution 64/292 (2010) and article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the populations of the Azerbaijani cities, particularly those in the west, bordering Türkiye and Iraq, are facing growing shortages of safe and accessible water. The most visible example of this crisis is the current catastrophic situation of Lake Urmia. Since other similar lakes in the region are thriving, it is debatable if climate change has exacerbated the problem. The primary cause of Lake Urmia's decline is excessive dam construction, and this is tantamount to malpractice and harmful state policies, including diversion of inflowing rivers for irrigation, and overexploitation of groundwater. Framing this disaster primarily as climate-driven obscures the accountability of state authorities, whose decisions have violated the principles of non-discrimination, participation, and accountability in water governance. The right to clean water of Azerbaijanis in Iran has been sacrificed by the Iranian authorities to achieve a delusional food security with an outdated agricultural system in Iran.

The **Iranian Elite Research Centre** recalls that one of the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, reaffirmed by the global community and binding treaties, is the prohibition of attacks against civilian infrastructure essential for survival, in particular water and sanitation systems. Violations of this principle are recognized as war crimes. Israel has repeatedly and systematically disregarded this rule. In Palestine, and most acutely in Gaza, the destruction of water pipelines, wells, and sewage networks has deprived millions of people of safe drinking water. Every day, raw sewage floods neighborhoods, contaminating scarce water supplies and spreading disease. The deliberate targeting of such life-sustaining infrastructure, alongside blockade and forced deprivation, clearly constitutes genocide. This same pattern of violence was also witnessed during the twelve-day aggression against Iran. The explosion in the urban area of Tajrish - which destroyed part of the city's urban water facilities and left residents injured and without safe supply - is a further illustration of these grave crimes. How long will the international community remain silent as water is weaponized? What concrete measures will end attacks on water infrastructure and protect civilians?

**Association internationale pour l'égalité des femmes** notes with concern the fact that, with the onset of summer, the challenges of Iran's water crisis once again come into sharp focus. Iran today faces not only severe water scarcity, but also widespread land subsidence, a crisis that threatens the lives and livelihoods of millions and carries far-reaching consequences. Climate change is a global phenomenon, but in Iran the problem has been dramatically worsened by poor governance, most notably, uncontrolled and illegal extraction from groundwater reserves and the overall mismanagement of water resources. These failures have placed the country's water security in grave danger. Research shows that Iran can sustainably use only about 53 billion cubic meters of water each year. In practice, however, the actual withdrawal is nearly double this figure. Such unregulated over-extraction has emptied aquifers, dried up rivers and wetlands, and turned land subsidence into one of the country's most pressing threats. In short, it is not merely a lack of rainfall that has brought Iran to this point, it is mismanagement and the failure of leadership that have left the country dry.



**Jameh Ehyagaran Teb Sonnatî Va Salamat Iranian** draws urgent attention to the catastrophic collapse of water and sanitation in Gaza. For nearly two years, civilians - especially children - have endured severe deprivation of safe water. Communities survive on a fraction of the minimum required for life, while much of Gaza's infrastructure lies in ruins. Families rely on unsafe water, causing widespread illnesses related to unsafe water. Less than 4% of freshwater is drinkable. UNRWA records over 10,000 cases of illness related to contaminated water weekly. Children survive on only 2–3 liters per day, far below the WHO emergency minimum of 15 liters. Only 137 of Gaza's 392 wells remain accessible. Daily queues under bombardment put children at mortal risk. UN experts warn that water is being weaponized. This deliberate denial of life's most basic necessity violates international humanitarian and human rights law, and these acts threaten the universal right to safe water and sanitation. In this regard, the organization calls on the SR to examine Israel's restrictions on safe water in Gaza and document civilian impacts; to report to the UNHRC on Gaza's water infrastructure destruction; to condemn water deprivation as a weapon and call for urgent humanitarian deliveries. No community should ever be forced to choose between thirst and death.

#### **FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION**

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**3** Inter-Governmental Organizations and UN Entities

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