

Side Event Promoting and Protecting the Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment

14 September 2022
19.00 to 20.30 CET

AT THE GENEVA ACADEMY (VILLA MOYNIER) AND ONLINE

Global challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, forced migration, and armed conflicts, as well as difficult access to water, land and other natural resources, raw materials and energy, have increased and have a major impact on stability and security in the world. Violations of human rights, especially in the context of environmental protection, are increasingly driving conflict.

At its 48th session, in October 2021, the Human Rights Council recognized for the first time the human right of all to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The Human Rights Council called on States to work together, and with other partners, to implement this newly recognized right. It also invited the General Assembly to consider the matter. At its 76th session, in July 2022, the UN General Assembly responded to this call and recognized the human right of all to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

In parallel, UN treaty bodies and regional courts are increasingly acknowledging the environmental dimensions of human rights. These treaty bodies and courts are developing a jurisprudence on environmental harm inducing human rights violations, and on the negative human rights implications of climate change, as well as harmful projects aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change.

At this side event to the 51st session of the Human Rights Council, the organizers – the Geneva Academy, the Permanent Missions of Switzerland, Slovenia, Morocco, Maldives and Costa Rica to the UN in Geneva, Franciscans International, CIEL and EarthJustice – invite States, NGOs, international organizations and human rights experts to discuss their role in promoting and protecting the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

This side event will take place at the Geneva Academy (Villa Moynier) and online (hybrid). At this occasion, a background paper of the Geneva Academy will be presented. At the end of 2022, the Geneva Academy will publish an Academy Briefing on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and the links between human rights and the environment, with a focus on their potential inclusion in future resolutions of the Human Rights Council and General Assembly.

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19:00 – 19:05	Welcome Dr. Erica Harper, Head of Research and Policy Studies, Geneva Academy
19:05 – 19:20	Introduction H.E. Ambassador Asim Ahmed, Permanent Representative of Maldives to the UN in Geneva H.E. Ambassador Shara Duncan Villalobos, Deputy Permanent Representative and Chargée d'affaires a.i. of Costa Rica to the UN in Geneva
19:20 – 20:15	Panel on Promoting the Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. David R. Boyd, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment• Prof. Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights• Ms. Astrid Puentes Riaño, Independent expert consultant on human rights, environment and climate change• Dr. Megan Donald, Associate Research Fellow at the Geneva Academy, author of “Greening the International Covenant on ESC Rights” (2021) <i>Moderator: Dr. Christophe Golay, Senior Research Fellow and Strategic Adviser on ESC Rights, Geneva Academy</i>
20:15-20.30	Conclusion H.E. Ambassador Anita Pipan, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the UN in Geneva H.E. Ambassador Omar Zniber, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the UN in Geneva

Contact details of the organizers:

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To register for online participation: <https://geneva-academy-ch.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEpdOmpqDsjHdNDDXPAmAYZj53XuFFaNK48>

To register for onsite participation at the Geneva Academy (Villa Moynier): <https://forms.gle/ckSiZNFen331nBL58>