

**45<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council**  
**Item 6: UPR Outcome of Kiribati**  
**29 September 2020**

*Delivered by Budi Tjahjono*

Mr President,  
Ko Na Mauri!

Franciscans International welcomes the adoption of the UPR Outcome of Kiribati. Kiribati has shown its commitment to address the adverse impact of climate change to human rights, by accepting all climate change relevant recommendations, in particular, the commitments to adopt an inclusive and participatory approach to the implementation of community-based climate adaptation initiatives, and ensure that a human rights approach is also reflected in Kiribati's 2020 submission of the reviewed Nationally Determined Contributions.<sup>1</sup>

As a nation, the survival of Kiribati depends on the serious commitment of the international community. We commend the UN Human Rights Committee landmark decision on January 2020, regarding the case of Mr Ioane Teitiota from Kiribati. The Committee decided that States must consider the impacts of climate change on the right to life. As the impacts of climate change worsen, it becomes more likely that States' non-refoulement obligations will be triggered.<sup>2</sup>

The climate crisis has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of climate related negotiations have been postponed, while the climate crisis continuously affects the vulnerable states, such as Kiribati. We regret that a number of States use the Covid-19 recovery as a reason<sup>3</sup> to take steps back to lower their environmental standards, suspend environmental monitoring requirements, reduce environmental enforcement, and restrict public participation.<sup>4</sup>

The international cooperation to address climate crisis is much more needed now than never, to prevent the irreversible impacts of climate change to human rights. Robust, human rights based and ambitious climate actions in the updated NDCs are very much needed, and we urge Kiribati to implement its commitment.<sup>5</sup> In parallel, we urge the Council in the coming sessions to consider resolutions to establish a mandate for a special rapporteur on human rights and climate change<sup>6</sup> as well as to recognize the right to a safe, clean and healthy and sustainable environment.<sup>7</sup>

Ko Rab'a! I thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> See A/HRC/44/15/Add.1

<sup>2</sup> See the UN Human Rights Committee Decision CCPR/C/127/D/2728/2016 issued on

<sup>3</sup> See Franciscans International statement at [https://franciscansinternational.org/news/news/covid-19-extreme-poverty-and-environmental-justice/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_news\\_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx\\_news\\_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=c815fe844f462a4874521f98fe02b4c6](https://franciscansinternational.org/news/news/covid-19-extreme-poverty-and-environmental-justice/?no_cache=1&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=c815fe844f462a4874521f98fe02b4c6)

<sup>4</sup> See the statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and environment at <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25794&LangID=E>

<sup>5</sup> They should include human rights-based social and environmental safeguards; ensure access to information and public participation and ensure an independent, equitable, accessible, legitimate, rights-based, and transparent grievance mechanism.

<sup>6</sup> During COP25 of the UNFCCC in Madrid, the President of Marshall Islands, on behalf of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) made a call for the creation of a dedicated Special Rapporteur on climate change by the UN Human Rights Council. See <https://thecvf.org/president-heine-statement-to-the-cvf-partners-leaders-event-at-unfccc-cop25/>

<sup>7</sup> See the conclusion of the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and environment, A/HRC/43/53