



Statement of Rev. Monsignor John Putzer, Chargé d’Affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International
Organizations in Geneva
at the 53rd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council

**Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on promotion
and protection of human rights in the context of climate change**

Geneva, 28 June 2023

Mister President

The Holy See takes note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change. As underlined by H.Em. Cardinal Pietro Parolin in his intervention at COP27 last year, “*the human face of the climate emergency challenges us deeply*” and we have a moral duty to address its ever more frequent and severe humanitarian impacts, especially forced migration.¹ Displacement can take place after rapid-onset triggers or slow-onset processes, but the climate crisis can also be an indirect driver of migration, exacerbating social tension and generating conflicts over scarce resources.

Pope Francis has repeatedly denounced the “*tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation, [who] are not recognized by international conventions as refugees*”.² While welcoming ongoing national, regional and international legal and policy approaches to address climate displacement, the Holy See regrets that these are often short-sighted and influenced by economic concerns, increasing the risk of exploitation, abuse and discrimination. In this regard, the Holy See wishes to encourage the members of this Council to protect the fundamental human rights of migrants and other persons affected by climate displacement, while building adequate targeted legal frameworks.

Mister President,

Even though climate change increasingly affects everyone, the greatest pain is felt by those who have contributed to it the least. In fact, it disproportionately affects low-income and developing countries, which do not have the resources to face its consequences alone. Therefore, the Holy See calls on the international community to work on a collective and coordinated response in a spirit of solidarity, placing human dignity and the care for our common home at the center of all its efforts.

Thank you, Mister President

¹ Intervention of H.Em. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of His Holiness Pope Francis at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Sharm el-Sheikh, 8 November 2022.

² Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter “Laudato Si” on care for our common home, 2015, p. 21.