

**Climate Action Stakeholder Consultation
Joint Statement from the
US Climate Action Network & the US Human Rights Network**

Madam Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. President and Members of the Climate Action Stakeholder Consultation:

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director Keya Chatterjee and the US Climate Action Network membership, I offer my gratitude for the opportunity to address you today.

My name is Colette Pichon Battle and I am the Executive Director of the US Human Rights Network, the largest grassroots civil society organization working to advance human rights in the US.

I am speaking to you today from US Climate Action Network annual member meeting in Virginia, where more than 170 climate, environment and justice organizations from across the US have gathered to build trust and alignment to address climate change in a just and equitable way.

At the top of our discussions, is the refusal by the Trump Administration to honor the Paris Agreement and engage the US in active mitigation of the global climate crisis.

Despite this, we as USCAN and USHRN acknowledge the role of the US in increasing the climate impacts on communities here in the US. We also understand and acknowledge the responsibility of the US to make a fair and robust contribution to mitigate the acceleration of global change.

We can already see the impact of the global climate crisis on indigenous communities from Shishmaref, Alaska to the Gulf Coast. My personal commitment to the climate movement comes from working in communities of color in the post Katrina, post- BP recovery in the Gulf South region of the US. Ten years after Katrina, the Gulf South Rising initiative sent a delegation to Paris to advocate for the successful completion of the Paris Accord. Our delegation of more than 20 frontline leaders from the five Gulf South states, was led by Principal Chief Thomas Dardar of the United Houma Nation. Houma Tribe is Louisiana's largest tribe and is currently faced relocating its tribal members due to sea level rise and increased extreme weather. This South Louisiana community has been acknowledged as the US' first climate refugees.

In Paris, the Gulf South Rising delegation met with the Mayor Mitch Landrieu and from there worked with his administration to plan the first climate change summit for the City of New Orleans.

Despite the Trump Administration's decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Agreement, Mayor Mitch Landrieu recently joined other main players in the US economy in stepping up and forging ahead on climate action. Signatories on the "We're Still In" declaration are committed to upholding the US' part to drive down carbon pollution and fight climate change. The states,

cities, colleges/universities, businesses and investors driving the U.S. economy *will* continue to pursue ambitious climate goals, working together to ensure our nation remains a global leader in reducing emissions.

These leaders represent a broad cross-section of the American economy, yet assembled in pursuit of climate action. Together, their efforts can deliver concrete emissions reductions that will contribute towards meeting US targets under the Paris Agreement. We acknowledge that energy access itself is a global challenge and we also know that extractive practices that generate energy in the US must be part of a community-wide commitment to Just Transition.

The mission of the US Climate Action Network and the mission of the US Human Rights Network connect two concepts that are essential to our civil society advocacy going forward. Our work to mitigate the acceleration and impacts of climate change are not just part of our binding obligation on the international climate treaty, but include our duty to achieve, advance and maintain the global standards of human rights in the US.

I have personally witnessed the multiple and years-long violations of human rights of some of the US' most marginalized communities. We know, from the well documented realities of the climate-based disaster in the US, that the human right to life, liberty and security of person (Art. 3 UDHR); the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association (Art. 20.1 UDHR); the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being (Art. 25.1 UDHR) will be threatened.

We also know that these climate-based disasters, extreme weather events and sea level rise create the conditions that assist the actions of the federal government to violate its other international obligations, namely the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). The Black bodies targeted by police during evacuation; the brown labor undermined by government contractors in the recovery and the prison labor used to clean up heavy crude after the country's largest fossil fuel extraction disaster are cautionary tales of what is to come if fail to make effective change.

We welcome continued engagement from the united nations and international community as we fight for climate justice and human rights in the United States. We see the Global Compact on Migration as an opportunity to reinforce our country's commitment on climate change and we urge more discussion on climate and security, especially at the UN Security Council.

It is with a unified voice that the members of the US Human Rights Network and the US Climate Network want to let the rest of the world know that, absent leadership from our federal government, Americans still believe in the promise of the Paris Agreement.

We are committed to building and organizing at all levels of civil society. And in addition to all the organizing, we pledge to resist our government's effort to undermined any attacks on the Paris Agreement.

And we offer our sincere gratitude, madam deputy, for the opportunity to offer this perspective.