



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Eighteenth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development**

## Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council\*

**18/22**

### Human rights and climate change

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Guided* by the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

*Bearing in mind* that 2011 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development,

*Recalling* its resolutions 7/23 of 28 March 2008 and 10/4 of 25 March 2009, on human rights and climate change, and 16/11 of 24 March 2011, on human rights and the environment,

*Reaffirming* the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives and principles thereof, and emphasizing that parties should, in all climate change-related actions, fully respect human rights as enunciated in the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention,<sup>1</sup>

*Reaffirming also* the commitment to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

*Reaffirming further* the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg

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\* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its eighteenth session (A/HRC/18/2), chap. I.

<sup>1</sup> FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, dec. 1/CP.16.

Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and recognizing that human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development and that the right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations,

*Welcoming* the decision to organize, in June 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, and taking note of the invitation of the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/236 of 20 December 2009, to organizations and bodies of the United Nations to contribute to the preparatory process for the Conference,

*Recognizing* the challenges of climate change to development and to the progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with regard to the goals on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, on environmental sustainability and on health,

*Acknowledging* that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

*Acknowledging also* that, as stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty,

*Reaffirming* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

*Taking note* of the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the relationship between climate change and human rights,<sup>2</sup> the panel discussion on the relationship between climate change and human rights, held on 15 June 2009, at the eleventh session of the Human Rights Council, and the 2010 Social Forum, which focused on the relationship between climate change and human rights,

*Emphasizing* that climate change-related impacts have a range of implications, both direct and indirect, for the effective enjoyment of human rights, including, inter alia, the right to life, the right to adequate food, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to adequate housing, the right to self-determination and the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and recalling that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

*Expressing concern* that, while these implications affect individuals and communities around the world, the effects of climate change will be felt most acutely by those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status and disability,

*Recognizing* that climate change is a global problem requiring a global solution, and that effective international cooperation to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention is important in order to

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<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/10/61.

support national efforts for the realization of human rights implicated by climate change-related impacts,

*Affirming* that human rights obligations, standards and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international and national policymaking in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy and sustainable outcomes,

1. *Reiterates its concern* that climate change poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has adverse implications for the full enjoyment of human rights;

2. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:

(a) To convene, prior to the nineteenth session of the Human Rights Council, a seminar on addressing the adverse impacts of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, with a view to following up on the call for respecting human rights in all climate change-related actions and policies, and forging stronger interface and cooperation between the human rights and climate change communities;

(b) To invite States and other relevant stakeholders, including academic experts, civil society organizations and representatives of those segments of the population most vulnerable to climate change, to participate actively in the seminar;

(c) To invite the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme to help organize the seminar, informed by the best available science, including the assessment reports and special reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;

3. *Decides* that the seminar will build on the previous work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, such as the Social Forum and relevant special procedures, while taking into account the outcome of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Cancun, in 2010, and any pertinent issues arising from the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Durban, in 2011;

4. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner:

(a) To submit to the Human Rights Council, at its twentieth session, a summary report on the above-mentioned seminar, including any recommendations stemming therefrom, for consideration of further follow-up action;

(b) To make available to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, at its eighteenth session, the summary report of the seminar;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the human and technical assistance necessary for the effective and timely realization of the above-mentioned seminar and summary report;

6. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*37th meeting*  
*30 September 2011*  
[Adopted without a vote.]