



**OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS**



**Human rights and the environment as part of
sustainable development**

Human Rights Resolution 2005/60

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling its resolution 2003/71 of 25 April 2003 and its decision 2004/119 of 21 April 2004,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted in June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights (A/CONF.157/23), and the relevant provisions of International Covenants on Human Rights,

Recalling the extensive work, reports and resolutions adopted by the Commission and human rights treaty bodies on issues relevant to environmental protection and sustainable development,

Recalling also the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment of 1972 (Stockholm Declaration) (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1 and Corr.1), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1, vol. I and Corr.1), Agenda 21 (ibid., annex II), adopted on 14 June 1992 by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1, annex) and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (ibid., resolution 2, annex), adopted in September 2002, and welcoming all efforts, at the national, regional and international levels, towards their implementation,

Bearing in mind the goals and targets of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the United Nations overarching agenda, including poverty eradication, human rights, sustainable development and peace-building,

Conscious of the mandate of the Commission on Sustainable Development to promote the implementation of Agenda 21 and the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as well as of the important work undertaken on environment issues by the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant forums,

Taking note that respect for human rights can contribute to sustainable development, including its environmental component,

Considering that environmental damage, including that caused by natural

circumstances or disasters, can have potentially negative effects on the enjoyment of human rights and on a healthy life and a healthy environment,

Considering also that protection of the environment and sustainable development can also contribute to human well-being and potentially to the enjoyment of human rights,

Recalling that everyone has the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, as reflected in article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

Welcoming actions taken by States, such as legal measures and public awareness activities, that promote and protect human rights and that also assist in the promotion of environmental protection and sustainable development,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development (E/CN.4/2005/96);

2. *Reaffirms* that peace, security, stability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, as well as respect for cultural diversity are essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all, as set forth in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

3. *Calls upon* States to take all necessary measures to protect the legitimate exercise of everyone's human rights when promoting environmental protection and sustainable development and reaffirms, in this context, that everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

4. *Stresses* the importance for States, when developing their environmental policies, to take into account how environmental degradation may affect all members of society, and in particular women, children, indigenous people or disadvantaged members of society, including individuals and groups of individuals who are victims of or subject to racism, as reflected in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted in September 2001 by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (A/CONF.189/12 and Corr.1);

5. *Encourages* all efforts towards the implementation of the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, in particular principle 10, in order to contribute, inter alia, to effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy;

6. *Reaffirms* that good governance within each country and at the international

level is essential for sustainable development;

7. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to disseminate widely the reports considered and resolutions adopted by the Commission and the observations and recommendations adopted by human rights treaty bodies on issues relevant to environmental protection;

8. *Also requests* the High Commissioner and invites the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and other relevant bodies and organizations, within their respective mandates and approved work programmes and budgets, to continue to coordinate their efforts in activities relating to human rights and the environment in poverty eradication, post-conflict environmental assessment and rehabilitation, disaster prevention, post-disaster assessment and rehabilitation, to take into consideration in their work relevant findings and recommendations of others and to avoid duplication;

9. *Further requests* the High Commissioner and invites the United Nations Environment Programme, within their respective mandates and approved work programmes and budgets, to continue to coordinate their efforts in capacity-building activities, in cooperation with other relevant bodies and organizations;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its sixty-third session a report, consistent with the outcomes of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Declaration in September 2005, on how respect for human rights can contribute to sustainable development, including its environmental component, and can also contribute positively to poverty eradication and strengthen capacity-building activities for developing countries, taking into account the contributions of relevant international organizations and bodies and the views of concerned States, and to include any developments that would update the report of the Secretary-General on human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development;

11. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this question at its sixty-third session under the same sub-item of the agenda item entitled “Promotion and protection of human rights”.

58th meeting
20 April 2005

[Adopted without a vote. See chap. XVII, E/CN.4/2005/L.10/Add.17]