FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION (QUAKERS)

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**Quaker United Nations Office**

**FWCC Oral Statement to be delivered at the 37st session of the Human Rights Council**

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) welcomes the reports of John Knox, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, and thanks him for his work over the past six years.

We look to the Human Rights Council to continue this important mandate at this necessary time.

As the Special Rapporteur stated in 2013, human rights and the environment are interdependent; a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is necessary for the full enjoyment of human rights, including the right to health, food, water and life.

Due to our human activities, humanity is experiencing a rate of global temperature rise ten times faster than ever seen before, and a rate of eco-system degradation and species extinction unprecedented in our human history. The concentration of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is the highest in at least 3 million years. We must urgently transform our activities to protect present and future generations.

Yet time to act is limited. Environmental destabilization is already harming people’s lives and rights.

The Human Rights Council has an essential role in guiding urgent, effective, and rights-based climate action, and we welcome the progress it has already made.

We welcome the Special Rapporteur’s Framework Principles on human rights and environment, and their guidance for practical implementation of human rights obligations.

We recognise the advantages experienced by countries that have already adopted constitutional rights to a healthy environment, as highlighted in the Report of the Special Rapporteur.

As a crucial step in global action to protect humanity, we urge States to fully recognise a human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

*Our question to you is, noting greater environmental protection in countries which have integrated this right domestically, what steps can the Human Rights Council take to further the global recognition of a right to a healthy environment?*