



Thank you Chair.

We welcome the convening of the panel on emerging technologies, including geoengineering, while regretting that civil society was not allowed to have a hybrid panelist.

We echo what has been stated by the OHCHR on the unproven, unavailable, and unfeasible nature of geoengineering technologies. As she has already highlighted, many human rights institutions have stressed that the deployment of geoengineering technologies has the potential to seriously interfere with the enjoyment of human rights for millions and even billions of people, with potential disproportionate impact on Indigenous Peoples.

The precautionary approach and States' obligations to protect, respect, and fulfill human rights entail a duty not to deploy or develop geoengineering technologies, given the associated high risks and uncertainties for the rights of present and future generations (as stressed by the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea very recently).

Research, experimentation with and deployment of geoengineering technologies clearly pose important questions about effective participation, access to information and access to justice of those individuals, groups and communities that are affected by them, as well as the question of how to ensure Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples. The Aarhus Convention provides an important framework in establishing some of the States' obligations regarding procedural rights in the context of geoengineering-related policy making, including in relevant public international fora.

We are deeply concerned by the proliferation of open air and water marine geoengineering experiments that are planned or already underway, often with no prior consultation or consent of the affected communities - incl. in the very country of the US agency speaker. We regret that the previous panelist did not address these issues in his presentation and would like to ask him to tell us more about any policies implemented by his government to prevent any breach of procedural rights in the context of geoengineering deployment - incl. In the context of relevant international forums.

The issue of conflict of interests is particularly relevant when it comes to geoengineering, including in the context of public international fora where relevant policies are discussed. As the Advisory Committee has highlighted, there are huge

vested interests from corporations, which tend to “exaggerate certainties of a technology in question, while underplaying uncertainties”¹.

In the conclusions of the Working Group of the Parties, we urge Parties to the Aarhus Convention to highlight the risks that geoengineering technologies pose to fundamental human rights, and to call upon Parties to uphold the rights of access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice, including in relevant international fora, when it comes to any policy or framework that relates to geoengineering. This would also include ensuring safe and effective participation of civil society in international fora and taking measures to counter undue economic or political influence. We also look forward to the response to our question by the US government expert.

A longer written statement will be provided, and we would kindly ask the Secretariat to make it available on the website. The statement will aim to focus on the international normative framework on geoengineering, to fill the gaps of one of the panelist’s presentation.

¹ Human Rights Council Advisory Committee Report on “Impact of new technologies intended for climate protection on the enjoyment of human rights, (fn 4),para 21