***To the Office of the United Nations***

***High Commissioner for Human Rights***

*On provision of a reply to the information request*

The answer is laid out in two parts. The first deals with policy planning and legislative measures. The second deals with impacts and relevant data. This is to provide information on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of people in vulnerable situations as requested in the resolution 47/24 of the Human Rights Council.

**I Policy planning and legislation**

The main policy planning document that includes climate change issues is *“The Latvian National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change until 2030”*. The overall aim of climate change policy in Latvia is to reduce vulnerability of people, economy, infrastructure, construction, and environment to the impacts of climate change and to promote the use of opportunities created by climate change. The plan includes 80 concrete adaptation measures and five Strategic goals to address climate change risks. The main five goals are:

* to protect human life, health and wellbeing from the adverse effects of climate change;
* to adapt the economy to the adverse effects of climate change and to use the opportunities offered by the climate change;
* to plan the infrastructure and construction according to potential climate risks, that they are climate-resilient;
* to preserve nature, cultural and historical values and minimize the negative impact of climate change on them;
* to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation aspects into sectoral policies and spatial development planning, on the basis of scientific reasoning.

*“The Civil Protection and Catastrophe Management Law”* and the *“National Civil Protection Plan”* of Latvia include civil protection system that comprises risk assessment and prevention, disaster management of all natural extremes in all sectors and governmental levels.

According to the *“Civil Protection and Catastrophe Management Law”* and regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, the civil protection commissions of municipal territories must develop their own civil protection plans that includes indicated risks, scenarios, matrices, mapping, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery measures for each risk. Climate change related risks are mostly addressed in civil protection plans.

To achieve one of the goals dealing with protection of human life, health and wellbeing from the adverse effects of climate change the plan includes the following directions of action:

* provide that the early warning system is responsive, regularly updated and provide high-resolution modelling for prognosing the effects of extreme weather events;
* provide that there are comprehensive preventive measures to protect human health and life from the adverse effects of climate change.

This goal includes measures such as improving access to free drinking water in public places, awareness rising among education and social care institutions, development of recommendations for social care institutions and for social workers on health prevention measures during the heat waves.

**II** **Impacts and relevant data** **that captures how the adverse effects of climate change may affect people in vulnerable situations**

*“The Latvian National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change until 2030”* includes risk assessment regarding impacts of the climate change on health and well-being of the people.

The plan foresees that the climate change may affect the least protected groups in society e.g. people with chronical diseases, low income and living away from the main regional centers. Extreme weather conditions may affect health and thus ability to work and gain income also for people in households which are not in the group of low-income risk.

Possible weather conditions that may affect health and well-being in Latvia are:

1. increase in average temperature that may extend summer, spring and autumn seasons and reduce winter season;
2. increase in annual rainfall;
3. increased frequency and duration of heat waves.

Possible health risks include increased acute intestinal diseases, outbreaks of these diseases, increased cardiovascular disease cases, increased number of respiratory diseases and other health issues. As regards to other risks, extreme whether may cause damage to households and affect their socio-economic well-being as well as cause migration risks.

*“The Latvian National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change until 2030”* foresees measures to tackle risks related to climate change:

* Promote the availability of free accessible drinking water in public places;
* Provide the public with information with effects of heat on health and recommendations on action during heat waves;
* Provide additional and preventive information on climate change impacts and adaptation to them in education institutions;
* Improve legal regulation and implementation as regards the need for and maintenance of air-cooling systems;
* Create areas with plants in urban environment which create shadows;
* Improve civil protection training course including climate change issues and possible actions to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change;
* Inform the public, particularly patients with chronic diseases, of health prevention measures before and during heat waves.