



10.12.2015 – The negative impacts of climate change are disproportionately endured by people and communities already in disadvantageous situations owing to geography, poverty, gender, age, disability, cultural or ethnic background, among others, that have historically contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions.

The adverse impacts of climate change increases frequency of:

- Extreme weather events and natural disasters
- Rising sea-levels
- Floods

- Heat waves
- Droughts
- Desertification
- Water shortages
- The spread of tropical and vector-borne diseases

These situations affect the enjoyment of human rights by people throughout the world including:

- The rights to life
- Water and sanitation
- Food
- Health
- Housing
- Self-determination

- Culture

- Development

These consequences are suffered in particular by people living in low-lying coastal lands, tundra and Arctic ice, arid lands, and other delicate ecosystems and at risk territories for their housing and survival.

The negative impacts caused by climate change are global, simultaneous and increasing exponentially according to the degree of climate change that ultimately takes place. Climate change, therefore, requires a global rights-based response.

The Human Rights Council (HRC), its special procedures mechanisms, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) are working to bring renewed attention to human rights and climate change through a series of resolutions, reports, and activities on the subject, and by advocating for [a human rights based approach to climate change](#) which respects, protects, promotes and fulfils human rights standards.



[OHCHR's Key Messages on Human Rights and Climate Change](#)

The following messages are reflected in OHCHR's submission, [Understanding Human Rights and Climate Change](#), to the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

1.

Mitigating climate change and to prevent its negative human rights impacts

2.

Ensuring that all persons have the necessary capacity to adapt to climate change

3.

Ensuring accountability and effective remedy for human rights harms caused by climate change

4.

Mobilizing maximum available resources for sustainable, human rights-based development

5.

International cooperation

6.

Ensuring equity in climate action

7.

Guaranteeing that everyone enjoys the benefits of science and its applications

8.

Protecting human rights from business harms

9.

Guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination

10.

Ensuring meaningful and informed participation



All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

– Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1

Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December. It commemorates the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

This year's Human Rights Day is devoted to the launch of a year-long campaign for the 50th anniversary of the two International Covenants on Human Rights: the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) and the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#), which were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966.

The two Covenants, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, form the International Bill of Human Rights, setting out the civil, political, cultural, economic, and social rights that are the birth right of all human beings.

"Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always." aims to promote and raise awareness of the two Covenants on their 50th anniversary. The year-long campaign revolves around the theme of rights and freedoms -- freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear -- which underpin the International Bill of Human Rights are as relevant today as they were when the Covenants were adopted 50 years ago.

High Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein's message for Human Rights Day 2015:

UNRICs Related Links

- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- [Understanding Human Rights and Climate Change](#)

- [Human Rights Day 2015 - Q&A](#)
- [Climate change is a human rights issue](#)
- [Human Rights Day UN Website](#)
- [Indigenous people and climate change](#)

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