



**Written Statement for 22nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Human Rights Situation that requires Council's attention
(Agenda Item 4)**

Call for a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) organized a Seminar on Human Rights and Climate Change following the September 2011 United Nations Human Rights Council resolution (Res 18/22) which affirmed that “human rights obligations, standards, and principles have the potential to inform and strengthen international and national policy making in the area of climate change, promoting policy coherence, legitimacy, and sustainable outcomes”. This was the third resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council, following, the March 2008 (7/23) and March 2009 (10/4) resolutions. As Resolution 7/23 expressed already “climate change poses an immediate and far reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights” while “the effect of climate change will be felt most acutely by those segments of the population who are already in a vulnerable situation”.

Furthermore, an analytical study on the relationship between human rights and climate change was conducted (contained in A/HRC/10/6) and the 2010 edition of the HRC Social Forum focused on climate change and human rights.

In the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference, *The Future We Want*, UN Member States agreed to address urgently the adverse impact of climate change on the human rights of people in all countries.

The Human Rights Council in its 19th, 20th and 21st session did not take action.

Over the last years it has become evident the dramatic effects that Climate Change has on Human Rights. Some of the consequences that populations are facing in various regions of the world are forced displacement, migration, loss of livelihoods and cultures. These threats affect in particular vulnerable peoples that have a strong and direct link to nature such as people living on small islands or indigenous peoples. The lives of millions of peoples are at stake.

To delay the establishment of such a mandate will only exacerbate the difficult conditions that millions of people are facing in different communities around the world; those who are marginalised are particularly vulnerable and there are also those that never expected that they could lose everything from one day to the other. All these peoples should have the possibility to enjoy their most fundamental human rights; enjoy health, security and an adequate standard of living.

For several years now civil society has called for a Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate. The non-governmental organizations that joined with the present statement and many others around the world strongly believe that more needs to be done. The effects of Climate Change on the full enjoyment of Human Rights must be addressed without delay.