



Reference: TIGO IOR 40/2022.2546

H.E. Mr. Espen Barth Eide
President of the United Nations Environment
Assembly and Minister of Climate and
Environment of Norway
Kongens gate 20,
Oslo
Norway

Via email

14 January 2022

Your Excellency,

I am writing in relation to the draft Ministerial Declaration for the United Nations Environment Assembly 5.2, which the Secretary a.i. of Governing Bodies has invited Stakeholders to share comments on.

We are disappointed to find that there are no references to human rights anywhere in the draft declaration and urge you to remedy this in the next draft. The link between human rights and environment is indisputable and the UN Human Rights Council has passed a resolution in October 2021 recognizing access to a healthy and sustainable environment as a universal right. Amongst other things, the resolution calls on governments “to take into account human rights obligations and commitments relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment...” Calls made by the UN Secretary General in his 2020 Call to Action on Human Rights and commitments towards mainstreaming human rights within the UN should also serve as reminder to the United Nations Environment Assembly of its responsibility to ensure human rights are fully considered in all its decision-making, operations and institutional commitments.

As such, we believe it is imperative that the text of the Ministerial Declaration should make clear that the commitments and plans referred to are grounded in human rights. As a minimum, we suggest that reference could be made in the following paragraphs of the draft declaration:

Paragraph 7. We recognize the need for transformative and systemic changes and for **human-rights consistent** policies that address several environmental and societal challenges simultaneously, rechanneling financial flows through innovative holistic approaches that truly value nature. [adding “human-rights consistent”]

Paragraph 13. We commit to working across sectors and levels of government, and between governments, to halt the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of ecosystems **while respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities**, focusing on areas of particular importance for biodiversity; sustainable land, sea and water use, effectively managing and designating protected areas and parks **without adversely impacting the human rights of those living within those areas**, safeguarding especially vulnerable habitats, types of nature and ecosystems, and addressing deforestation, wildlife trafficking, illegal mining, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and other unsustainable activities, crimes and conflicts that have serious impacts on the environment. [adding “while respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities” and “without adversely impacting the human rights of those living within those areas”].

Paragraph 26. We further recognize that the effective implementation of these actions requires [~~enabling and coherent~~] [replace with: **enabling, coherent and human-rights consistent**] legal and policy frameworks at all levels, good governance and law enforcement, to be supported by effective and urgently mobilized means of implementation from all sources of

finance, including domestic, international, private sector and innovative sources in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as well as from relevant international environmental agreements, by further capacity-building, environmentally sound technologies, dedicated development partnerships, and a renewed and strong commitment to multilateralism and international solidarity.

I look forward to your attention to this matter and remain at your disposal should you require any clarification or if you would like to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Netsanet", with a horizontal line underneath.

Netsanet Belay,
Research and Advocacy Director,
Amnesty International