**50th session of the Human Rights Council**

**Panel discussion on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations in the context of climate change**

*Concept note (as of 16 June 2022)*

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| **Date and venue:** | **Tuesday, 28 June 2022, 10 a.m. to noon (UTC+2) Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva and online platform (Zoom)**  *(will be broadcast live and archived at* [*https://media.un.org/en/webtv*](https://media.un.org/en/webtv)*)* |
| **Objectives:** | This panel discussion will focus on the adverse impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights of people in vulnerable situations and best practices and lessons learned in the promotion and protection of their rights.  The objectives are:   * **To enhance understanding** of the impacts of climate change on the rights of people in vulnerable situations; * **To highlight the benefits** of inclusive climate action, particularly adaptation and mitigation - for people in vulnerable situations; * **To identify good practices and share lessons learned** in the promotion and protection of the rights of people in vulnerable situations in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change; * **To identify opportunities** for collaboration and action by States through international cooperation to implement an inclusive approach to climate action that benefits both people and planet. |
| **Chair:** | **H.E. Mr. Federico Villegas**,President of the Human Rights Council |
| **Opening statement:** | **Ms. Michelle Bachelet**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  *Video screening: Testimonies of climate change human rights impacts* |
| **Panellists:** | * **Mr. Ian Fry,** Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change * **Ms. Nisreen Elsaim,** Chair of the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change andChair of Sudan Youth Organization on Climate Change (*video statement*) * **Ms. Sara Oliveros López,** Secretary of the Council, ICCA Consortium (*video statement*) * **Mr. Carroll Muffett,** President and CEO of the Center for International Environmental Law (*video statement*) |
| **Outcome:** | The panel discussion will provide an opportunity for States, international organizations and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the adverse impacts of climate change on the effective enjoyment of the rights of people in vulnerable situations and the promotion and protection of their rights through participatory climate action. The outcomes are expected to include improved understanding of the impacts of climate change on the rights of people in vulnerable situations, the agency of people in vulnerable situations in climate action, and rights-based approaches to climate action. These outcomes will be furthered through the summary report of the panel discussion with recommendations for inclusive, rights-based climate action. |
| **Mandate:** | In its resolution [47/24](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/47/24) on human rights and climate change, the Human Rights Council decided to incorporate into its programme of work for the 50th session a panel discussion on the rights of people in vulnerable situations in the context of climate change. The Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to submit a summary report of the panel discussion to the Council at its 52nd session and to make the report available in accessible formats, including Plain Language and Easy-to-Read. |
| **Format:** | The panel discussion will be limited to two hours. The opening statement and initial presentations by the panellists will be followed by a two-part interactive discussion and conclusions from the panellists. A maximum of one hour will be set aside for the podium, which will cover the opening statement, panellists’ presentations and their responses to questions and concluding remarks. The remaining hour will be reserved for two segments of interventions from the floor, with each segment consisting of interventions from 12 States and observers, 1 national human rights institution and 2 non-governmental organizations.  The list of speakers for the discussion will be established through the online inscription system and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups of States will be moved to the beginning of the list. Each speaker will have two minutes to raise issues and to ask panellists questions. Delegates who have not been able to take the floor due to time constraints will be able to upload their statements on the online system to be posted on the HRC Extranet. |
| **Accessibility:** | In an effort to render the Human Rights Council more accessible to persons with disabilities and to promote their full participation in the work of the Council on an equal basis with others, this panel discussion will be made accessible. International sign interpretation and real-time captioning will be provided and webcast during the debate. During the event itself, participants can access live English captioning on the StreamText web page (<https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=CFI-UNOG>). Hearing loops are available for collection from the Secretariat desk. Oral statements may be embossed in Braille from any of the six official languages of the United Nations, upon request and following the procedure described in *The accessibility guide to the Human Rights Council for persons with disabilities* (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Accessibility.aspx>). |
| **Background:** | The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has found that climate change affects weather and climate extremes in every region of the globe, with corresponding impacts on the lives of persons both in developed and developing countries. The years that have passed since the Paris Agreement have been the hottest years on record and during the last decade, almost four billion people were impacted by climate-related disasters. While no one is inherently vulnerable, some people are at higher risk of experiencing the adverse effects of climate change and have fewer means to adapt to them than others – including as a result of historic, ongoing and structural discrimination and exclusion. Climate change as such is both an environmental and a social justice crisis that raises interconnected demands for climate action and social equality.  The risks to human rights posed by climate change have been documented by the Human Rights Council, its special procedure mechanisms and OHCHR in resolutions, various reports and activities. The disproportionate harms that may be experienced by people in vulnerable situations are also increasingly recognized. In its [resolution 47/24](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/47/24), the Council acknowledged the need to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of people in vulnerable situations to respond to climate change. The Council further highlighted the importance of international cooperation and assistance to address the adverse impacts of climate change, particularly on people in vulnerable situations. It called upon States to better promote the access of people in vulnerable situations to livelihoods, food and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, social protection, health-care services and medicines, education and training, adequate housing and decent work. It also called upon States to better promote the access of people in vulnerable situations to clean energy, science and technology and to ensure services for people in vulnerable situations can be adapted to emergency and humanitarian contexts.  Under international human rights law, States should take active measures to protect persons in vulnerable situations against the negative human rights impacts of climate change and to ensure their access to information, participation and access to justice. The active and meaningful participation of people in vulnerable situations at all levels of decision-making and action will empower people in vulnerable situations as agents of change, prevent discrimination against them and make climate action more effective.  This panel discussion will be informed by the report of the Secretary-General on the impacts of climate change on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations ([A/HRC/50/57](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/50/57)). It presents an opportunity to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on human rights of people in vulnerable situations and the rights-based approaches that can unleash their power as agents of change. |
| **Background documents:** | Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and climate change:   * [Human Rights Council resolution 47/24](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/47/24) of 14 July 2021 * [Human Rights Council resolution 44/7](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/44/7) of 16 July 2020 * [Human Rights Council resolution 41/21](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/41/21) of 12 July 2019 * [Human Rights Council resolution 38/4](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/38/4) of 5 July 2018 * [Human Rights Council resolution 35/20](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/35/20) of 22 June 2017 * [Human Rights Council resolution 32/33](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/32/33) of 1 July 2016 * [Human Rights Council resolution 29/15](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/29/15) of 2 July 2015 * [Human Rights Council resolution 26/27](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/26/27) of 27 June 2014 * [Human Rights Council resolution 18/22](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/18/22) of 30 September 2011 * [Human Rights Council resolution 10/4](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/10/4) of 25 March 2009 * [Human Rights Council resolution 7/23](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/7/23) of 28 March 2008   Report of the Secretary-General on the impacts of climate change on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations (2022): [A/HRC/50/57](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/50/57), Easy-to-Read version in English and Plain Language version in English |