Climate Vulnerable Forum Breakfast Debate
“HUMAN RIGHTS & CLIMATE CHANGE”

Co-Hosted by the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations & the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice

08:00-10:00, Thursday 05 March 2015
Delegates’ Restaurant, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

EVENT FOCUS

› United Nations human rights mechanisms have actively examined linkages with climate change, including through four Human Rights Council resolutions (7/23, 10/24, 18/22 and 26/27), a formal Panel Discussion (June, 2009) and a Seminar (March, 2012), in addition to the 2010 Social Forum, and a Council-mandated 32-page 2009 report prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) on the relationship between climate change and human rights, outlining, inter alia, implications for rights to food, housing, self-determination and safe drinking water – findings recently echoed in the February 2015 Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) and CARE International briefing paper entitled “Climate change: tackling the greatest human rights challenge of our time”

› Decision 1 of the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) emphasized that Parties, should, in all climate change related actions, fully respect human rights.

› The IPCC’s 5th Assessment Report Synthesis of November 2014 also reaffirmed the high level of scientific agreement on the extent to which warming of the climate is understood to affect and interact with health, food security, territorial integrity, water supply, development outcomes and many other challenges

› The most recent Human Rights Council resolution (26/27) noted the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and its “Climate Vulnerability Monitor” research series and mandated the first full-day discussion on human rights and climate change coinciding with an intensification in negotiations towards a new international regime for responding to climate change for the period beyond 2015 – itself set to conclude at Paris in December this year (UNFCCC COP21)
Human rights perspectives on climate change have the potential to constructively inform key climate policy decisions, such as the global temperature target: e.g. in the context of the UNFCCC 2013-15 Review, can human rights inform the choice between a 2° and a 1.5° C goal? Procedural rights, moreover, are vital to ensuring policy effectiveness, while strong human rights protections can help to reinforce the resilience of communities facing climate-related pressures.

The Human Rights Council is devoting a full-day to discussion of climate change and human rights at a critical juncture for policy-making that could guide decades of responses to this challenge. With the ongoing UN climate negotiations, there is a strong case for the ability of human rights perspectives to strengthen the integrity and effectiveness of important climate policy outcomes. This Breakfast Debate will contribute to the related thematic discussions of the Human Rights Council.

THEMATIC BREAKFAST DEBATE

The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) thematic Breakfast Debate with the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica and the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice brings together high-level delegates to the 28th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Permanent Representatives and senior delegates to the United Nations at Geneva, and international partners and experts. The thematic breakfast debate is an opportunity for diverse partners and speakers to contribute to policy development by sharing and inputting into the Human Rights Council’s focused debate on climate just as the post-2015 track of UNFCCC negotiations is set to conclude at Paris in December 2015.
EVENT PROGRAMME

Format
Seated, served breakfast and refreshments with thematic interventions together with moderated room discussion.

Agenda
08:00 Welcome remarks:
  • H.E. Ms. Elayne Whyte Gómez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica
08:05 Co-Chair remarks:
  • H.E. Ms. Cecilia B. Rebong, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines and, Climate Vulnerable Forum Chair
  • Mrs. Mary Robinson, President, Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice
08:20 Keynote statement:
  • H.E. Mr. Manuel González Sanz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica
08:30 Viewpoint interventions
  • States
  • International organizations/experts
09:00 Moderated room discussion by Mr. Marc Limon, Executive Director of Universal Rights Group:
  • Remarks and discussion among delegates and officials present
09:50 Wrap-up and closing
10:00 Departure

Venue
Delegates’ Restaurant, Building A (8th Floor), Palais des Nations, Geneva

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