

46th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Agenda Item 4, General Debate
XX March 2020

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL PROCEDURES MANDATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Madam President,

On behalf of the Geneva Interfaith Forum for Climate Change, Environment and Human Rights (GIF)¹, I would like to draw the attention of the Human Rights Council to the importance of the establishment of a Special Procedures mandate on human rights and climate change.

We commend the Member States of the CVF and Pacific Island States who reiterated this call during the 44th session of the Human Rights Council for the mandate to be instituted without delay to assist, identify and better protect those most affected by the impacts of the climate crisis.

We express deep concern over the suffering of both people and our planet as a result of the intertwined climate and global health emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing patterns of inequalities. There is now an increased urgency for the Council to address the climate crisis in a more permanent, wide and sustained manner, to protect people from its adverse impacts, promote the respect for and protection of human rights in all climate responses, and ensure access to justice and empowerment.

Resolutely adopting a human rights-based approach is key to secure the respect for the dignity of life, particularly of those who are already in vulnerable situations and feel more acutely the impacts of these multifaceted crises.

We therefore urge the Council to consider the establishment of this new mandate during the 47th Session of the Council in June.

Thank you.

¹ The World Council Churches, Lutheran World Federation, Franciscans International, Dominicans for Justice and Peace, Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Soka Gakkai International