



**Human Rights Council, 48th session
Item 4 - General Debate
24 September 2021**

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Thank you, Madam President.

I speak on behalf of several organizations.¹

Climate change affects every aspect of our life, threatens the livelihoods of millions and hinders a safe future for present and future generations. At the COP25 in 2019, 15 countries signed the Intergovernmental Declaration on Children, Youth and Climate Action, which acknowledges the heightened impact of climate change on children rights, and the urgent need for children-centered climate action. We are glad to see that among the signatories are some of the proponents of the creation of a Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change by the Human Rights Council.

The Human Rights Council must play a key role in addressing the human rights dimension of climate change. Civil society and indigenous peoples' organizations have called for the creation of a new UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change for over 10 years. Over the past two years, huge steps have been taken, thanks to the leadership of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, Small Islands States and many other countries that now support the creation of this mandate. The Council has finally the possibility to create a Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change at this session: we urge members not to miss this opportunity. A dedicated mandate would provide better coherence in addressing the human rights implications of climate change, support states in developing ambitious, equitable and right-centered climate policies, and facilitate the participation of groups and communities most affected.

The recent IPCC report and UNFCCC NDC Synthesis note and OECD report on climate finance have depicted a gloomy picture of the state of climate action and cooperation, and have shown once again that increased ambition is urgently needed. The Council must act now to protect the rights of young people, children, and communities at risk across the world and establish a new UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change without further delay.

Thank you.

¹ The statement is co-sponsored by: Franciscans International (FI), Foundation for Gaia, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), International Federation for Human Rights Leagues (FIDH), The Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR), Earthjustice.