

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC ON HUMAN RIGHTS-CONSISTENT CLIMATE ACTION IN 2026

KEY HUMAN RIGHTS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLIMATE ACTION IN 2026

Towards a just transition and fossil fuel phase out:

- All parties should demonstrate a commitment to phasing out fossil fuels, followed by concerted action, according to their historical responsibility and capacity. Ending all fossil fuel subsidies while ensuring an adequate standard of living for people with lower incomes who rely on subsidized fuel is an urgent first step.
- All parties should develop human rights-compliant just transition pathways away from activities that produce substantial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (such as fossil fuel-based energy and transport systems, carbon-intensive construction, meat production or nitrogen-based fertilizer heavy agricultural systems) with the meaningful participation of affected peoples and communities.
- Electrification is an essential component of such pathways but must be developed to deliver renewable energy produced in a manner consistent with human rights.

Towards scaled-up finance and climate reparations:

- High income countries most responsible for historical emissions, and all other states in a position to do so, should speedily increase their finance provision – primarily in the form of grants – and deliver on existing funding commitments to support lower income countries in reducing emissions, adapting to climate change (including by at least tripling adaptation finance well before 20235), and phasing out fossil fuels while protecting fossil fuel workers and others who may be harmed.
- As a contribution to reparatory justice, parties most responsible for climate change should scale up efforts to address loss and damage, including by increasing contributions to the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD). They should also agree on an effective process to deliver a regular State of Loss and Damage Report and provide further guidance to the FRLD Board to ensure that its operations are fully human rights compliant and that it adopts an ambitious, human rights-based resource mobilization strategy.

Towards greater protection of, and participation by, civil society including environmental human rights defenders:

- Parties should publicly recognize the important role of human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders (EHRDs), and other civil society actors in effective climate action.
- Host countries of UNFCCC meetings, including COPs, should facilitate access for all members of civil society who wish to contribute and should encourage and increase participation of Indigenous Peoples, affected communities and marginalized groups such as people living with disabilities.
- Parties should consult meaningfully with civil society participants and affected communities on climate action at local, national, regional and international levels.
- As hosts or co-hosts of UNFCCC meetings, Australia, Fiji and Türkiye must ensure that all persons can freely express themselves, individually or in association with others, and peacefully demonstrate, including about climate change and environmental issues, without discrimination or fear of reprisals before, during and after COP31.

This document provides recommendations for parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and to the Paris Agreement which would help to put human rights front and centre of all climate action and decision making at COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, in November 2026. To do so will result in more effective and more sustainable outcomes, remedies for unavoidable harms, and reductions in historic inequalities often stemming from racist and colonial legacies, while pointing the way towards climate justice for all. A full, fast, fair and funded fossil fuel phase out in all sectors as part of a just and equitable transition towards renewable energy, and a massive scale up of finance in line with the polluter pays principle, together with reform of the global financial architecture, are urgent and essential, as are open and fully participatory civic space and the protection of human rights.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE

As a human rights organization, Amnesty International is profoundly alarmed by the climate crisis and its injustices, its multiple and serious impacts on human rights and the failure of governments to tackle it. In 2014, 27 UN Special Procedures described climate change as “one of the greatest human rights challenges of our time”.¹ In 2019 the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that “the world has never seen a threat to human rights of this scope”.² Amnesty International concurs with these views and has incorporated climate change as a cross-cutting priority in its global strategy up to 2030.³

Yet, in the last decade, global greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise, not fall as they urgently need to do. 2015-2025 was the hottest 11-year period on record⁴ and 2026 is set to be the second hottest or even hottest year in history⁵ as a very strong El Nino effect sets in.⁶ Fossil fuel producing states and companies have pushed back against the implementation of effective mitigation measures. Inadequate adaptation measures leave billions at risk of human rights harms from both extreme and slow onset events including heatwaves, droughts, forest fires, storms, floods and glacial melt. The countries most responsible for historical emissions are failing to scale up the finance needed for both mitigation and adaptation and loss and damage is escalating without an adequate framework for redress. Authoritarian momentum, including widespread climate disinformation, is spreading its tentacles across the globe, leaving environmental human rights defenders, including climate scientists, at risk of stigmatization and attacks, both on and offline, while the right to peaceful protest about climate change is increasingly restricted. As a result, people in all countries are not able to enjoy their right to access the climate-change related information they need and to be able to hold governments and corporations to account.

As a global movement with many years of expertise in civil and political rights and a growing body of work on how to make global economic governance more consistent with states’ human rights obligations, Amnesty International believes that the continuing failure of world governments to tackle the global climate crisis could amount to one of the greatest inter-generational human rights violations in history⁷ and is campaigning for a just transition away from fossil fuels, for adequate, primarily grants based finance for climate action, for a reparatory justice approach to loss and damage, and against authoritarian practices that close civic space and put EHRDs and peaceful climate activists at risk. These human rights imperatives, the priorities of people and organizations representing those most harmed, and Amnesty’s assessment of its added value as a global human rights movement guide its advocacy priorities for COP31, which are laid out in this briefing.

¹ OHCHR, “A new climate change agreement must include human rights protections for all”, 17 October 2014, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/SP/SP_To_UNFCCC.pdf

² OHCHR, “Global update at the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council, Opening statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet”, 9 September 2019, www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24956&LangID=E

³ Amnesty International, *Global Strategic Framework (2022-2030)*, 17 September 2021, (Index: POL 50/3639/2021), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol50/3639/2021/en/>

⁴ World Meteorological Organization, “Earth’s climate swings increasingly out of balance”, 23 March 2026, <https://wmo.int/media/news/earths-climate-swings-increasingly-out-of-balance>

⁵ WMO, “New report suggests more global temperature records ahead”, 28 May 2026, <https://wmo.int/news/media-centre/new-report-suggests-more-global-temperature-records-ahead>

⁶ WMO, “El Niño set to become very strong, raising risks of extreme weather into 2027”, 3 September 2026, <https://wmo.int/media/news/el-nino-set-become-very-strong-raising-risks-of-extreme-weather-2027>

⁷ Amnesty International, “Amnesty International stands in solidarity with school strike for climate”, 13 March 2019, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/03/amnesty-international-stands-in-solidarity-with-school-strike-for-climate/>

HUMAN RIGHTS PRIORITIES FOR COP31

Protection of and respect for human rights are essential for effective climate action, as noted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).⁸ Meanwhile, human rights harms are escalating dramatically with each increment of global heating. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has clarified the 1.5°C target is legally binding on all states. Any overshoot of this target⁹ must be kept as low as possible, with a speedy return to below 1.5°C, through tackling the problem at its root cause – justly and equitably phasing out the production and burning of fossil fuels and protecting and restoring ecosystems – without relying on unproven technologies that cannot deliver emissions reductions at the scale and speed needed and risk causing further human rights harms. The Paris Agreement preamble includes references to human rights law and standards,¹⁰ but, regrettably, attention to human rights – including in relation to non-discrimination and gender, racial and intergenerational justice – in COP discussions and decisions since then has remained limited and even been opposed by some parties.

COP31 is an opportunity to inject human rights principles into key areas of climate policy, simultaneously improving their effectiveness while tackling global inequalities. Climate change, caused primarily by humans extracting and burning fossil fuels and by unsustainable land use practices, is an injustice: it is the result of powerful people taking actions that inflict harm on everyone else. A **climate justice** approach looks at the root causes of the climate crisis and calls on powerful actors to address these imbalances and develop a future beyond fossil fuels that fully respects and protects human rights for all generations, now and to come. The future should not replicate the extractivism and discrimination of the present and the past. These practices not only deepen historical inequalities but also create new forms of exclusion and vulnerability.

To achieve climate justice demands, Amnesty International is urging parties to the UNFCCC to focus on the following priorities at COP31: an urgent **just transition away from fossil fuels** with an immediate end to fossil fuel subsidies; **scaled-up finance** for climate action, including for enhanced protection for disproportionately affected communities, that does not create further debt in lower income countries; **reparations for loss and damage** caused by the climate crisis; and an **open civic space** both nationally and within the UNFCCC process along with improved **protections for environmental human rights defenders** (EHRDs) globally. This is not an exhaustive list but rather represents opportunities for real progress that can be achieved in 2026 that will go a long way to supporting other climate justice demands.

A JUST TRANSITION AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS

Fossil fuels harm communities directly, such as through polluting nearby air and groundwater, as well as indirectly, through climate change.

Amnesty International's 2025 report *Extraction Extinction: Why The Lifecycle of Fossil Fuels Threatens Life, Nature and Human Rights* demonstrates how fossil fuel infrastructure poses risks for the health and livelihoods of roughly a quarter of the world's population that live within five kilometres of such sites.¹¹ The imperative to protect human rights by phasing out fossil fuels has also been made explicit by several UN treaty bodies¹² and experts.¹³

Furthermore, in its July 2025 Advisory Opinion on climate change, the ICJ found that:

⁸ The Summary for Policymakers of the IPCC's synthesis report of its sixth assessment cycle states that "Adaptation and mitigation actions that prioritise equity, social justice, climate justice, rights-based approaches, and inclusivity, lead to more sustainable outcomes, reduce trade-offs, support transformative change and advance climate resilient development". See: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/summary-for-policymakers/>, section C.5.2.

⁹ UN Environment Programme, *Limiting Overshoot - Navigating exceedance of 1.5°C and pathways towards return*, 2 September 2026, <https://www.unep.org/resources/limiting-overshoot-navigating-exceedance>

¹⁰ Paris Agreement, 29 January 2016, UN Doc. FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1.

¹¹ Amnesty International, "Global: Fossil Fuel Infrastructure is Putting Rights of 2 Billion People and Critical Ecosystems at Risk", 12 November 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/fossil-fuel-infrastructure-rights-critical-ecosystems-at-risk/>

¹² See, for example, "Joint statement by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", 14 May 2020, UN Doc. HRI/2019/1

¹³ OHCHR, "Fossils fuels at the heart of the planetary environmental crisis: UN experts", 30 November 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/fossils-fuels-heart-planetary-environmental-crisis-un-experts>

“Failure of a State to take appropriate action to protect the climate system from [greenhouse gas] emissions — including through fossil fuel production, fossil fuel consumption, the granting of fossil fuel exploration licences or the provision of fossil fuel subsidies — may constitute an internationally wrongful act which is attributable to that State.”¹⁴

In 2023 the Paris Agreement’s first global stocktake (GST), mandated on a five-yearly cycle, marked a milestone in explicitly calling for a transition “away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science.”¹⁵ The first GST nevertheless lacks a clear follow-up mechanism, particularly in relation to a clear timeline for fossil fuel phase out. Amnesty International calls for a strengthening of the modalities for the second GST, due in 2028, to ensure meaningful participation, including through the creation of regional “GST People’s Assemblies” co-organized with civil society and Indigenous Peoples; reliance on the best available science, particularly the IPCC; alignment with climate finance targets; consideration of loss and damage separately from adaptation; and strengthening protection for EHRDs.¹⁶

Fossil fuel phase out, while urgent and necessary, must be done in a manner that protects the rights of affected individuals and communities, including those relying on the fossil fuel industry for income, those living near planned or existing renewable energy infrastructure, and others. A just and equitable transition is thus an integral part of climate action towards a defossilized future. While electrification — a key priority of the COP31 Presidency¹⁷ — is an essential component of just transition pathways, it must be developed so that it delivers renewable energy produced in a manner consistent with human rights.

Adoption of a robust process for the swift operationalization (ideally by COP32) of the Just Transition Mechanism agreed at COP30 to “enhance international cooperation, technical assistance, capacity-building and knowledge sharing, and enable equitable, inclusive just transitions”¹⁸ (also called the Belém-Antalya Mechanism [BAM] by civil society) is an important step that should be taken at COP31. The BAM should have a multi-layered governance system, enabling coherence between just transition discussions in all forums and the UNFCCC, including a diverse BAM Assembly of Practitioners, feeding in operational experience into a BAM Expert Group with a balanced composition of higher and lower income parties and with Indigenous Peoples and civil society representation.

Creation of a permanent agenda item and associated contact group at COPs would enable translation of emerging issues into concrete COP outcomes. Critical modalities that need to be addressed include: a Resource Mobilization Task Force to assist with scaling up finance to support just transitions; a matchmaking platform to connect identified needs with offers of support and dedicated Secretariat capacity to help organize and coordinate the activities of the mechanism. A short-lived transitional committee, similar to that put in place for the operationalization of the FRLD, is essential for faster development of these and other key modalities, and to oversee expert and practitioner nominations to the relevant bodies created.

Given the lack of progress within the UNFCCC process on creating a timebound roadmap for fossil fuel phase out, some states have turned to parallel initiatives to demonstrate their commitment to transition to renewable energy sources and to kickstart the urgent process of coordinating this action amongst states. Amnesty International welcomes the endorsement by 18 national governments — and many more sub-regional governments, cities and organizations — of the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, which aims to end the expansion of coal, oil and gas, and equitably phase out existing production to keep global warming within 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.¹⁹ Amnesty International urges states that participated in the First Conference on Transitioning away from Fossil Fuels, held in Santa Marta, Colombia, between 24–29 April 2026,²⁰ to follow up on its findings and outcomes as a matter of urgency, including complementarity to the initiatives proposed through substantive discussions under existing and appropriate agenda items in the

¹⁴ International Court of Justice, *Advisory Opinion: Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change*, 23 July 2025, para. 427, <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/187>

¹⁵ UNFCCC, “Decision 1/CMA.5: Outcome of the first global stocktake”, 15 March 2024, UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2023/16/Add.1, para. 28(d).

¹⁶ Amnesty International, *COP30: Human Rights Deprioritized But a Win on Just Transition* (Index: IOR 40/0684/2026), 5 February 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/0684/2026/en/>

¹⁷ COP31.tr, “COP31 Presidency announces “35% by 2035” electrification target as part of Action Agenda launch”, 9 June 2026, <https://cop31.tr/news-detail/bonn-electrification-target-2026>

¹⁸ UNFCCC, “Decision 2/CMA.7, UAE Just Transition Work Programme,” UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/19/Add.1, para. 25

¹⁹ For information about the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, see: <https://fossilfueltreaty.org>

²⁰ See: <https://transitionawayconference.com/>

UNFCCC process. Amnesty International also calls on all states to participate in the second Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels, due to be held in Tuvalu and co-hosted by Ireland, in 2027.

Recommendations

Amnesty International calls on all parties to:

- **Continue to develop a robust process for operationalization of the Just Transition Mechanism, agreed at COP30 putting human rights at its centre, with meaningful and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, affected communities and civil society in all its diversity and adopt it at COP31 with a view to establishing the mechanism at COP32.**
- **Commit to a just transition away from fossil fuels, in line with each country's responsibility and capacity, including by endorsing the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative and engaging actively towards the speedy negotiation and implementation of a treaty and with the COP30 Presidency's initiative to develop a Roadmap for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner (TAFF Roadmap),²¹ as well as by joining the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance²² and Powering Past Coal Alliance,²³ if not already a member.**
- **Develop human rights-compliant national and regional pathways for a just transition away from fossil fuels.**
 - **Ensure human rights-compliant just transition plans, for all sectors and developed with the meaningful participation of affected peoples and communities, are included in all new or revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-LEDS).**
- **Ensure human rights-compliant critical mineral supply chains for the transition to renewable energy, in line with principles outlined by civil society²⁴ and the UN Secretary-General.²⁵**
- **End all subsidies for fossil fuels while ensuring an adequate standard of living for people with lower incomes.**
- **Strengthen the modalities for the second GST so that it can build on the first GST outcome and deliver a concrete commitment to a just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels by 2050, according to states' responsibilities and capabilities.**
 - **These modalities must ensure active and meaningful participation, including through the creation of regional 'GST People's Assemblies' co-organized with civil society and Indigenous Peoples; reliance on the best available science, particularly the IPCC 7th Assessment Report and Indigenous knowledge; alignment with climate finance targets; consideration of loss and damage separately from adaptation; and strengthening recognition of and protection for EHRDs.**

SCALED-UP FINANCE AND REPARATIONS

Adequate finance is crucial to help lower income countries carry out rapid transitions to zero carbon economies (mitigation), to adapt to climate change and to recover from unavoidable climate change-related loss and damage. Finance is also required to ensure they can protect their populations from human rights harms that result from the transition process itself. High income countries that have the greatest historical responsibility for climate change have the obligation to provide climate finance, technology transfer and capacity building under the UNFCCC framework to support lower income states in implementing their climate mitigation and adaptation plans. All states in a position to do so have an obligation to provide international cooperation and assistance for the

²¹ See UNFCCC, "COP30 Presidency Roadmaps", <https://unfccc.int/cop30/cop30-presidency-roadmaps> (accessed 1 May 2026)

²² See <https://beyondoilandgasalliance.org/>

²³ See <https://poweringpastcoal.org/>

²⁴ Amnesty International, *Powering Change: Principles for Businesses and Governments in the Battery Value Chain* (updated October 2022) (Index: ACT 30/3544/2021), 4 February 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ACT30/3544/2021/en/>

²⁵ The UN Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals, "Resourcing the energy transition: Principles to guide critical energy transition minerals towards equity and justice resourcing the energy transition", 11 September 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/critical-minerals>

progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum of their available resources, including in the context of climate change mitigation, adaptation, responding to climate change related loss and damage and in developing human rights-compliant just transition pathways.

The finance needs of lower income countries for climate mitigation and adaptation are estimated to be between USD 5 to 6 trillion cumulatively by 2030.²⁶ Nevertheless, high income, historically high emitting countries have repeatedly failed to meet their existing obligations to provide climate finance, including to deliver USD 100 billion for climate finance annually from 2020 to 2025 to lower income countries²⁷ – an amount which, in any case, fell far below what was actually required.

The New Collective Quantified Goal for climate finance (NCQG) agreed at COP29 of USD 300 billion per year by 2035²⁸ remains wholly inadequate to meet the needs identified by lower income countries and will put the rights of millions of people at risk while perpetuating global inequalities.²⁹ These needs will only increase as the planet heats.

The implementation of the two-year Climate Finance Work Programme (CFWP), agreed at COP30,³⁰ must therefore ensure balanced, predictable and needs-based finance across for all aspects of climate action, while addressing systemic barriers and enabling delivery of, and effective access to, adequate, public, grants-based finance at scale, including implementation of the COP29 call to triple outflows from multilateral climate funds.³¹ The Climate Finance Work Programme must translate its political commitments into concrete, trackable and accountable financial flows, clarifying the public provision component of the USD 300 billion goal and its relation to Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement. It should be placed as a sub-item under "Matters relating to finance" on the provisional agenda for COP31, which should result in a decision on the modalities and scope of the CFWP.

The Work Programme must ensure coherence across the climate finance architecture, linking the NCQG, the Standing Committee on Finance's work and the Financial Mechanism and its operating entities, as well as other funds. It must also look at other relevant constituted bodies and thematic work programmes such as the Global Goal on Adaptation and the Just Transition Work Programme, the Enhanced Transparency Framework and the Global Stocktake. It must produce actionable decisions – not just reports from consultations, but frameworks, methodological guidance, and political signals that can inform budgetary processes in developed countries, replenishments, NDC and NAP implementation, and the 2028 NCQG progress report.

The Paris Agreement requires a balance between mitigation and adaptation finance yet adaptation measures – that are essential for human rights protection – have long been massively underfunded. To meet their human rights obligations, parties must strengthen the reference to tripling adaptation finance agreed at COP30,³² through a concrete commitment in the Global Goal on Adaptation decision to reaching at least USD 120 billion per year well ahead of 2035, recognizing much more is needed meet the adaptation needs of lower income countries.

As well as continuously revising and implementing their NDCs and NAPs, lower income countries also need support to respond to existing and future loss and damage caused by climate change, where adaptation is insufficient or too slow to prevent climate harms. Loss and damage may include, among other things, loss of life, livelihoods, homes, land and cultural rights, as well as climate-change related displacement. Loss and damage funding needs in 2025 were estimated to be USD 395 billion.³³ A reparatory justice framework to address loss and damage is required to achieve climate justice. The ICJ, in its Advisory Opinion, clearly affirmed that human rights law is critical to interpreting and addressing loss and damage. The climate crisis is not only harming a wide range of fundamental human rights, but loss and damage responses also require the application of human rights principles and standards. Additionally, the ICJ endorsed the calls of frontline communities and countries for implementation of their right to full reparation, as

²⁶ UNFCCC, Standing Committee on Finance, *Addendum: Second report on the determination of the needs of developing country Parties related to implementing the Convention and the Paris Agreement*, 10 September 2024, UN Doc. SCF/2024/35/4, Annex I (unedited)

²⁷ Although high income countries claimed to have met and exceeded the USD 100 billion per year since 2022, Oxfam has estimated that official OECD figures overinflate the true amount of grant-equivalent climate finance by USD 88 billion in 2022 and by around USD 100 billion in 2024. See Oxfam, "Rich countries exaggerating 'true value' of climate finance by around \$100 billion", 8 July 2026, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/rich-countries-exaggerating-true-value-climate-finance-around-100-billion>

²⁸ UNFCCC, "Decision 1/CMA.6: New collective quantified goal on climate finance", 27 Mar 2025, UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2024/17/Add.1

²⁹ Amnesty International, "COP29: Finance target is a blueprint for inequalities and violations", 25 November 2024 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/11/cop29-finance-target-is-a-blueprint-for-inequalities-and-violations/>

³⁰ UNFCCC, "Decision 1/CMA.7: Global Mutirão: uniting humanity in a global mobilization against climate change", 30 Mar 2026, UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/19/Add.1, para. 54

³¹ UNFCCC, "Decision 1/CMA.6: New collective quantified goal on climate finance", previously cited, para. 16

³² UNFCCC, "Decision 1/CMA.7: Global Mutirão: uniting humanity in a global mobilization against climate change", 30 Mar 2026, UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/19/Add.1, para. 53

³³ M. Tavoni and others, "Economic quantification of Loss and Damage funding needs", 3 June 2024, *Nature Reviews Earth and Environment*, 5, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43017-024-00565-7>

it confirmed the basic principle of international law that those who breach their legal obligations, including under the climate treaties, have a duty to repair the harm they cause.³⁴ Funding to respond to loss and damage can be considered a form of climate reparation when given as non-repayable grants rather than debt-inducing loans.

The Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) was set up at COP27 in 2022 to finance “initiatives to help vulnerable communities recover from climate-related losses and damage resulting from incidents such as climate-change related extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and other climate-change induced crises”.³⁵ However, the FRLD is woefully underfunded³⁶ with initial proposals outstripping initially available funds by over USD 2.5 billion.³⁷ Other concerns remain that important aspects of its operations, such as direct small grants to communities in need and a robust Active Observer Policy, have not yet been put in place.³⁸ At the ninth Board meeting in July 2026, civil society representatives criticized the lack of transparency in the negotiations through the repeated use of closed door sessions which hampered the effectiveness of their participation in the meeting.³⁹ Amnesty International has previously called for the FRLD to take a more human rights-based approach to assessing and addressing loss and damage⁴⁰ and is urging the FRLD Board to put in place an ambitious and rights-based Resource Mobilization Strategy⁴¹ as well as for a massive scale-up and swift delivery of contributions to the fund.

The Sevilla Commitment,⁴² the outcome document of the Fourth Financing for Development Conference (FFD) aims to close the funding gap to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by attempting to transform the international financial architecture to increase the fiscal space of countries’ budgets,⁴³ recommitting to multilateralism including targeted support for the most vulnerable country groups such as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Development States (SIDS).⁴⁴ The Commitment highlights issues not otherwise in the UNFCCC including the debt-climate nexus⁴⁵ (supporting countries’ liquidity and debt sustainability⁴⁶ in the context of external shocks) or pre-arranged finance.⁴⁷ It calls for more aid effectiveness,⁴⁸ broadened tax bases⁴⁹ (which should include global solidarity levies for high-emission or luxury sectors⁵⁰ to generate dedicated climate revenue and ensuring that all companies, including multinationals, pay taxes to the governments of countries where economic activity occurs),⁵¹ more transparent, gender⁵² and climate sensitive budgets⁵³ and the empowerment of sub-national authorities.⁵⁴

Making climate action intrinsic to all financial flows, by ensuring that all financial investments support mitigation and adaptation, is a key objective of the Paris Agreement, stipulated under Article 2.1(c). The annual Veredas Dialogue on the implementation of Article 2.1(c)⁵⁵ should develop a clear vision and theory of change for Article 2.1(c) and propose solutions to achieve the necessary

³⁴ Climate Home News, “The ICJ climate ruling has major implications for the loss and damage fund”, 3 October 2025, <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2025/10/03/the-icj-climate-ruling-has-major-implications-for-the-loss-and-damage-fund/>

³⁵ UNFCCC, “Decision 2/CMA.4: Funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including a focus on addressing loss and damage”, 17 March 2023, UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2022/10/Add.1, para. 3

³⁶ See <https://fiftrustee.worldbank.org/en/about/unit/pim/fiftrustee/fund-detail/fird#1age>

³⁷ The Fund received 176 funding requests to its start-up phase – known as the Barbados Implementation Modalities (BIM), totalling USD 2.8 billion USD, while only USD 342 million has been allocated to the BIM. Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, “The Fund for responding to Loss and Damage Board Concludes Ninth Meeting, Advances Resource Mobilization and Prepares for Funding Decisions”, 10 July 2026, https://www.fird.org/sites/default/files/Press%20Release_Post%20B.9%20communiqu%e.pdf

³⁸ Joint Open Letter: *A human rights-based long-term operationalization of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage* (Index: IOR 40/0905/2026), 20 April 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/0905/2026/en/>

³⁹ Loss and Damage Collaboration, *Daily Policy Updates for the Ninth Meeting of the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD B9)*, p37-38, July 2026, <https://www.lossanddamagecollaboration.org/resources/daily-policy-updates-for-the-ninth-meeting-of-the-board-of-the-fund-for-responding-to-loss-and-damage-fird-b9>

⁴⁰ Amnesty International and Centre for International Environmental Law, *Human Rights as a Compass for Operationalising the Loss and Damage Fund* (Index: IOR 40/5773/2022), February 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/5773/2022/en/>

⁴¹ Joint submission to the FRLD Secretariat, *Towards an Ambitious and Rights-Based Resource Mobilisation Strategy for the FRLD* (Index: IOR 40/0717/2026), 31 January 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/0717/2026/en/>

⁴² United Nations General Assembly. *Sevilla Commitment*, 25 August 2026, UN Doc. A/RES/79/323

⁴³ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 25

⁴⁴ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 9

⁴⁵ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), Sections E and F, paras 47 - 5

⁴⁶ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited) paras 49 and 54

⁴⁷ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 32(f)

⁴⁸ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), Section C, paras 35 - 41

⁴⁹ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 27 (d)

⁵⁰ Sevilla Commitment (previously cited), para 27 (e)

⁵¹ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 27 (f)

⁵² Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 27 (g)

⁵³ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), para 27(h)

⁵⁴ Sevilla Commitment, (previously cited), paras 13 and 27 (o) and (p)

⁵⁵ UNFCCC, “Decision 11/CMA.7: Sharm el-Sheikh dialogue on the scope of Article 2, paragraph 1(c), of the Paris Agreement and its complementarity with Article 9 of the Paris Agreement”, 30 Mar 2026, UN Doc. FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/19/Add.1

transformation of the international financial architecture that is needed to address historical imbalances of power in this arena that perpetuate inequities, avoiding undue influence by international finance institutions.

Recommendations

Amnesty International recommends that:

- To meet their obligations under environmental and international human rights law, all countries in a position to do so, especially high income countries most responsible for climate change, must rapidly provide adequate, new, additional and predictable finance – primarily in the form of grant equivalent public finance – to support lower income countries in reducing emissions and adapting to climate change, as well as to address loss and damage and to support just transitions that leave no one behind, while aiming to ensure a balance between funding for mitigation and adaptation, including by speedily fulfilling new and existing funding commitments.
- All parties should ensure that the Climate Finance Work Programme, which should be formally reflected in the provisional agenda for CMA8 at COP31 as a sub-item under "Matters relating to finance", results in the provision of balanced, predictable and needs-based finance across all aspects of climate action, while addressing systemic barriers and enabling delivery of, and effective access to, public, grants-based finance at scale. A decision on the modalities and scope of the Work Programme should be taken at CMA8.
- Parties should also firmly commit to at least triple adaptation finance to a minimum of USD120 billion per year well before 2035, recognizing that much more is needed to protect people from the human rights harms of climate change.
- Parties should adopt a clear plan to triple outflows of multilateral climate funds by 2035 (compared to 2022), including by finding ways to decrease the administrative burden for lower income states, especially those with limited institutional capacity.
- Parties should adopt an effective process to deliver the regular State of Loss and Damage Report mandated at COP30.⁵⁶
- Parties should provide further guidance to the Board of the FRLD at COP31 to ensure that all elements and conditions of the FRLD's Governing Instrument, including access to small grants for communities, Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable groups and their livelihoods,⁵⁷ are fulfilled, that its operations, including the proposed Active Observer Policy are fully human rights-compliant,⁵⁸ and that it adopts an ambitious, rights-based resource mobilization strategy.
- Article 2.1 (c) discussions, including in the context of the Veredas Dialogue, must set out a clear pathway towards the collective achievement of the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement that is led by the UNFCCC rather than international finance institutions, including necessary transformation of the international financial architecture.
- Financing for Development initiatives must adequately address the debt-climate nexus including by providing for adequate and timely debt relief (including through support for a UN Sovereign Debt Convention), supporting international tax cooperation including effective taxation of multinational corporations, and ensuring more gender sensitive and climate sensitive transparent budgets at the national level.

CIVIC SPACE AND PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The safe and meaningful participation of frontline and fenceline communities, EHRDs and other representatives of civil society in multilateral climate negotiations leads to fairer, more sustainable decisions and promotes environmental⁵⁹ and climate justice. But

⁵⁶ UNFCCC, "Decision 11/CP.30: Review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts" UN Doc. FCCC/CP/2025/12/Add.2, para. 20

⁵⁷ UNFCCC, "Decision 1/CP.28 Operationalization of the new funding arrangements, including a fund, for responding to loss and damage referred to in paragraphs 2–3 of decisions 2/CP.27 and 2/CMA.4: Annex I, UN Doc. FCCC/CP/2023/11/Add.1, para.49 (d)

⁵⁸ For more detailed recommendations, see Amnesty International and Centre for International Environmental Law, *Human Rights as a Compass for Operationalising the Loss and Damage Fund* (previously cited).

⁵⁹ Environmental justice demands fairness and equity in environmental policy and practices that must address historical and ongoing systemic inequalities that have resulted in environmental harm to marginalized communities. It requires the equitable distribution of environmental benefits

too often, they are sidelined or excluded. When governments and institutions restrict protests, limit side events or block access to negotiations, they make climate policy less inclusive, less effective and less just. These challenges are especially visible at UNFCCC climate talks, where participation by civil society is frequently restricted even for those who are able to be physically present, while others are kept away due to the prohibitive cost of travel and accommodation, non-allocation of badges or visas, or because of access restrictions that prevent people living with disabilities being able to attend. Lessons should be learned from the experience of COP30, which saw the largest participation of Indigenous Peoples representatives in any COP, to replicate and further expand participation.⁶⁰

The official recognition by the UNFCCC of a Disability Caucus in February 2026 marks a long-overdue commitment to include people living with disabilities and their representatives in discussions. Amnesty International supports the demand of the Disability Caucus for full Constituency status to ensure that people living with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in decision making.⁶¹ In this regard, additional clauses on physical accessibility for transportation, accommodation and within the Blue Zone, as well as larger venue specifications including for side events, to promote inclusivity, in the COP31 Host Country Agreement (HCA)⁶² are a welcome development.

People of African descent continue to be subjected to environmental racism⁶³ and are among those disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, along with other racialized peoples and communities in all regions. The climate crisis is thus also a crisis of racial injustice.⁶⁴ Yet people of African descent face persistent barriers in accessing information, participating on equal terms with others in climate action decision making at all levels due to historical and accessing remedies for climate harms, due to historical and ongoing racialized systems of exclusion, discrimination and economic marginalization. In line with the Durban Programme of Action and recommendations by the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African descent, which call for states to facilitate the participation of people of African descent in all political, economic, social and cultural aspects of society,⁶⁵ and regarding climate change related-measures⁶⁶ Amnesty International also supports the demands of people of African descent for recognition by the UNFCCC as a group that faces disproportionate climate impacts rooted in historical and ongoing systems of colonial extraction, displacement, and structural racism, yet are underrepresented in UNFCCC decision making spaces.⁶⁷

People of African descent continue to be subjected to environmental racism⁶⁹ and are among those disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, along with other racialized peoples and communities in all regions. The climate crisis is thus also a crisis of racial injustice.⁷⁰ Yet, people of African descent face persistent barriers in accessing information, participating on equal terms with others in climate action decision making at all levels and accessing remedies for climate harms, due to historical and ongoing racialized systems of exclusion, discrimination and economic marginalization. In line with the Durban Programme of Action and recommendations by the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African descent, which calls for states to facilitate and increase the participation of people of African descent in all political, economic, social and cultural aspects of society,⁷¹ and regarding climate change related-measures,⁷² Amnesty International also supports the demands of people of African descent for recognition by the UNFCCC as a group that faces disproportionate climate impacts rooted in legacies of colonialism, extraction, displacement, and systemic racism, yet are underrepresented in UNFCCC decision making spaces.⁷³

and burdens, ensuring that all communities, without discrimination, can enjoy their right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. It also requires inclusive decision-making processes, where affected communities are heard, and their needs are prioritized in environmental planning and legislation.

⁶⁰ UNFCCC, *COP 30 Executive report*, 29 June 2026, pp 67 and 73, <https://unfccc.int/documents/659630>

⁶¹ CBM UK, "Historic climate action win: Disability Caucus secures official recognition", 27 February 2026, <https://www.cbmun.org.uk/app/uploads/2026/02/IDA-Disability-Caucus.pdf>

⁶² On file with Amnesty International

⁶³ Environmental racism has been defined by the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Special Rapporteur on racism), as "[any] environmental policy, practice, law or regulation that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups, or communities based on race, colour, descent and national and ethnic origin". See UN General Assembly, Report: Ecological Crisis, Climate Justice and Racial Justice, 25 October 2022, UN Doc. A/77/549, para. 45

⁶⁴ UN General Assembly, *Environmental justice, the climate crisis and people of African descent: Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent*, 21 September 2021, UN Doc. A/HRC/48/78, para. 55

⁶⁵ World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance Programme of Action (Durban Conference), 2002, para II.4, <https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/background/durban-declaration-and-programme-of-action>

⁶⁶ UN General Assembly, *Environmental justice, the climate crisis and people of African descent: Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent*, 21 September 2021 UN Doc. A/HRC/48/78, para. 73

⁶⁷ Joint Open Letter, *Afro-Descendant peoples must be recognized as a formal constituency within the UNFCCC*, November 2025, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ce2MazRwUYNgclP-brnuKugBkY-3cLAKyIXAAIOpxPA/edit?tab=t.0>

Amnesty International has reported previously on the methods used at COPs to exclude civil society voices.⁶⁸ Including Indigenous Peoples and civil society in all its diversity is crucial to achieving the goals of the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, as recognized by the Action on Climate Empowerment (ACE) framework which aims to empower all members of society to engage in climate action, through the six ACE elements – climate change education and public awareness, training, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these issues.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, the COP process itself requires substantial reform, particularly to end ongoing ‘corporate capture’, whereby lobbyists from the fossil fuel industry and companies pushing risky and unproved climate ‘solutions’ undermine the essential fossil fuel phase out and crowd out the voices of communities and defenders.⁷⁰ COP30 in Brazil was overshadowed by the largest ever concentration of more than 1,600 lobbyists working for the fossil fuel industry,⁷¹ while Indigenous Peoples, affected communities, people living with disabilities and other marginalized individuals struggled to get a seat at the table.⁷² Reforms proposed by civil society organizations include majority-based decision-making when consensus fails, a robust conflict of interest procedure to exclude industry lobbyists, greater protection of human rights by host countries and enhanced transparency and accountability for climate action.⁷³

Within and beyond the UNFCCC process, EHRDs play a fundamental role in protecting ecosystems and the rights of their communities. Without their vital work, climate action is less effective and climate justice cannot be achieved. Yet, in many countries, EHRDs are subject to grave threats and abuses, including in countries that host UNFCCC meetings.⁷⁴

In **Türkiye**, the host country for COP31, Amnesty International and other organizations have long raised concerns over violations of freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly that target human rights defenders and others.⁷⁵

Türkiye has been found repeatedly to have violated the rights of human rights defenders including by the European Court of Human Rights. Most recently, in August 2026, in a binding judgment the Court ruled that prisoner of conscience Osman Kavala⁷⁶ should be freed at the earliest opportunity, finding that his rights to fair trial, liberty, freedom of expression, and to peaceful assembly had been violated for ulterior motives including to silence and punish him as a human rights defender, as well as a violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment. Importantly, the Court required the Turkish authorities to address the systemic problem of prosecution and imprisonment of human-rights defenders, political opponents and journalists for criminal offences, alerting for the “misuse of the State’s” “machinery of repression” through the instrumentalization of criminal proceedings.

Journalists reporting critically about matters of public concern are targeted in abusive criminal investigations and prosecutions and are subjected to arbitrary use of punitive pretrial detention under overly broad and vague criminal code provisions such as the ‘disinformation law’.⁷⁷ Protests critical of the authorities are routinely banned and peaceful protesters subjected to excessive use of police force and arbitrary detention. Civil society organizations face punitive and burdensome audits and even closure for their legitimate activities.⁷⁸

⁶⁸ Amnesty International, *Civic Space and Environmental Human Rights Defenders: Essential for Achieving Climate Justice* (Index: POL 32/0173/2025), 23 October 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol32/0173/2025/en/>

⁶⁹ See: Article 6 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, previously cited

⁷⁰ Joint Statement, *Reclaiming Climate Justice: United Call for an Urgent Reform of the UN Climate Talks*, 23 June 2025, (Index: IOR 40/9530/2025), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/9530/2025/en/>

⁷¹ Kick Big Polluters Out, “Fossil fuel lobbyists flood COP30 climate talks in Brazil, with largest ever attendance share”, 14 November 2025, <https://kickbigpollutersout.org/Release-Kick-Out-The-Suits-COP30>

⁷² Amnesty International, *COP30: Human Rights Deprioritized but a Win on Just Transition* (Index: IOR 40/0684/2026), 5 February 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/0684/2026/en/>

⁷³ Joint statement, *Reclaiming Climate Justice: United Call for an Urgent Reform of the UN Climate Talks*, 23 June 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/9530/2025/en/>

⁷⁴ See for example Amnesty International, *Environmental human rights defenders: Vital voices face attacks and lack protection: Submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to a Healthy Environment*, 24 August 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/es/documents/ior40/1394/2026/en/>

⁷⁵ See Frontline Defenders’ page on Türkiye at <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/location/turkiye> and Amnesty International’s 2025 analysis of the human rights situation in Türkiye at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/europe-and-central-asia/western-central-and-south-eastern-europe/turkiye/report-turkiye/>

⁷⁶ Amnesty International, “Türkiye: Osman Kavala must be immediately released following European Court order to quash his conviction”, 26 August 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/08/turkiye-osman-kavala-must-be-immediately-released-following-european-court-order-to-quash-his-conviction/>

⁷⁷ Amnesty International, *Türkiye: End the crackdown on journalists*, (Index: EUR 44/0957/2026), 3 May 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur44/0957/2026/en/>

⁷⁸ Amnesty International, “Türkiye: Absurd charges against board of LGBTI+ organization must be dropped”, 7 April 2026,

There are currently a number of campaigns around Türkiye involving protests by local communities in opposition to environmental destruction and degradation. These include İzköy/Akbelen Forest (Muğla), where protests continue against coal mining and deforestation; Afşin–Elbistan power station (Kahramanmaraş),⁷⁹ where communities oppose the coal-fired power plants due to health and environmental impacts; Soma district (Manisa), where demands persist for accountability and safer conditions following the 2014 coal mining disaster in which 301 miners were killed;⁸⁰ as well as İzidere district (Rize) and the Kazdağları national park (Çanakkale), where local populations resist quarrying, mining and other large-scale extractive projects. These cases reflect a broader pattern of localized resistance against extractive industries across the country, including through the courts, despite the deepening erosion of the rule of law, in particular in relation to the independence of the judiciary. These communities are facing intransigence from the authorities, invariably favouring companies over the needs of local people and at the expense of the environment.

A recent and disturbing example of Türkiye’s crackdown on dissent is the detention on 31 March 2026 of Esra Işık, an EHRD in İzköy/Akbelen in the south-western province of Muğla, for her participation in a peaceful protest against an urgent expropriation decision affecting land and property in her and other villages near Akbelen forest in favour of a coal mining company.⁸¹ Held in pretrial detention until 11 May 2026, she was found guilty of “resisting a public official to prevent them from performing their duty” and “insulting a public official” on 6 July 2026 and sentenced to two years and one month in prison and a fine of TL 44,200 (Euro 830), deferred for five years. Esra Işık is at liberty pending the appeal against her conviction.

This and other similar attempts to silence EHRDs and civil society organizations opposing environmental devastation in Türkiye ahead of COP31, including the pretrial detention of environmental volunteers from the TEMA Foundation among scores of civil society actors and extensive blanket bans in several provinces ahead of the NATO summit held in Ankara on 7-8 July 2026, signal a seriously restrictive environment for their meaningful and safe participation in COP31 without fear of retaliation before, during or after the conference. These concerns are heightened by reports that a number of journalists were denied accreditation to attend and report from the July 2026 NATO summit held in Ankara, a worrying development that signals that journalists may also face obstacles in attending and reporting on COP31. Journalists reporting on previous COPs have also faced reprisals, as happened to some journalists in Azerbaijan before and after COP29.⁸² Preventing journalists from covering important events by denying them accreditation to attend international forums or through reprisals in relation to their work constitutes an unjustified interference with the right to freedom of expression and the ability of people in Türkiye and around the world to be informed.⁸³

Most recently, on 12 September 2026, authorities launched a coordinated crackdown targeting LGBTI+ rights groups and activists across Türkiye. More than 100 people have been detained and dozens remanded in pretrial detention, including LGBTI+ rights defenders. The crackdown has also involved the authorities blocking numerous social media accounts and websites, including those of LGBTI organizations, activists, journalists and human rights organizations (including Amnesty International Türkiye), as well as the detention of peaceful protesters opposing the crackdown.⁸⁴ These developments further illustrate the increasingly restrictive environment for civil society and human rights defenders in Türkiye ahead of COP31.

In light of these concerns regarding the human rights situation in Türkiye, including laws that have shrunk civic space and unduly restrict the exercise of human rights and their arbitrary and abusive implementation by state authorities such as provincial governorates and law enforcement officials, it is extremely disappointing that the HCA for COP31⁸⁵ contains text omitted from the COP30 HCA that could hinder the ability of human rights defenders and civil society organizations to conduct their work safely and

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/04/turkiye-absurd-charges-against-board-of-lgbti-organization-must-be-dropped/>

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch, *Amicus Curiae Brief on Afşin Elbistan A Coal Plant Expansion Project*, 25 June 2025,

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/07/03/human-rights-watch-amicus-curiae-brief-on-afsin-elbistan-a-coal-plant-expansion>

⁸⁰ Transparency International, *Soma Mining Disaster: A Ten-Year Fight for Justice*, February 2025,

<https://www.transparency.org/en/cepi/cases/soma-mining-disaster>

⁸¹ Amnesty International, *Türkiye: Environmental defender on trial: Esra Işık*, 12 June 2026,

<https://www.amnesty.org/fr/documents/eur44/1143/2026/en/>

⁸² Amnesty International, *Azerbaijan: From Newsroom to Cell. Persecution of Independent Journalists*, 22 July 2025,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur55/0128/2025/en/>

⁸³ Amnesty International, “Türkiye: Authorities must end the crackdown ahead of the NATO summit and respect the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression”, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur44/1257/2026/en/>

⁸⁴ Amnesty International, “Türkiye: Authorities must end escalating crackdown on LGBTI rights groups and immediately release detained activists”, 15 September 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/09/turkiye-authorities-must-end-escalating-crackdown-on-lgbti-rights-groups-and-immediately-release-detained-activists/>

⁸⁵ On file with Amnesty International

could have a wider chilling effect on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in Türkiye before, during and after COP31, particularly in relation to Article 11.11 of the HCA regarding the duty of participants to respect the laws and regulations in force in the Republic of Türkiye and the duty not to interfere in its internal affairs. Amnesty International is concerned that these clauses could put people at risk of human rights violations, particularly in light of the reinsertion of a clause about waivers of immunity (Article 11.12) and urges that all parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat do all within their power to ensure respect for and protection of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in Türkiye. Future HCAs should not include these clauses, building on the positive example set by Brazil for COP30.

Amnesty International is also urging all parties to call on Türkiye to release Osman Kavala and all other unjustly imprisoned human rights defenders and to implement binding rulings of the ECtHR without further delay.

Australia, which will lead the COP31 negotiations, has also seen its fair share of criticism over the treatment of climate activists. Laws across several jurisdictions disproportionately restrict freedom of expression and assembly, imposing harsh penalties of up to two years' imprisonment and fines up to AUD 50,000 for peaceful protest. For example, the Roads and Crimes Legislation Amendment Act 2022 in NSW criminalizes damage or obstruction to so-called 'key infrastructure', with penalties up to two years in prison and fines up to AUD 22,000 for protesting without a permit.⁸⁶ In November 2023, Australia arrested and charged more than 100 protesters who used kayaks to block a coal port's shipping lanes in an event organized by the grassroots climate network Rising Tide.⁸⁷ At similar blockades in November 2024⁸⁸ and November 2025,⁸⁹ over 170 and 140 people, respectively, including children, were arrested, although charges against the majority of those arrested in 2024 have subsequently been dropped.⁹⁰ Such a heavy-handed response to peaceful protests is deeply discouraging and more should be done to ensure the protection of EHRDs in Australia.

Similarly, Amnesty International and other NGOs have repeatedly raised concerns with Fiji, host of the Pre-COP meeting between 5 and 8 October 2026, about its protection of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. These include Fiji's unduly restrictive laws, arbitrary restrictions on peaceful protests, including climate protests, and harassment of protesters.⁹¹

In December 2024, CIVICUS Monitor ranked Fiji's civic space as "narrowed", following steps to repeal the restrictive 2010 media law and reversing politically motivated travel bans against government critics. Other positive steps included strengthening of the independence of the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission and progress towards establishing a Truth and Reconciliation commission to address past abuses.⁹² During the January 2025 UPR of Fiji's human rights record, the government supported recommendations to reform remaining repressive laws that continue to restrict civic freedoms.⁹³ However, more than 18 months after the review, neither the Public Order (Amendment) Act nor the sedition provisions of the Crimes Act has been amended or repealed, and the authorities have continued to rely on the former to arbitrarily restrict peaceful assemblies, including by denying permits for peaceful protests.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, the National Referendum Bill 2025, introduced in Parliament in December 2025, has raised fresh concerns over freedom of expression.⁹⁵

⁸⁶ Amnesty International Australia, Universal Periodic Review Submission, 1 August 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org.au/australia-upr-submission/>

⁸⁷ Amnesty International, "Australia: More than 100 people charged after kayaking protesters block coal port ahead of COP28", 27 November 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/11/australia-protesters-climate-coal/>

⁸⁸ Guardian, "Police arrest 170 at NSW Rising Tide protest as activists temporarily block coal ships", 24 November 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2024/nov/24/police-arrest-170-at-nsw-rising-tide-protest-as-activists-temporarily-block-coal-ships#:~:text=Police%20said%20156%20adults%20and,Newcastle%20local%20court%20on%20Monday>

⁸⁹ Human Rights Law Centre, "NSW police arrest of young climate protesters a serious overreach", 1 December 2025, <https://www.hrlc.org.au/news/rising-tide-nsw-protest/>

⁹⁰ Guardian, "Police drop charges against 125 Rising Tide protesters two years after Newcastle port blockade", 7 August 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2026/aug/07/police-drop-charges-against-125-rising-tide-protesters-two-years-after-newcastle-port-blockade>

⁹¹ See CIVICUS and others, *Fiji: Joint Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review 48th Session of the UPR Working Group* (Index: ASA 18/8337/2024), 18 July 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa18/8337/2024/en/>

⁹² CIVICUS, "The CIVICUS Monitor upgrades the condition of basic freedoms in Fiji to "Narrowed" from "Obstructed" as government tackles reforms", 4 December 2024, https://monitor.civicus.org/press_release/2024/fiji/

⁹³ Joint Oral Statement to the Human Rights Council, "Fiji's UPR Report Adopted: Progress Acknowledged, Legal Reforms Still Urgently Needed", 1 July 2025, <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/united-nations/geneva/7744-fijis-upr-report-adopted-progress-acknowledged-legal-reforms-still-urgently-needed>

⁹⁴ CIVICUS Monitor, *Pacific Research Brief*, November 2025, <https://civicusmonitor.contentfiles.net/media/documents/ThePacific.ResearchBrief.November2025.pdf>

⁹⁵ Lanietia Tukana, *Fiji's National Referendum Bill: what it says, what it restricts, and why it matters*, Fiji Political Review, republished by the

Further, in July 2025, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended the amendment of laws that restrict the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, which affect women civil society activists, women human rights defenders (WHRDs), women journalists and whistle-blowers. CEDAW also highlighted that WHRDs often face technology facilitated gender-based violence, including cyberbullying and a lack of participation of WHRDs in the design, implementation and monitoring of laws, policies and budgets for the advancement of women and gender equality.⁹⁶

As co-hosts of COP31 meetings, Australia, Fiji and Türkiye must uphold the rights of all to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly before, during and after COP31.

Both the ICJ's 2025 Advisory Opinion on climate change⁹⁷ and the earlier Inter-American Court of Human Rights' Advisory Opinion on the climate emergency and human rights⁹⁸ reaffirmed that countries have an obligation to protect procedural rights such as public participation and access to information, education and training on climate change. Respect for these rights is essential for EHRDs to conduct their vital work, including protecting their homes, communities and livelihoods from climate injustice.

The launch at COP30 of the Leaders Network for Environmental Activists and Defenders (LEAD) provides a space to bring together governments, defenders, civil society, multilateral institutions, and other key actors in a shared space for dialogue and action to secure the recognition of EHRDs; strengthen their meaningful participation in multilateral decision-making spaces; increase their protection and reduce violence against them.⁹⁹ Support for this initiative is one way in which governments and institutions can recognize the important role of EHRDs.

Recommendations

Amnesty International recommends that:

- **Parties publicly recognize the important role of human rights defenders and other civil society actors, including EHRDs, through public statements at UNFCCC meetings, by integrating explicit language on recognition and protection of human rights defenders into all relevant UNFCCC decisions and outcomes, and by joining the Leaders Network for Environmental Activists and Defenders (LEAD).**
- **Parties should step up efforts to disseminate reliable, accessible, evidence-based and trustworthy information on climate change and on climate action, including by joining the Global Initiative for Information Integrity on Climate Change¹⁰⁰ and signing the Declaration on Information Integrity on Climate Change.¹⁰¹**
- **Fiji, as the host of Pre-COP, and Türkiye, as host of COP31, should facilitate access to COPs and other UNFCCC meetings for all Indigenous Peoples and members of civil society, including EHRDs, who wish to contribute, including through provision of a specific UNFCCC visa process. They should encourage and increase participation of Indigenous Peoples and affected communities as well as other marginalized groups such as women and girls, people of African descent and people living with disabilities.**
- **The UNFCCC Secretariat should take further steps to grant formal UNFCCC constituency status to the recently recognized Disability Caucus to act as a focal point for people living with disabilities and to ensure that people living with disabilities can participate effectively in UNFCCC meetings without discrimination.**

Pacific Islands News Association, 21 April 2026, <https://pina.com.fj/2026/04/21/fijis-national-referendum-bill-what-it-says-what-it-restricts-and-why-it-matters/>

⁹⁶ UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Fiji*, 10 July 2025, UN Doc. CEDAW/C/FJI/CO/6

⁹⁷ International Court of Justice, *Advisory Opinion: Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change* (previously cited), para. 260.

⁹⁸ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Advisory Opinion AO-32/25 on the Climate Emergency and Human Rights*, 29 May 2025, <https://corteidh.or.cr/tablas/OC-32-2025/index-eng.html>

⁹⁹ See <https://lead-initiative.com/>

¹⁰⁰ UNESCO, "Global Initiative for Information Integrity on Climate Change", <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/information-integrity>

¹⁰¹ UNESCO, Declaration on Information Integrity on Climate Change", <https://www.unesco.org/en/information-integrity-climate-change/cop30declaration?hub=780>

- The Secretariat should also create a formal caucus within the UNFCCC for people of African descent to enhance their participation, recognizing that Afro-Descendant communities experience environmental racism, including disproportionate climate impacts rooted in historical and ongoing systems of colonial extraction, displacement, and structural racism, but remain underrepresented within UNFCCC decision-making spaces.
- Parties should consult meaningfully with civil society participants on all decisions and outcomes before and during UNFCCC meetings and during their implementation.
- Parties should mandate the UNFCCC Secretariat to establish a focal point for reprisals against human rights defenders participating in UNFCCC processes and adopt concrete mechanisms for prevention of, protection from and response to reprisals and attacks on EHRDs.
- The UNFCCC Secretariat and Türkiye should publish the Host Country Agreement for COP31 immediately.
- As host of COP31, Türkiye must ensure that all persons can freely express themselves, individually or in association with others, and peacefully demonstrate including about climate change and environmental issues without discrimination or fear of reprisals.
- The UNFCCC Secretariat and Türkiye must ensure that journalists, including independent journalists, can receive timely accreditation and visas, to facilitate their safe participation in COP31 without discrimination. All states must protect journalists who report on the conference from reprisals for their work.
- All countries should ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society, including NGOs, environmental and other human rights defenders, journalists and activists, by repealing restrictive laws and policies, refraining from unduly restricting access to information, including about environmental and climate-related matters, and by releasing any individuals who are arbitrarily detained. Parties should raise the case of Osman Kavala and others unjustly detained, imprisoned, convicted and/or sentenced in Türkiye, including LGBTI+ individuals and activists, calling on the authorities to abide by the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights and immediately release those concerned.

Parties should reform the UNFCCC in line with civil society proposals to establish a majority voting procedure in instances when consensus fails, to prevent undue corporate influence – particularly of the fossil fuel industry and other polluting sectors – over the proceedings, to provide greater transparency and accountability over decisions and action taken, and to ensure that the process and decisions are fully human rights-compliant.