

A healthy planet



For future generations

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NGO Committee on Sustainable Development VIENNA

Oral Statement at CCPCJ 30th session, TOP 5

Environmental crime - a trigger for forced migration

According to the 2020 Displacement Report of the International Displacement Monitoring Centre, conflicts and disasters triggered **33.4 million new internal displacements** across 145 countries and territories in 2019. Furthermore, in the same year, environmental disasters forced some one million people to abandon their homes that had become uninhabitable on account of such as landslides, wildfires, rising sea levels, droughts and extreme temperatures. The number of those affected is rising unremittingly - much to the detriment of the world in which we live.

The global degradation of the environment caused by climate change, droughts and hazardous legacies, such as abandoned mining sites and festering waste dumps has compelled people to seek a better life - be it in other parts of their own countries or abroad. Not every country considers activities that destroy, contaminate or degrade soil, air and bodies of water and pose a risk to people's (mental) health to be serious crimes. The perpetrators might not be subject to investigation. Indeed, they might not even be identified. This holds particularly true for activities, not infrequently neo-colonial in nature, that are carried out in other countries or on other continents.

Criminal activities jeopardize sustainable development and must be stopped!

The undersigned Non-Governmental Organisations in Consultative Status with the UN

- Welcome the Kyoto declaration on advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly promoting international cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime, § 60 f.

- Urge the delegates to the UN CCPCJ to:
 - a) Define the scope of environmental crime, taking into account recent developments and all UN Conventions related to the protection of the Earth;
 - b) Ensure an international framework to implement and enforce legislation and persecute and punish perpetrators;
 - c) Enhance cooperation between the secretariats of these UN Conventions with a view of setting up a unit dedicated to documenting environmental crimes and follow-up investigations into criminal acts;
 - d) Widen the scope of accepted causes for forced migration and thus enhance the protection and support for migrants;

- e) Provide adequate information and training for legal personnel, administrators and police forces to deal with crimes contributing to forced migration and, in so doing, increase public awareness of the contributory factors and provide improved assistance to migrants, especially migrant children;
- f) Publish transparent reports on the progress of defining and reducing environmental crimes;
- g) Ensure participation of local governments and administrations, as well as NGOs, in the execution of the above endeavours.

Endorsement

The following organizations have joined the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development in this Statement:

- Conference of NGO in Consultative Status with the UN (CoNGO)
- African Action on Aids (AAA)
- European Union of Women (EUW)
- Graduate Women International (GWI)
- IADL
- International Alliance of Women (IAW)
- International Inner Wheel (IIW)
- International Federation of Business and Professional Women (IFBPW)
- International Council of Psychologists
- PAX Romana
- Servas International
- SID
- Socialist International Women (SIW)
- Soroptimist International
- United Methodist Church-General Board of Church and Society
- Verein zur Förderung der Völkerverständigung
- Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWP)
- Women's International Zionist Organisation (WIZO)
- World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ)