



HRC44 – Resolution on Human Rights and Climate Change (Item 3) Joint Statement for delivery by the Marshall Islands

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Thank you madame president,

I speak for nations devastated by today's climate emergency: Bahamas, Barbados, Costa Rica, Fiji, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Lesotho, Palau, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, and my own country, the Marshall Islands.

Small Islands, atoll nations, low-lying coastal States, and countries with threatened ecosystems, are among the most vulnerable. We therefore encourage pursuing country-specific as well as island-tailored approaches in line with the SAMOA Pathway for SIDS.

We've backed the resolution on human rights and climate change for its mandating of another important panel discussion and study on our elderly whose rights are also affected.

Madame President, a comprehensive body of knowledge has emerged from all the work of the climate resolution and its Core Group. Multiple thematic reports and panels; the UPR; Different treaty bodies and the Special Procedures inclusion of climate considerations in their work—because this issue cuts across all mandates.

In 2019, the chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, called climate change “the most serious human rights issue we have ever faced.” Likewise, the High Commissioner has recognized that “the world has never seen a threat to human rights of this scope”.

We have both a climate and a rights emergency on our hands. The Special Procedures have rightfully included climate change considerations in work, but we must not lose sight of the big picture, even as we continue to deepen our analysis.

Future generations will look back on this Council and ask what did we do? They will judge whether or not we took proportionate and effective action. Youth today demand leadership, it is their future that hangs in the balance.

The Council must strengthen its climate work and we must exhaust all avenues to uphold the rights of all human kind.

As asserted by the High Commissioner “we must act now, we must act urgently and we must deploy every tool at our disposal”. We, strongly support the call made by leaders of the CVF last year, to establish a dedicated new special procedure on climate change and human rights.

We are convinced that the creation of such mandate will strengthen this Council's efforts to address the climate emergency. It would provide additional means to raise awareness and better inform governments, promote ambitious efforts to protect rights, and constitute a major step towards the protection of the rights of the world's most vulnerable people.

We look forward towards building the pathway and consensus to take such a step. Between now and next year, there is sufficient time to put in the work required to make this vision a reality.

I thank you.