**53rd session of the Human Rights Council**

**Annual panel discussion on the adverse impacts of climate change on human rights**

***Theme: Adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food***

*Concept note (as of 16 June 2023)*

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| **Date and venue:** | **Monday, 3 July 2023, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (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 year’s panel discussion will focus on the adverse impacts of climate change on the full realization of the right to food for all people and ways forward to address the challenges thereto, as well as best practices and lessons learned.  The objectives are:   * **To enhance understanding** of the impacts of climate change on the right to food as well as the climate impacts of food systems; * **To highlight the benefits** of human rights-based climate action and a food system transition from industrialized agriculture towards agroecology; * **To identify good practices and share lessons learned** in the promotion and protection of the right to food in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change, including with respect to science-based approaches and Indigenous Peoples’ traditional knowledge; * **To identify opportunities** for collaboration and action by States through international cooperation to implement rights-based climate action and a food system transition that benefits both people and planet. |
| **Chair:** | **H.E. Mr. Asim Ahmed**,Vice-President of the Human Rights Council |
| **Opening statement:** | **Mr. Volker Türk**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| **Video screening:** | *Testimonies of climate change impacts on the right to food (5 mins)* |
| **Panellists:** | * **Mr. Benyam Dawit Mezmur**, Member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child * **Ms. Ana Maria Suarez Franco**, Geneva Representative of FIAN International * **Mr. Gian Carlo Cirri**, Director of the Geneva Global Office of the World Food Programme * **Ms. Pasang Dolma Sherpa**, Executive Director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research and Development |
| **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 right to food. It will also provide a space for discussing the climate impacts of food systems and the food systems transformation that is needed to reduce climate impacts and safeguard the right to food. The outcomes are expected to include improved understanding of the impacts of climate change on the right to food, the climate impacts of food systems, and rights-based approaches to climate action – including food systems transition. These outcomes will be furthered through the report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to the Human Rights Council at its 55th session. |
| **Mandate:** | In its resolution [50/9](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/50/9) on human rights and climate change, the Human Rights Council decided to incorporate into its programme of work for the 53rd session a panel discussion on the adverse impacts of climate change on the full realization of the right to food for all people. This panel discussion will be informed by the report of the Secretary-General on the impacts of climate change on the full realization of the right to food ([A/HRC/53/47](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/53/47)). The Council requested OHCHR to present a report to the Human Rights Council at its 55th session identifying the necessary measures for minimizing the adverse impact of climate change on the full realization of the right to food, taking into account the panel discussion and the interactive dialogue held at the 53th session on this matter, to be followed by an interactive dialogue, and to make the report available in accessible formats, including in plain language and easy-to-read versions. |
| **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/hr-bodies/hrc/accessibility). |
| **Background:** | The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has found that climate change will lead to increasing pressure on food production and access, particularly in vulnerable regions, thereby undermining food security and nutrition. Climate change affects the four components of the right to food – its physical and economical accessibility, availability, adequacy, and sustainability – in different, and related ways. By undermining the right to food, climate change impacts also threaten the full and effective enjoyment of other human rights.  The majority of climate change-related disasters, such as extreme weather events, have hit countries where the right to food is already being violated and social protection systems are not sufficiently robust to respond to climate-induced hunger, including in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, small island developing States, least developed countries, and the Arctic. Those hardest hit include Indigenous Peoples, small-scale food producers and low-income households – particularly in developing countries. People suffering from severe hunger include those directly depending on agriculture and subsistence farming, herding, fishing and hunting. Their livelihoods, knowledge and traditional ways of life are threatened by climate change and competition over resources, which will lead to increasing hunger and malnutrition if the right to food is not respected, protected and fulfilled.  While climate change impacts put global food systems at risk, food systems are also a significant source of the anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change. Today’s industrialized food system is a major contributor to climate change and environmental degradation, including through biodiversity loss, soil degradation, water depletion and pollution. The reduction of fossil fuel emissions alone will not be sufficient to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. A food system transformation is therefore key to limiting global warming. A food system transition from industrialized agriculture towards agroecology and other approaches that work with natural processes such as ecosystem-based fisheries and aquaculture management would reduce emissions, enhance food security, and build climate resilience. For climate action to effectively contribute to upholding the right to food, it must place rights-holders at the centre of all action, ensuring their effective contribution to its planning, development, implementation and evaluation. |
| **Background documents:** | Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and climate change:   * [Human Rights Council resolution 50/9](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2FRES%2F50%2F9&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False) of 7 July 2022 * [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 full realization of the right to food (2023, [A/HRC/53/47](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/53/47)), Easy-to-Read version in English and Plain Language version in English. |