

Climate-Induced Migration: Realities, Rights, and Responses

A side-event to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

1 May 2017

10:00am – 11:30am

UN Headquarters, Conference Room B

SPONSORED BY: NGO Committee on Migration, Company of the Daughters of Charity, Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office

WITH SUPPORT FROM: Christian Life Community, Curia Generalizia Agostiniana, International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Federation of Social Workers, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Society of the Sacred Heart, UNANIMA International, Vivat International, World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations

This side-event is held within the context of the 16th session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which will mark the tenth anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Climate change is a concern affecting the rights of indigenous peoples and other persons throughout the world. The effects of climate change can be felt from areas prone to flooding, high temperatures, cyclones, and soil salinity in Bangladesh, to a record-breaking El Niño now causing drought from the Horn of Africa to the Cape of Good Hope, to serious concern about oceans overtaking islands in the Pacific. They can be seen in oddities like New York witnessing temperatures of 50-60 degrees in the middle of January or drought in Syria that has caused many to move to find food and employment. Climate change, occurring planet-wide, has become so drastic that many are forced to leave their land.

Land is more than a home for indigenous peoples--it is an integral part of their identity, belief system, culture, social connections, and agricultural practices that have been passed down from generation to generation. What happens when land is no longer livable because of drought, flooding, or sea-level rise?

This side-event will focus on the realities, rights, and responses of indigenous peoples to climate change. Panelists will discuss the extent of climate-induced migration and its effects upon indigenous peoples, such as losses to be expected if individuals and communities are forced to move; the importance of protecting rights of indigenous peoples and “eco-migrants;” responses of indigenous peoples to climate change through good adaptive practices; and what indigenous peoples might ask of the world at large in terms of addressing climate change.

OBJECTIVES:

- *Raise awareness of the impact of climate change on indigenous peoples and other persons
- *Emphasize protection of the rights of persons affected by climate-induced displacement
- *Highlight potential losses if greater climate-induced migration occurs
- *Portray good practices in prevention, adaptation, and mitigation of the effects of climate change

QUESTIONS:

1. What human rights of persons affected by climate-induced migration are most in need of protection?
2. What indigenous values are at risk due to climate change?
3. What are some good practices in adapting to climate change?