

*(Français ci-dessous) (Español abajo) (متوفر باللغة العربية أدناه)*

Signatories/ Signataires / Firmantes / الموقعون

Geneva, 30th November 2023

To:

Consultative Group of the Human Rights Council

President of the Human Rights Council

Permanent Representatives of the Members States of the Human Rights Council

**Subject: Appointment of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment - time for the Council to appoint a woman from the Global South**

Excellencies,

We, the undersigned organizations, respectfully write to you with regard to the upcoming appointment of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, announced by the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council in its [Note Verbale of 18 October 2023](#). Our organizations work at the intersection of human rights and environmental protection across the world.

Since the creation of the Independent Expert on human rights and the environment in 2012, and later of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment in 2015, the Human Rights Council has played a central role in addressing environmental disruption through human rights lenses. This mandate, in conjunction with the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, is essential to understand the human rights impacts of the triple planetary crisis (biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution), elevate the plight and analysis of frontline communities, and provide States with guidance for effective human rights-based environmental action.

The previous Special Rapporteurs on human rights and the environment, Professor John Knox and Professor David Boyd, have contributed significantly to clarifying States' human rights obligations in the context of the environment, and laid the foundation for the global recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.

Yet, we shall not ignore that the Human Rights Council has never appointed a woman to the environmental mandate, with all five mandate holders to date being men. In addition, both

former and current Special Rapporteurs on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment are experts from North America.

In this regard, both the current and previous Special Rapporteurs on human rights and the environment have shared with Member States their hope for a well-qualified woman from the Global South to be appointed as their successor.

In all resolutions that it adopted since 2012, the Council referred to the importance of tackling the gender aspects of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The Council has explicitly recognized in [Resolution 41/6](#), that “women remain underrepresented...in several United Nations bodies and mechanisms... noting that balanced gender representation is an essential step towards bringing about a structural change needed to advance substantive gender equality and gender parity...” As the United Nations Member States have repeatedly recognized "without the active participation of women and incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved" ([Beijing Declaration](#), para 181).

**In this context, we believe it is time that the Human Rights Council appoints a woman from the Global South as the new Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.**

While of course the selection process should be guided by the criteria outlined in the annex to Human Rights Council [resolution 5/1](#), we believe, in line with paragraph 40 of the annex, that gender balance and equitable geographic representation with respect to previous mandate holders should also be an essential principle in the choice by the Consultative Group, the President of the Human Rights Council, and the Council itself. Especially considering that there are many women in the Global South with the expertise, experience and abilities that this very important mandate requires.

Excellencies, we are confident that, with your expertise and integrity, you will be able to appoint a woman expert from the Global South to build on the pivotal work of previous mandate holders in order to continue to advance the respect, protection and fulfillment of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and to the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

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**Signatories/ Signataires / Firmantes / الموقعون:**

Abs Development Organisation for woman&Child

African Foundation for Environment and Climate Change (AFECC)

African Young Positives Network

ALTSEAN-Burma (Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma)

Asociación Ciudadana por los Derechos Humanos

Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente

Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente -AIDA

Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de España (APDHE)

Association Justice and Environment, z.s.

Association LaSiesta Pour la Protection de l'environnement

Association of District Coordination Committees of Nepal (ADCCN)

Association of World Citizens

Association pour la Conservation et la Protection des Ecosystèmes des Lacs et l'Agriculture Durable

Beyond Beijing Committee

Biodiversity Observer Inc.

cambiaMO

CAMBIUM

Carbone Guinée

Center for Education Policy and Climate Justice

Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)

Center Women and Modern World

Centre for Environment, Human Rights & Development Forum - CEHRDF

Centre for Independent Journalism (Malaysia)

Centre International de Droit Comparé de l'Environnement

Centro Interdisciplinario de Investigación y Desarrollo Alternativo U Yich Lu'um, AC

Child Rights Connect

Child Rights International Network (CRIN)

ClientEarth

Climate Change Africa Opportunities - CCAO

Climate Refugees

Collectif Sénégalais des Africaines pour la Promotion de l'Éducation Relative à l'Environnement (COSAPERÉ)

Community Science Centre, Vadodara

Corporación Camino a Farellones

Corporación Ecológica y Cultural Penca de Sábila, Colombia

Corporación la Caleta

Culture Society of people with disabilities -Nepal

Dada Mashinani in Waste and Sanitation

Dibeen for Environmental Development

Disability Peoples Forum Uganda

Dominicans for Justice and Peace

Dristi Nepal

Earthjustice

Education Defenders Network - EDN

Elseidi law firm

Emony Yefwe International

Empower India

Equidad de Género, Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia

Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS)

European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Extinction Rebellion United States

Faidhaa Innovation Hub/Digital Generation Hub

Family organization for empowerment FOREM

Federation of Women with Disability Nepal(FWDN)

FIAN International

Franciscans International

Frente de Defensa de la Amazonía

Fundación Chile Sustentable

Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer

Gender and Economy Research Center NPGE

GenderCC-Southern Africa Women For Climate Justice

GENDERS A.C.

Global Pact Coalition

GQUAL Campaign

Greenpeace International

Groupe de Réflexion et d'Initiative pour l'Avancement de la Grand'Anse (GRIAG)

Hawaii Institute for Human Rights

Human Right 2 Water

Indian Drug Users Forum (IDUF) & The SHAKTI Collective

Innoeva Development Foundation

Integrated Policy Research Institute

International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

International Centre for Environmental Health and Development (ICEHD)

International Platform Against Impunity

International Service for Human Rights

Ipas

Italian Climate Network

JEVEV (Jeunesse et Emplois Verts pour une Économie Verte)

Join For Water

Journalists for Human Rights

Kalkal Human Rights Development Organization (KAHRDO)

La Verità Onlus - International Diplomacy

Law Professor, School of Law, Autonoma University

League of Women Voters of the United States

Let There Be Light International

LIFE Education Sustainability Equality e.V.

Links Ecologisch Forum/Forum Gauche Ecologie (LEF/FGE)

MenEngage Global Alliance

Midwifery Society of Nepal

Milieudefensie

Movimiento Movilizandonos por una Cultura de Derechos de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes en Chile

Naireeta Services Private Limited

NAPUD

National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal (NIDWAN)

NAtional Indigenous Women's Federation

Natracare

Navaspoorthi Sanga Vijayapur

NGO: ADET - Amis des Etrangers au Togo

North American Climate, Conservation and Environment(NACCE)

Ntamayuk Foundation

Observatorio para la Gobernanza Marino Costera

Office against Discrimination, Racism and Intolerance - ODRI

ONG Plus de Sida dans les Familles

Our Children's Trust

Oxfam

Palmares Action Lab

PaWED/IATC - Pathways for Women's Empowerment and Development

Pilier aux Femmes Vulnérables Actives - PIFEVA

Plan International

Porgera Red Wara (River) Women's Association Incorporated (PRWWA INC)

Red de Defensoras del Ambiente y el Buen Vivir

Red Ecofeminista Latinoamericana y del Caribe

Remisi

Resama - South American Network for Environmental Migrations

Réseau pour la Sécurité et la Souveraineté Alimentaire En Rd Congo - Ressac

Ruth Rotich & Company Advocates

Sarathi Trust

SECTION27

SEED: Strategies for Ethical and Environmental Development, Inc.

Shanta Memorial Rehabilitation Centre

SNAPAP - CGATA Confédération générale autonome des travailleurs en Algérie

Society for the Promotion of Human Rights

Soka Gakkai International

Soroptimist International

Soul City Institute

Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute, SAFCEI

Sukaar Welfare Organization

Sukaar Welfare Organization

Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment (SWAGEN)

Sustain267

Tafawuq Consulting Center for Development

TEMA Foundation

University of Calabar, Nigeria

Viktor Chistyakov, Attorney at Law

Village Farmers Initiative (VFI)

VWA FANM AYISYÈN (VFA)

Wilpf Guinée

Woman Inc

Women Against Violence and Exploitation WAVE Foundation

Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) International

Women Environmental Programme

Women for Peace and Ecology

World Future Council

World's Youth for Climate Justice



World's Youth for Climate Justice

Xumek, Derechos Humanos.

Young Indigenous Leaders for Nature and Climate - Yilnac Network

Youth and Environment Europe

Youth Entrepreneurship Support Hub

Youth For Climate Turkey