

28th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Joint Oral statement during the Panel on Human Rights and Climate Change
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Delivered by Budi Tjahjono – Franciscans International

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to thank the Council for organising this important Panel on Climate Change and Human Rights. We also thank the panellists for their input on the urgent need to address the impact of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights. The statement made by President Tong from Kiribati is particularly relevant given that Kiribati, other small, low-lying Island and Atoll States are directly threatened by the adverse impact of climate change.

In the past few years it has become evident that climate change can have dramatic effects on human rights. Some of the consequences that populations are facing in various regions of the world include forced displacement, migration, loss of livelihoods and cultures, and significant challenges to public health. Vulnerable peoples are particularly susceptible to these threats as they often have a strong, more direct dependency on nature. Indigenous communities, women and children, and people living on small islands are particularly under threat. Our planet and the lives of millions of peoples are at stake.

Responses to climate change should be based on principle to respect, protect, promote and fulfil all human rights. The Council has a responsibility to respond to the concerns expressed by the panelists today. We acknowledge that the Council has taken some steps towards acknowledging the link between human rights and climate change including the adoption of several resolutions, seminars, and studies. This was exemplified by the panel today, which expressed the view that climate change poses an immediate and far reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights.

Despite the actions mentioned above, the Council has not been able to establish an appropriate mechanism to address the impact of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights. As a result, the issue of climate change is addressed in an ad-hoc manner and the Council has failed to adequately respond to the grievances of the victims of climate change.

We still believe in the relevancy of the on-going call from civil society members that was expressed in the Council Social Forum in 2010; the adverse impact of Climate Change on the full enjoyment of Human Rights must be addressed without delay. **The Council should have the issue permanently on its agenda and should establish a mandate for a UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change to assess its impact on the full enjoyment of human rights.** The mandate would allow for country visit, to receive communication from the victims and affected communities, and the intake of information regarding good practices in the field of combatting climate change.

Thank you.

This statement is supported by:

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