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The impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization with special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 February 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.



Written Statement to the 27th session of the Advisory Committee

The impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights

Introduction

1. The legal system nowadays cannot separate between climate change, its consequences and the enjoyment of human rights. New technologies for climate protection such as investments in low-carbon energy technologies and energy efficiency are being adopted in order to limit global warming, which helps to decrease temperature. In order to address the impact of new technologies on the enjoyment of human rights, we need to study precisely the impact of climate change on human rights.
2. Climate change causes environmental problems that threaten the life and future of humans and other creatures on Earth, such as drought, rising water levels, floods and forest burning. Therefore, individual and collective actions must be taken on a national, regional and international basis to address this crisis. The entire world is affected by climate change, but the countries most affected are vulnerable ones that do not have financial resources and new technologies for climate protection,
3. As the environment and ecosystems are affected, people do not enjoy the most basic rights such as the right to life, food and health, access to healthy drinking water and sanitation services, and these rights will be ensured with the help of new technologies for climate protection.
4. Hence, Maat Foundation for Peace, Development and Human Rights is interested in submitting its contribution to the report submitted to the Human Rights Council by the advisory committee on the impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights in accordance with Council resolution 48/14 to clarify its vision on the positive and also the negative impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights.
5. To study the impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights, we need to be aware of both the positive and the negative sides of it.

1. The positive impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights

6. New technologies for climate protection positively affect the enjoyment of human rights, for example, the climate change consists of is an increase in temperature degrees due to greenhouse gas emissions, and the majority of new technologies for climate protection aim to reduce these emissions, such as sequestering carbon dioxide and methane gas and replacing them with other materials more beneficial to the environment, which contributes to decreasing temperature degrees. When new technologies achieve their goals, people will be able to enjoy their rights as follows:

- **Right to life**

7. New technologies for climate protection ensures the right to life as it stops the consequences of climate change that threatens people's lives, such as rising water levels, floods and burning forests.

- **Right to food**

8. New technologies for climate protection directly affect the right to food and increase people's food security. Since droughts resulting from increased temperatures affect agricultural soils and the number of crops produced annually, new technologies aim to reduce temperatures, which contributes to solving the food insecurity crisis.

- **Right to housing**

9. The climate crisis has affected the human right to housing and the number of migrants and refugees in the world has increased due to climate change. The increase in the number of population in specific parts of the world after migration due to climate change, affects the enjoyment of human rights of indigenous population, immigrants and refugees.

10. Those most affected by the right to housing as a result of the climate crisis are migrants, refugees and people whose homes have been destroyed as a result of natural disasters such as floods due to climate change.

11. New technologies work to reduce floods and other crises, which helps individuals enjoy their right to housing, whether they are indigenous people, refugees and migrants.

- **Right to water**

12. New technologies for climate protection impacts drought mitigation, which affects the further enjoyment of human access to water. The right to water is threatened due to increasing temperature degrees, which causes drought and affects the efficiency of agricultural soils.

- **Right to freedom of movement**

13. The climate crisis prevents people from moving freely in their country or around the world because of the many affected areas and new technologies guarantee this right to move.

- **Right to health**

14. Climate crises affect the health of individuals and their access to health services, and new technologies guarantee the right to health when they reach their goals in reducing the threatening consequences of climate change.

- **Right to education**

15. Homelessness and internal or external displacement resulting from climate change reduce individuals' enjoyment of their right to education and increase the phenomena of children dropping out of school. New technologies for climate protection help in the stability of individuals which leads to them enjoying their right to education.

2. The negative impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights

16. So far, no negative effects of any of the new technologies for climate protection have been proven directly on humans, and this will be shown precisely after months or years of experiments. But new technologies to protect the climate may affect other creatures that live on earth, which affects human beings and their enjoyment of human rights in the end.

17. In this section, we address the adverse impacts of technologies on human beings but we also need to be aware of the negative impact of new technologies for climate protection on other land and sea creatures living on earth and not ignore it, because this leads to an ecological imbalance which also affect human stability and the enjoyment of his rights.

3. The adverse impact of new technologies for climate protection:

- Individuals safety may be affected by new technologies for climate protection such as energy stations and stations that aim to absorb or replace carbon dioxide and methane gas as they have a threatening impact on the individuals safety in places near these stations.

- The Right to health may this time be affected in a negative way through a technology that aims to change the composition of agricultural crops and develop new crops resisting drought and disease. This type of new technology requires much researches before its adoption, as using it as a source of food may negatively affect humans or other animals that feed on agricultural crops.

- The access to diverse food sources may be affected by new technologies such as

- Feeding cows with seaweed, this new technology may affect the fish wealth that is already threatened, as a result of the increase in the number of cows on farms that will need a large number of seaweed for feeding. That may impact the access of individuals to diverse food sources.

-Hydrogen ships, hydrogen gas emitted from these ships may affect sea creatures which can also affect the fish wealth and the individuals access to diverse food sources.

- The Right to freedom of movement may also be affected negatively by new technologies for climate protection, since some of these technologies need wide spaces and a large period for examination which will block the individuals' freedom of movement in the area in which the new technology will be examined or adopted.
- The access to new technologies for climate protection is not guaranteed to all individuals and countries, especially developing and vulnerable ones, because new technologies for climate protection need time and experts efforts which need financial resources that may not be disposable for some countries such as developing and vulnerable ones.

4. Recommendations

18. In the end, Maat Foundation for Peace, Development and Human Rights stresses the importance of this topic, and the importance of raising awareness on the impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights and recommends the following:

- Studying the safety of new technologies for climate protection on humans.
- Studying the impact of new technologies for climate protection on the natural resources, the livestock and fish wealth.
- Studying the countries most affected by the climate crisis, such as developing countries in order to define their eligibility for support in implementation of new technologies for climate protection.
- Providing financial and technical support to developing countries and implementing new technologies for climate protection for vulnerable ones.
- Making sure of the accessibility of new technologies on climate protection to all people around the world and all countries, especially vulnerable ones.
- Establishing a committee specialized in the impact of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights. The committee will then be responsible to study the impact of new technologies for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights and submit reports. The committee can consist of experts in the domain of environment and climate, and succeed with its work with the help of the special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change.
- Raising awareness of new technologies for climate protection and their impact on the enjoyment of human rights before their adoption.
