

FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION (QUAKERS)

www.quono.org



Quaker United Nations Office

Avenue du Mervelet 13
CH-1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel +41 (22) 748 4804

Fax +41 (22) 748 4819

Email ltownhead@quono.ch

FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 31st session of the Human Rights Council

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) congratulates the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment for his outstanding report on climate change.

We value his conclusion that bringing human rights into climate action can result in policies that are coherent, legitimate and sustainable. We welcome his outline of obligations, including States' procedural obligations to inform and involve their citizens in climate policy.

Ensuring that the public is informed and can participate in decision-making around land, water and other natural resources can help prevent destructive conflict. This would also provide opportunities to draw on Indigenous and local knowledge to more effectively respond to climate change. We further stress the inclusion of small scale farmers, who contribute significantly to global food security and whose innovation and maintenance of agrobiodiversity is critical to sustainable and resilient food systems.

We reiterate the Special Rapporteur's statement that even a 2°C increase in global mean surface temperature "would have drastic consequences for the full enjoyment of human rights¹". We echo his call on States to increase commitments from "what is promised to what is necessary²", noting that existing nationally determined contributions could still result in temperature increases of over 3°C. Under current emission levels we have less than ten years to limit warming to 1.5°C³.

We ask the Special Rapporteur to elaborate on how human rights could be better integrated in UNFCCC⁴ work plans to promote more just and effective climate action.

Finally, we recognise that at its heart, climate change is an intergenerational challenge⁵. We call upon States to act urgently and fairly to ensure the most vulnerable communities now, and all our future generations, will not suffer profoundly as a consequence of our human activities.

¹ 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.' A/HRC/31/52 Paragraph 72.

² 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.' A/HRC/31/52 Paragraph 77.

³ Climate Change 2014, The Synthesis Report, p. 64 http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/SYR_AR5_FINAL_full_wcover.pdf

⁴ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

⁵ See: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Article 3.