

Human Rights Council, 46th Session
General Debate
Item 3

8 March 2021

Joint Statement of United Nations entities (*)

Thank you. Madam President.

UNEP welcomes the opportunity to deliver this joint statement on behalf of 15 UN entities. The list is available on the extranet.

The right to a healthy environment is recognized by over 150 UN member states, but it has not been formally recognized at the global level thereby delaying achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, exacerbating inequalities, and creating protection gaps, especially for environmental human rights defenders, children, youth, women, and indigenous peoples who often have been and continue to be agents of change for safeguarding the environment.

We are faced with a triple environmental crisis: climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution. Rights of present and future generations depend on a healthy environment. The global recognition of the right to a healthy environment will support efforts to leave no one behind, ensure a just transition to an environmentally healthy and socially equitable world and realize human rights for all.

We commend the Council's leadership for bringing the world closer to global recognition and protection of the right to a healthy environment.

We also welcome the pledge signed by over 1,000 civil society, child, youth and indigenous peoples' organizations calling for Member States to recognize the right to a healthy environment.

We have come together under the UN Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights, through the inspiration provided by the Council, and in response to the urgent call for action from all corners of the world to declare that the time for global recognition, implementation, and protection of the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is now.

We stand ready to support Member States in achieving this objective.

Thank you.

(*) This present statement is joined by:

1. International Labour Organization (ILO)
2. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
3. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

4. Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY)
5. UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (SRSG VAC)
6. UN Women
7. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
8. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
9. United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)
10. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
11. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
12. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
13. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
14. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
15. World Health Organization (WHO)