

**Dear  
Ian Fry  
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of  
climate change**

Honduras, September 25, 2023

We greet you from the *Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho Internacional (CEJIL)*, *Foro Nacional para Las Migraciones en Honduras (FONAMIH)*, *ASONOG*, *Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CIPRODEH)*, *Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH)*, *Cristosal Inc*, *el Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación (ERIC-SJ)*, *el Centro de Desarrollo Humano (CDH/Honduras)*, *el Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras (COFADEH)*, *la Asociación Entrepueblos-Entrepobles-Herriarte-Entrepobos*, *el Equipo Jurídico por los Derechos Humanos*, *la Asociación para una Ciudadanía Participativa (ACI PARTICIPA)*, *Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad*, *DIAKONIA de Suecia*, *Oficina Honduras*, *Protection International*, *Fian Honduras y*, *Bufete Justicia Para Los Pueblos*.

The purpose of our communication is to convey to you our concerns about the situation of people in a situation of human mobility or at risk of displacement in Honduras due to the impact of the climate emergency.

This letter arises from our work and experience in the field as civil society organizations that serve and accompany people in a situation of mobility in Honduras and in the region. Our organizations have identified that the multi-causality of human mobility in Honduras, added to seasonal migratory flows, the lack of attention and prevention of voluntary or forced displacement, the lack of political interest of public authorities, and the great attention traditionally paid to other causes of displacement (violence, disasters, insecurity, poverty, megaprojects, corruption, among others), represent obstacles to establishing clear causal links between mobility and the gradual phenomena of climate change in the country.

In this regard, we would like to make the following considerations and recommendations:

- Honduras is a country considered highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and climate variability. For decades, there have been internal movements of people who have had to leave their homes to secure their lives due to the slow or rapid onset impacts of climate change. For the most part, people have been forced to move internally or internationally and have not received any assistance or attention from the state in the face of their displacement.

- The lack of recognition of climate phenomena is having an aggravating effect on the pre-existing social and economic conditions of the population because it prevents the adoption of adaptation processes for the different livelihoods, considering possible climate scenarios, and thus avoiding expulsion processes from the territories.
- Likewise, the absence of data and a correct characterization of the multidimensional factors that cause migration and displacement generate inadequate attention to the people affected. In Honduras there is no efficient system for the collection of data and information on these mobilities, which has resulted in the lack of public policies that comprehensively address climate displacement in its different expressions.
- One of the challenges to be highlighted is the invisibility of internal and cross-border movement or displacement. This is due to the fact that migration or displacement due to climate causes is often erroneously interpreted only as a type of economic migration or one based on other causes. This occurs, for example, in the case of people who migrate after droughts or floods that make the crops that constitute their source of work and livelihood unviable<sup>1</sup> and even the impossibility of returning to their homes due to the deterioration caused by climatic events in their homes or in basic water and sanitation services, when in fact, this type of mobility arises from these interconnected causes and experiences, where climate change is a trigger.
- Governmental and non-governmental institutions that address the migration issue are absent in the processes of policy definition and planning on climate change, thus omitting necessary responses to guarantee fundamental human rights such as housing, food, water, and sanitation, among others.
- Although there are regulatory efforts in Honduras that address the forced internal displacement of people or other efforts that generally address climate change, such as the Climate Change Law -which is currently under reform-; all these inputs are neither efficient nor applied in practice and none of these specifically address the displacement or human mobility arising from the climate emergency. In other words, there is a clear lack of comprehensive policies and responses to provide adequate protection and assistance to people who are forcibly displaced by the effects of climate change.
- In Honduras there is also a weak institutional framework for prevention, mitigation and attention to risks associated with climate change. For example, there are many municipalities that do not have Municipal Emergency Committees (CODEM) and there is a great absence of Local Emergency Committees (CODEL), in addition to serious

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<sup>1</sup> Inter-American Development Bank, Why addressing climate change and migration simultaneously is key, 11/11/2020. Available at: <https://blogs.iadb.org/migracion/es/abordar-cambio-climatico-y-migracion-de-forma-simultanea/>; El País, Los que resisten con el café de El Salvador, 25/03/2022. Available at: <https://elpais.com/planeta-futuro/2022-03-26/los-que-resisten-con-el-cafe-de-el-salvador.html>

economic, personnel and equipment limitations in these institutions<sup>2</sup> . Only 5 municipalities have Risk Management Units (UGR). In a study carried out in 91 municipalities by CEPREDENAC and UNISDR, only 66 of them have risk studies and a Municipal Risk Management Plan (PMGR), 27 have a Prevention and Response Plan (PPR) and 60 have Municipal Emergency Plans (PEM)<sup>3</sup> .

- Finally, Honduras continues with an extractivist model that has endangered communities in vulnerable situations, who are at specific risk of displacement because of climate change and environmental degradation associated with extractivism itself. A clear example of this is the communities or ancestral peoples whose property or ancestral territory is not recognized and who face criminalization processes associated with extractivism.

Accordingly, the following is recommended:

1. Urge the State of Honduras to design or update its regulatory framework to comprehensively ensure the protection of climate displaced persons, both internally and internationally. This includes including the phenomenon of migration and displacement in the reform process that the government is undertaking to the Climate Change Law.
2. Urge the State to recognize, through its public policies and regulations, the intrinsic relationship between climate change and other causes of human mobility already existing in the country. This also requires the allocation of specific resources for climate change prevention and adaptation policies, as well as for comprehensive care programs, or damage and loss mechanisms.
3. Urge the State of Honduras to adopt sustained measures for the protection of natural resources, including the sustainable management of protected areas and water-producing watersheds, that guarantee community participation and establish as a priority the use of resources for human consumption and food production, in such a way as to ensure their availability over time.
4. Urge the State of Honduras to establish a National Loss and Damage Mechanism that includes addressing the phenomenon of migration and internal displacement. Among the responsibilities of this mechanism should be to establish a registry and characterization of the people affected and who have had to migrate or be forcibly displaced, in order to establish care and protection and reparation routes.
5. Urge the State of Honduras to establish, through inter-institutional cross-referencing of information, a system for registering displacement related to climate change, a system that should be regulated within the National Adaptation Plan against climate change and through the National Loss and Damage Mechanism.

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<sup>2</sup> On this, see: COPECO (2013). Informe de Gestión Integral de Riesgo de Desastres. Tegucigalpa, Honduras: UNISDR-CEPREDENAC.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

6. Urge the State of Honduras to implement a process of continuous and comprehensive training for public officials on the link between human mobility and climate change; and the rights of the displaced population, presenting this as a trigger for various forms of human mobility.

We thank you in advance for the consideration you will give to our suggestions.

**Signatories:**

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