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Virtual Briefing & Discussion

Enhancing the response of the UN Human Rights Council to climate change:

Towards the appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change

Briefing for Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples

Tuesday 8th September 2020, 17:00-18:00 CEST

Registration link: bit.ly/Join-ClimateRapporteur

Supported by:



Background:

During the 2019 Conference of the Parties under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the then President of the Marshall Islands, H.E. Hilda Heine, on behalf of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), called for the establishment by the UN Human Rights Council of a Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change. This call was reiterated by Bangladesh in its capacity as the 2020 Chair of CVF. These statements echoed a longstanding request from civil society organizations calling upon the Human Rights Council to better respond to the human rights implications of climate change and of climate policies. Several countries among those most impacted have reiterated this request through a joint statement delivered in July 2020 at the 44th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. It is expected that this proposal put forward by the Climate Vulnerable Forum will be considered by the 47th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2021.

This virtual briefing aims at enabling key actors among the Climate Vulnerable Forum to present this proposal to a broad range of civil society actors. The objective of this conversation is to enhance understanding across civil society and indigenous peoples organizations of the merits of the proposal as a first step towards mobilizing broad public support for the establishment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change and to clarify what are the key expectations from NGOs with regards to the potential role that this new Special Rapporteur could play.

The virtual briefing is open to all members of civil society and indigenous peoples' organizations.

Speakers:

- **Shanchita Haque**, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Geneva, People's Republic of Bangladesh
- **Ambassador Doreen de Brum**, Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Geneva, Republic of the Marshall Islands
- **Ambassador Nazhat Shameem Khan**, Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Geneva, Republic of Fiji

Discussant:

- **Olivier De Schutter**, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

Around 25 minutes will be devoted to Q&A.

For an overview of Special Rapporteurs' role and functions, please refer to the Background Note on the Establishment of a UN Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur (English version: bit.ly/HR&CC-UNSR-note; French version: bit.ly/HRCC-UNSR-note-FR)

Speakers' bios:

Shanchita Haque, a career diplomat of Bangladesh, is currently serving at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN in Geneva as CDA, ai and Deputy Permanent Representative. She has deep knowledge and experience in multilateral diplomacy particularly on development issues such as SDGs, climate change, financing for development, graduation, LDC matters, migration and so on. She represented her country in the negotiations on many global documents including 2030 Agenda and SDGs, Paris Agreement, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Earlier Haque served in the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh in New York and Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi. At the Headquarters, she worked in different capacities including as Director, Multilateral Economic Affairs and Director, Foreign Minister's Office.

Haque obtained a Master's degree in International Affairs from the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia and a Master's degree in English Literature from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Ambassador Doreen de Brum was appointed Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to the UN Office in Geneva in 2019. Prior to that, Ambassador de Brum had been serving as Assistant Secretary to the Bureau of Multilateral Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Marshall Islands since October 2013. From 2010 to 2013, she was a Consultant for the Food and Agricultural Organization, and National Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Coordinator, at the Ministry of Resources and Development of the Marshall Islands. From May 2008 to 2010, Ambassador de Brum was a Fisheries Policy and Planning Advisor at the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority. She served as the Undersecretary for Asia-Pacific Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Marshall Islands from 1996 to 2005. Ambassador de Brum is actively involved in pediatric healthcare improvement in the Marshall Islands.

In 2017, she started Nito's Butterfly's Foundation, which completely renovated the pediatric department at the hospital in Majuro, and now provides essential medical and financial support to children with rare conditions and their families.

Ambassador Nazhat Shameem Khan was appointed Permanent Representative to Geneva in 2014. Prior to her appointment, she had been working as a private practitioner, engaged principally in training lawyers and judges on human rights law, legal ethics, sentencing law, governance and litigation skills, since 2009. In 1999, she was appointed Fiji's first woman High Court judge, working mainly in the criminal division. Prior to being a High Court judge, Ambassador Khan had been the Director of Public Prosecutions of Fiji since 1994.

Ambassador Khan attended Sussex University and Cambridge University, where she studied law. She was admitted to the Bar of England and Wales at the Inner Temple in London in 1983, and to the High Court in Fiji as a barrister and solicitor in 1984. She holds a Master of Philosophy degree in Criminology from the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. She was Chief Negotiator of the UNFCCC COP23, when Fiji had the Presidency of the COP. She is an active Member of the Geneva Pledge, a group of countries which commits to integrating human rights and climate action internationally.

Olivier De Schutter was appointed the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights by the Human Rights Council at its 43rd session, in March 2020. Prior to that, he had been a member of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights since 2015, to which he was reelected in 2019, before resigning in order to accept the mandate of Special Rapporteur. He was the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food between 2008 and 2014, and served as a member of the Scientific Committee of the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union from 2013 to 2018. Between 2004 and 2008, he served as the Secretary General of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), and, from 2002 to 2007, he was the coordinator of the EU Network of Independent Experts on Fundamental Rights.

Mr. De Schutter is Professor of Law at UCLouvain and at SciencesPo (Paris) and a member of the Global Law School Faculty at New York University. He has taught human rights at the University of Leicester, at the College of Europe, at Columbia University and Yale University, and was a visiting professor at UC Berkeley in 2013-2014, where he helped launch the Berkeley Food Institute. In 2013, he was awarded the Francqui Prize for his contribution to international human rights law and to the theory of governance. He is also the founder and Editor-in-chief of the *European Journal of Human Rights / Journal européen des droits de l'homme*.

Mr. De Schutter holds a LL.M. from Harvard University, a diploma *cum laude* from the International Institute of Human Rights (Strasbourg) and a Ph.D. in Law from UCLouvain.