



fidh

COP29

A human rights-based position on climate negotiations in Baku

Table of contents

Introduction	3
Protection of environmental human rights defenders in the context of COPs and at-risk sectors linked to the “green transition”	4
Accountability for corporate contributions to the climate crisis	6
The need to prioritise human rights in negotiations of climate finance	7
a) Loss and Damage.....	7
b) Climate finance and the need for a human rights economy	8

Introduction

Today's reality is one of polycrisis.¹ From the climate crisis to socio-economic divides, from growing conflict to democratic backsliding, we witness a series of deeply intertwined and mutually exacerbating crises. As one of them, climate breakdown finds its roots in an economic model grounded into two interconnected tenets. The first one is the exploitation of natural resources for the purpose of economic growth, leading to planetary boundaries' overshoot, with grave consequences for Earth ecosystems and consequently a large number of human rights, such as the rights to health, food, water, an adequate standard of living, and a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.^{2 3 4} The second one is a legacy of colonialism as a resource-seizing and labour exploitation strategy by developed states, which has forced countries and communities least responsible for emissions into increased vulnerability. This hinders their capacity to respond to current challenges and deepens systemic injustices.⁵

Showing the extent of such injustice, "Global North" states were historically responsible for 92% of global emissions between 1850 and 2015.⁶ Today, the largest economies - "Global North" and "Global South" - account for a disproportionate amount of yearly emissions: in 2022, G20 countries were responsible for 76% of global greenhouse gas emissions, whereas least developed countries accounted for 3.8%.⁷ At the same time, Global Majority countries are trapped in debt repayments to Global North lenders. This limits their fiscal space to respond to growing climate impacts and losses, keeping them locked in the carbon-intensive economic model that has caused power imbalances in the first place.⁸ Such a vicious cycle of "ecological debt"⁹ impacts the availability of resources necessary to secure the fulfilment of human rights at a time when the climate crisis poses immense and unprecedented challenges to their enjoyment.¹⁰

Adding to this, current climate action has been reliant on false solutions such as geoengineering, carbon offsets, or other measures often amounting to mere greenwashing that give an appearance of meaningful climate action while actually functioning to delay effective policies to reduce emissions. These false solutions have been proposed by various governments and international institutions and adopted by developed states and other actors, oftentimes without participation of those affected. This deepens the root causes of the crisis and hence worsens the issue of climate change through their ineffectiveness, once again disproportionately impacting the rights of marginalised communities, and putting at risk humanity and the planet more broadly.^{11 12 13} False solutions have been prioritised by countries and private actors as the pathway to follow in the context of collaborative voluntary strategies which are, in principle, conceived to scale up action required to meet Nationally Determined Contributions under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.¹⁴ Furthermore, violations of human rights and the rights of nature have taken place in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. It is FIDH's belief that "just transition" is a crucial concept referring to a host of different and contextual

1. Adam Tooze (2022). "Welcome to the world of the polycrisis". *Financial Times*, 28 October.

2. Kate Raworth (2017). "[A Doughnut for the Anthropocene: Humanity's Compass in the 21st Century](#)". *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 1(2).

3. UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights (2024). [Eradicating poverty beyond growth: Report to the Human Rights Council](#). A/HRC/56/61.

4. UN Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment (2024). [Business, planetary boundaries, and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment](#). Report. A/HRC/55/43.

5. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2023). [Sixth Assessment Report: Synthesis Report for Policymakers](#). p. 31.

6. Jason Hickel (2020). "[Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary](#)". *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 4(9), e399-e404.

7. United Nations Environmental Programme (2023). [Emissions Gap Report 2023: Broken Record - Temperatures Hit New Highs, Yet World Fails to Cut Emissions \(Again\)](#). pp. XVII and XVIII. Estimates exclude the African Union, which became a permanent member of the Group of 20 in September 2023.

8. Tess Woolfenden and Sindra Sharma Khushal (2022). [The debt and climate crises: Why climate justice must include debt justice](#).

9. Rikard Warlenius, Gregory Pierce, and Vasna Ramasar (2015). "[Reversing the arrow of arrears: The concept of 'ecological debt' and its value for environmental justice](#)". *Global Environmental Change*, 30: 21-30.

10. John H. Knox (2009). "[Linking human rights and climate change at the United Nations](#)". *Harvard Environmental Law Review*, 33: 477-498.

11. Carbon Brief (2023). [Mapped: The impacts of carbon-offset projects around the world](#).

12. Human Rights Watch (2024). [Carbon Offsetting's Casualties: Violations of Chong Indigenous People's Rights in Cambodia's Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project](#).

13. SOMO (2024). [Facing the facts: carbon offsets unmasked](#). Analytical series.

14. For more context, see CIEL (2021). [Rights, Carbon, Caution: Upholding Human Rights under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement](#). Note that carbon trading first emerged in 1997 with the Kyoto Protocol, notably through the so-called "[Clean Development Mechanism](#)".

means for states to move away from a fossil fuel-dependent economy and address the challenges posed by climate change while simultaneously preventing the negative impacts such actions have on human rights, justice, equality, and the environment. However, governments and businesses often co-opt such a multifaceted concept as a rhetorical device to indicate actions, policies or projects which, while supposed to tackle climate change, are already resulting in violations that might skyrocket as efforts to “green the economy” gain speed without any hope of absolute decoupling.¹⁵

The interconnection of the drivers of the climate crisis with others in the polycrisis calls for immediate, bold and transformative action at all levels of society for systemic change, in the form of just transition pathways that are grounded in human rights, are respectful of nature, and do not rely on false solutions. In light of this and ahead of COP29, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) urges negotiating parties to pursue climate justice as the paramount goal in their negotiations of urgently-needed climate action. No just transition pathway can exist and be effective without putting human rights agreements, obligations, standards and principles at its centre. FIDH supports the need for a paradigm shift towards a human rights economy¹⁶ addressing the root causes of injustice and power imbalances expressed in the climate crisis as in all others. A transformative economic and governance system would not have unbridled economic growth as its motivation and goal, and gross domestic product (GDP) as its main metric,¹⁷ but the enjoyment of human rights by all within planetary boundaries. Climate action rooted in recognition, distributive and procedural justice, along with full democratic participation, is an opportunity to bring about the needed systemic change and achieve the fulfilment of human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and particularly for the most marginalised groups.

With this in mind, this document details FIDH's position on COP29's technical discussions while outlining cross-cutting human rights concerns in relation to climate action.

Protection of environmental human rights defenders in the context of COPs and at-risk sectors linked to the “green transition”

The root causes of environmental breakdown have been extensively documented by the scientific community, and the solutions to them have been outlined by the latter as well as by the peoples and affected communities. Despite their commitment to take the necessary measures to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures, states have made insufficient progress in that direction. This has pushed individuals and communities alike to hold state - as well as non-state - actors accountable for their inaction and contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. Environmental defenders on the frontline of the climate crisis risk their lives to stand against the harmful impacts of deforestation, mining, hydrocarbons extraction, and other threats to their environment. They speak up for the rights of communities affected by climate change and the search for effective and sustainable solutions. Under international law, and notably pursuant to the UN General Assembly Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the individuals, groups, communities, movements, and organisations that stand up for human rights, including for the enjoyment of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, need to be protected and supported.

However, all around the globe, these environmental human rights defenders face heightened reprisals, violence and harassment from both governments and non-governmental actors, for denouncing how extractivism, unsustainable human activities, and the implementation of false solution projects are affecting both communities and ecosystems, further fueling the polycrisis. Proving that, in 2023 at least 196 land and environmental defenders were killed for trying to protect the planet (up from 177 in 2022), 43% of whom belonged to Indigenous Peoples.¹⁸ Besides, environmental defenders are

15. The emission reductions that high-income countries achieved through absolute decoupling fall far short of Paris-compliant rates. At the achieved rates, these countries would on average take more than 220 years to reduce their emissions by 95%, emitting 27 times their remaining 1.5°C fair-shares in the process. See Jefim Vogel and Jason Hickel (2023), [Is green growth happening? An empirical analysis of achieved versus Paris-compliant CO2-GDP decoupling in high-income countries](#), *The Lancet Planet Health*, 7: e759–69.

16. United Nations Secretary General (2024). [Analytical study on the impact of loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, exploring equity-based approaches and solutions to addressing the same](#). A/HRC/57/30.

17. UN Human Rights Council (2024). [Eradicating poverty beyond growth - Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights](#). A/HRC/56/61.

18. Global Witness (2024). [Missing voices: The violent erasure of land and environmental defenders](#).

routinely compared to terrorists, face police repression, or are arbitrarily detained for exercising their right to associate or protest against environmental degradation, including through civil disobedience.¹⁹ Special procedures from different regional human rights systems and the United Nations working on the protection of environmental defenders denounced the problem in a declaration co-signed at an “inter-mechanism meeting” in Paris, organised and facilitated by FIDH²⁰ on 29 and 30 October 2024.²¹

Attempts at stifling the voice of environmental defenders through restrictions on civic space and fundamental freedoms only heighten the urgency to act. States must demonstrate leadership, including during COPs under the UNFCCC, to protect environmental defenders both within and outside their borders and to promote their participation in international fora related to the environment. The COP29 provides an important occasion to reiterate the need to protect environmental defenders in all circumstances, and to involve them in the implementation of climate policies as part of the right to public participation enshrined in Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the Escazú Agreement, the Aarhus Convention, and human rights law more broadly.

On one hand, since 2022 the UNFCCC has been offering COP hosting privileges to countries with shrinking civic space, enabling governments to intensify their crackdown on human rights. According to the rules of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body on Implementation, UNFCCC sessions and mandated events must be convened in places where human rights and fundamental freedoms are promoted and protected, and where all participants are effectively protected against any violations or abuses.²² However, COP27 in Egypt and COP28 in the United Arab Emirates were marred by several instances of surveillance, harassment and detention of activists.^{23 24} Similarly, in the run-up to COP29, FIDH has been documenting Azerbaijan’s escalating repression of human rights defenders, journalists and opposition figures.^{25 26} Prior to these intense crackdowns, some obstacles to civil society participation, such as lack of room for representatives and denied entry to the hosting country, had already been reported at COP26 in Glasgow and COP24 in Katowice.^{27 28} FIDH calls on host countries to uphold international human rights law before, during and after the conference, and to ensure that participants can exercise their human rights without fear of intimidation and reprisals. When such conditions are not met, venue choices shall be reconsidered.²⁹

On the other hand, particular attention must be paid to the specific risks faced by environmental defenders in the context of business activities linked to the transition away from fossil fuels, as is the case for mining of minerals like lithium, used in electric batteries among others, and the encroachment of renewable projects in protected or Indigenous territories, to name but a few.³⁰ Research and documentation efforts around supply chains in these sectors shows that Free, Prior and Informed Consent and the requirement for meaningful engagement of affected communities are often ignored, and that human rights violations are exacerbated by other forms of marginalisation and exclusion, stemming from power imbalances and ingrained in the whole process.³¹

19. Under international human rights law, civil disobedience is recognized as a form of exercising the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly, as guaranteed by Articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), respectively. For more information, see Position Paper by Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on Environmental Defenders under the Aarhus Convention (2024), [State repression of environmental protest and civil disobedience: a major threat to human rights and Democracy](#).

20. Within the framework of the [Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders](#) (a FIDH-OMCT partnership).

21. To learn more, see [Joint Statement by international and regional human rights experts in the context of COP29: Time to protect environmental defenders and ensure their safe participation in international forums relating to the environment and climate change](#) (2024).

22. UNFCCC (2023). [Report of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation on its fifty-eighth session, held in Bonn from 5 to 15 June 2023](#). FCCC/SBI/2023/10.

23. United Nations (18/11/2022). [Rights experts decry harassment of activists attending COP27](#).

24. Human Rights Watch (2024). [United Arab Emirates: Events of 2023](#).

25. FIDH (18/09/2024). [Azerbaijan: Unprecedented repression since January 2024](#). Open letter.

26. FIDH (11/09/2024). [Azerbaijan: Civil society demands attention to human rights and climate justice ahead of COP29](#). Statement.

27. Climate Action Network International (2018). [Civil Society representatives denied entry to Poland to participate in climate talks](#).

28. The Guardian (08/11/2021). [COP26 legitimacy questioned as groups excluded from crucial talks](#).

29. FIDH (13/08/2024). [COP29: Call to stop hosting Conference of Parties \(COP\) annual climate summits in authoritarian countries](#). Open letter.

30. Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (2023). [Companies leading the transition to renewable energy are failing in human rights responsibilities](#).

31. UN General Assembly (2016). [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders](#). A/71/281. p. 15.

FIDH's recommendations

- States must comply with their international obligations to respect the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, including in regard to environmental protest and civil disobedience. They must immediately cease stigmatisation, criminalisation, harassment, violence, arbitrary detention, and any other measures targeting environmental human rights defenders and their activities.
- Concerning negotiations of COP venues, States must comply with the rules of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body by ensuring that all potential host countries can provide a safe and conducive environment for the full protection of human rights, so as not expose both in-country rights defenders and conference participants to repression.
- The UNFCCC must work to remove the administrative, financial and logistical barriers to the meaningful participation of communities and frontline defenders most affected by climate change, especially those from Global Majority countries with limited resources.
- States must take active measures to protect defenders from human rights abuses undertaken by non-state actors such as businesses. They must pay special attention to the human rights risks and abuses in key sectors linked to the green transition, and to that end, guarantee the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent as well as the right to meaningful participation of marginalised communities and environmental defenders affected by these business activities.

Accountability for corporate contributions to the climate crisis

The figures from COP28 tell a tale of corporate capture vis-à-vis increasing restrictions for civil society: 2,456 fossil fuel lobbyists, generally registered as an NGO under a “trade association”, were granted access out of “3,600 NGO representatives”.³² Overrepresentation of corporate interests is symptomatic of a broader problem: fossil fuel private actors that contribute to climate breakdown also gain access to and exercise undue influence in regulating spaces which curtails progress on matters of climate justice and perpetuate a fossil fuel-dependent economy. All the more so given that the climate reduction plans of private companies are often far from being aligned with the Paris Agreement, and that many of these actors are still involved in “carbon bomb” projects whose potential emissions would exceed the global 1.5°C carbon budget by a factor of two.³³ Indeed, private investor-owned companies historically account for 31% of all greenhouse emissions tracked by the database Carbon Majors; and a mere 57 oil, gas, coal and cement producers are directly linked to 80% of the world’s global CO₂ emissions since the signing of the Paris Agreement.³⁴ However, neither the voluntary recommendations and guidelines for responsible business conduct produced by governments, nor the codes of conduct and self-regulation developed by companies themselves proved to be effective in preventing or reducing cases of business human rights abuses and environmental damage.

Businesses must be accountable for their climate impacts and human rights violations, and must participate responsibly in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts with full respect for human rights.³⁵ Investors in these companies must also cease providing financial support to operations and activities which are clearly compromising and crossing the climate boundary. That is of relevance to climate justice not only because of the size of corporate contributions to greenhouse gas emissions, but also because large fossil fuel companies headquartered in the Global North often operate extraterritorially and with relative impunity in countries most affected by the climate crisis. This is due to the existing gaps in the international framework as well as to power imbalances. FIDH denounces corporate impunity alongside corporate influence over domestic and international decision-making spaces at the expense of voices speaking up for environmental protection and human rights. In parallel to the COP process, FIDH has been working for many years on developing a stronger normative framework for business impacts on human rights and the environment at different levels of governance. FIDH has also

32. Corporate Europe Observatory (2023). [Record number of fossil fuel lobbyists granted access to COP28 climate talks.](#)

33. Kühne, Kjell, et al. (2022). “Carbon Bombs” - Mapping key fossil fuel projects.” *Energy Policy*, 166: 1-10.

34. [The Carbon Majors Database: Launch Report](#) (2024).

35. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (n.d.). [Key messages on human rights and climate change.](#)

supported strategic litigation in relation to companies' contribution to the climate crisis. FIDH advocates for binding international regulation of businesses that provide climate and environmental obligations, one example being the draft UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights.

FIDH's recommendations

- The UNFCCC must establish clear and comprehensive conflict-of-interest policies and broader disclosure and accountability mechanisms in order to prevent corporate capture in climate negotiations.
- States must develop strong and effective legislation at the national, regional and international level that creates human rights, climate and environmental obligations for businesses and investors across the value chain, ensuring meaningful engagement and access to remedy for affected communities and rights-holders. Corporate climate obligations must be discussed and effectively developed at the COP level as well as in dedicated negotiation spaces for binding instruments on business and human rights.

The need to prioritise human rights in negotiations of climate finance

a) Loss and Damage

Historical and systemic inequity and discrimination affect individuals and communities' vulnerability to the effects of climate change, including those that occur despite mitigation and adaptation efforts and are known as "loss and damage".³⁶ Whether economic or non-economic, loss and damage has a permanent impact on all human rights and compounds intersecting forms of discrimination (e.g. Indigeneity, disability, gender, migration status...). The scale of loss and damage constitutes a critical human rights issue. According to a UN Secretary General report, estimates of the annual economic cost of loss and damage in developing countries alone amounted to at least \$435 billion in 2020, a figure that is expected to rise to at least \$580 billion by 2030, excluding non-economic losses and damages.³⁷ The global debt crisis has significantly hampered the ability of many developing countries to respond to and recover from climate-induced disasters, creating a real "debt trap" for them.³⁸ High levels of debt constrain the fiscal budget to build climate resilience, while debt servicing results in divestment from an already resource-limited fulfilment of human rights, exacerbating inequalities among communities who are not historically responsible for the most emissions. Indeed, 93% of the countries most vulnerable to climate impacts are in debt distress or at significant risk thereof.³⁹

International human rights law requires states, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, to mobilise the maximum available resources for the progressive realisation of rights. That must also apply to the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF), established at COP27 and currently under a four-year transition management period by the World Bank. The LDF's full operationalisation under an elected board will be a key topic at COP29 which will hopefully lead to its first disbursement in 2025.⁴⁰ The \$700 million pledged by developing countries upon the LDF's inception are nowhere near what would be needed to respond to the human rights crisis triggered by loss and damage. Adequate funding must be calculated on the basis of evolving needs instead of set targets. It must be mobilised and dispensed in the form of grants without conditionalities, including direct community access to funds to meet the needs and priorities of those most affected - something which the current World Bank host is unable to do by virtue of its institutional architecture.^{41 42}

36. United Nations Secretary General (2024). [Analytical study on the impact of loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights, exploring equity-based approaches and solutions to addressing the same](#). A/HRC/57/30.

37. UN Trade and Development (2023). ["Taking responsibility: towards a fit-for-purpose loss and damage fund"](#). pp. vii, 3.

38. Natalia Alayza, Valerie Laxton and Carolyn Neunuebel (2023). [Developing Countries Won't Beat the Climate Crisis Without Tackling Rising Debt](#).

39. United Nations Secretary General (2024). *Op. Cit.*

40. COP29 Media Room (21/09/2024). [Fund for responding to Loss and Damage achieves historic milestone in Baku](#).

41. CIEL (2023). [Only Two Days Left to Get It Right: A Loss and Damage Fund That Promotes Human Rights](#).

42. UN Special Rapporteur on the right to development (2024). [Report: Climate justice: loss and damage](#). A/79/168.

Financial commitments are not the only priority to address as the Fund moves forward. In fact, the LDF must uphold the dignity, rights, and participation of those most affected by climate-induced disasters, as a general human rights principle stipulated in international instruments like the ICCPR. To that end, it must ensure effective and meaningful involvement of civil society organisations, Indigenous Peoples representatives, trade unions, youth organisations, and environmental rights defenders among others. This must take place all across the LDF's structure and activities to comply with the principles of participation, access to information, non-discrimination and transparency. Such a participatory approach must be applied from local needs assessments, design and implementation of activities, to the Board's decision-making. For long-term transformation, as stressed by the UN Secretary General, LDF assessments must be rights-based, needs-based, and community-led in order to consider the full spectrum of rights affected by loss and damage and redress historical power imbalances which determine who is bearing the brunt of irreversible climate impacts.

The LDF should also not create any space for negative human rights or environmental impacts through its activities. Robust safeguards, consistent with international law and standards, are essential to prevent potential and actual harm. The Fund must establish effective mechanisms for monitoring and accountability, including an independent grievance mechanism allowing the public to raise concerns and seek redress for harms arising from the Fund's activities.⁴³ That is key to the right to effective remedy as enshrined in various international and regional human rights instruments.

FIDH's recommendations

- Negotiating parties must commit increased sums to the Loss and Damage Fund that can meet the estimated costs of the crisis, and reassess them on the basis of rights-based, needs-based, participatory and community-led assessments and procedures that take into account the breadth and scale of human rights impacts caused by loss and damage.
- Negotiating parties must move away from loan-based multilateral finance and commit to mobilising and dispensing sums under the Loss & Damage Fund in the form of grants without conditionalities, with the aim to redress the existing debt distress faced by developing countries on the front line of the climate crisis. Direct community access to funds should be privileged to provide support to community- and nature-based solutions.
- The Board of the Loss & Damage Fund must establish robust and inclusive human rights and environmental safeguards, including a monitoring mechanism and an independent and accessible grievance mechanism to guarantee remedy for affected rights-holders and communities.

b) Climate finance and the need for a human rights economy

When countries signed the Paris Agreement, they decided to set a "new collective quantified goal on climate finance" (NCQG) to replace the existing goal of \$100 billion per year. The NCQG is supposed to be renegotiated at COP29, following a first Global Stocktake which showed the urgent need to ramp up and deliver on climate finance commitments in order to avoid climate catastrophe.⁴⁴ Richer countries have a responsibility to provide financial support for climate actions in less well-resourced countries - however, those actions must supplement, not supplant, their own emissions reductions. Climate finance must be provided by developed countries in compliance with the polluter-pays and common-but-differentiated-responsibilities principles enshrined in Article 9 of the Paris Agreement. Yet, while augmented support is paramount to ambitious climate action, these commitments cannot be dissociated from climate justice considerations. Concerningly, the OECD estimates that 69% of the climate finance that developed countries provided to developing countries in 2022 took the form of loans.⁴⁵ The levels of debt make it difficult for countries to finance climate action, with loan solutions only exacerbating debt distress and climate risks resulting in more expensive borrowing costs. That contrasts with the immense ecological debt of developed countries towards developing countries, who have hardly benefited from an extractivist economic model whose negative externalities affect

43. As also argued in United Nations Secretary General (2024). *Op. Cit.* p. 9.

44. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (n.d.). [New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance](#).

45. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2024). [Developed countries materially surpassed their USD 100 billion climate finance commitment in 2022](#).

their communities and environment. Once again, evaluation of needs should drive the evolution of the amounts committed to the NCQG.

The NCQG should not reproduce debt mechanisms that are holding back the fulfilment of human rights in countries with the least responsibility for the climate crisis. FIDH believes there is an urgent need for a shift from loans to non-debt-creating grants, hence moving away from a borrowing logic that is unfit for tackling the challenges of the climate crisis and the polycrisis as a whole. That is why it is essential to accompany a stronger NCQG with debt relief and debt restructuring measures for countries most affected by climate change. Such a strategy would constitute one step forward in a paradigm shift toward a “human rights economy”: this consists in moving from an economy driven by the search for maximising profits through resource exploitation and financialisation, to one that strives for the realisation of human rights by internalising externalities (such as natural resources and human workforce) to ultimately come back within planetary boundaries.⁴⁶ In high-income countries, such a shift would entail a planned and democratic reduction of production and consumption to lower environmental pressures and inequalities while ensuring well-being, social justice and human rights for all. In low-income countries, development should not be equated with an increase in GDP, but with the realisation of human rights and increased social and ecological well-being.

A human rights economy would ground all economic, fiscal, monetary, business and investment decisions in human rights, by relying on human rights obligations that governments have already agreed to - including by designing progressive tax systems and tackling tax avoidance, especially from multinational corporations, to ensure greater equality and generate the resources needed to realise human rights for all. It would also tackle poverty and extreme concentrations of wealth and power alongside gender, ethnic, racial, geographic and other divides, and consequently contribute to redressing the systemic injustices at the foundation of the polycrisis by implementing a human rights framework to frame all just transition pathways, including the preventive mitigation and adaptation investments of the NCQG. Considering the historical responsibilities of state and non-state emitters, resources for the goal should be mobilised on the basis of the polluter-pays principle through new means such as equity-based taxation and carbon taxation on polluters, while redirecting public subsidies away from harmful fossil fuel activities which should be phased out as soon as possible. This mobilisation of resources must include appropriate safeguards and evaluations to prevent negative impacts on the most marginalised segments of our societies.

FIDH's recommendations

- Negotiating parties must set a New Collective Quantified Goal for climate finance that significantly surpasses the first initial goal of \$100 billion per year and draws on contributions from developed countries in compliance with the “polluter pays” and “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” principles. They must reassess and scale up yearly commitments by conducting rights-based, needs-based, and community-led assessments and implementing participatory procedural modalities.
- Negotiating parties from developed countries must dispense the NCQG's funding through non-debt-creating grants instead of loans. These must be accompanied in parallel by debt relief and debt restructuring measures by multilateral development banks and developed borrowers for developing countries most affected by climate change in order to redress systemic injustice and allocate resources for the fulfilment of human rights.
- At the national level, all States must shift towards a human rights economy model grounded in human rights agreements, obligations, standards and principles acting as its guidelines and benchmarks for a just transition. Such a shift must be secured through new means such as equity-based taxation, the fight against multinational tax avoidance, and carbon taxation on polluters, as well as a permanent cancellation of public subsidies for fossil fuel activities to ensure a full phaseout from the drivers of the climate crisis.

46. UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights (2024). [Report: Eradicating poverty beyond growth](#). A/HRC/56/61.

- Negotiating parties must set new ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) committed to time-bound, full phaseout of fossil fuels, and grounded in human rights obligations, principles, and standards in their preparation, content, and implementation. Contributions must be developed with the a full participation, inclusion and consent of peoples and communities, and in a gender-responsive, child-sensitive and disability-inclusive way, in order to foster gender, racial, ethnic, disability and intergenerational justice, respect and promote labour rights, and reduce inequality both within and between countries.
- The Just Transition Work Programme, established at COP28, must be anchored in international human rights law and principles to guide its priorities and operationalisation. It must provide an effective discussion forum for parties to reach clear consensus on the definition of just transition and pathways grounded into climate justice and responding to the needs and priorities of frontline communities. The Programme must also build states' capacity to develop comprehensive just transition policies at the national level, and plans at the sub-national level which should guide what aspects of just transition can be integrated into NDCs

Keep your eyes open

fidh

Establishing the facts - Investigative and trial observation missions

Supporting civil society - Training and exchange

Mobilizing the international community - Advocacy before intergovernmental bodies

Informing and reporting - Mobilizing public opinion

For FIDH, transforming societies relies on the work of local actors.

The Worldwide Movement for Human Rights acts at national, regional and international levels in support of its member and partner organizations to address human rights abuses and consolidate democratic processes. Its work is directed at States and those in power, such as armed opposition groups and multinational corporations.

Its primary beneficiaries are national human rights organizations who are members of the Movement, and through them, the victims of human rights violations. FIDH also cooperates with other local partner organizations and actors of change.

Director of publication:

Alice Mogwe

Editor:

Éléonore Morel

Author:

FIDH

Design:

FIDH/CB

fidh

CONTACT

FIDH

17, passage de la Main d'Or

75011 Paris - France

Tel: (33-1) 43 55 25 18

www.fidh.org

Twitter: @fidh_en / fidh_fr / fidh_es

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/FIDH.HumanRights/>



FIDH is an
**international human rights
NGO**
federating **188** organizations
from **116** countries

fidh

ABOUT FIDH

FIDH takes action for the protection of victims of human rights violations, for the prevention of violations and to bring perpetrators to justice.

A broad mandate

FIDH works for the respect of all the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

A universal movement

FIDH was established in 1922, and today unites 188 member organizations in 116 countries around the world. FIDH coordinates and supports their activities and provides them with a voice at the international level.

An independent organization

Like its member organizations, FIDH is not linked to any party or religion and is independent of all governments.