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Story

Launch of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations

Ann Vaessen, for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), said that the climate and environmental crisis was having a huge humanitarian impact and was affecting peoples' lives and livelihoods every day, mostly in parts of the world that contributed least to the problem. In that context, to green its humanitarian operations and integrate climate-smart solutions across its work, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had developed and introduced the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations.

Catherine-Lune Grayson, for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), said the Charter had been developed under the aegis of IFRC and ICRC for the humanitarian community, by the humanitarian community. After months of consultations with over 150 humanitarian organizations, the Charter had recently been opened for signature. ICRC was delighted to observe that it had already been signed by 25 organizations, with more expected to follow.

Climate change was making epidemics, floods, storms, droughts, heatwaves, and wildfires deadlier and more frequent. The scale of the challenge, and the uncertainty and the risks that it brought, required collective planning for the future. There was growing recognition across the humanitarian sector that climate change and environmental degradation were dramatically affecting communities, exacerbating risks and threatening lives and livelihoods. Moreover, the impacts of climate change were not equally felt: it was the most

vulnerable communities across the world who were most affected.

Recognizing the need to improve the humanitarian response to the climate and environment crisis, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had begun to develop the Charter in 2019. Its aim was to guide the humanitarian sector's approach to the increasing risks resulting from climate change and to address its own carbon and environmental footprint.

Elaine Angeles, for IFRC, said the Charter contained seven commitments. Most notable were the commitments for humanitarian organizations to step up their response to growing humanitarian needs and support those most at risk to the impacts of the climate and environmental crises; and to maximize the environmental sustainability of their work and rapidly reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Four commitments focused on how humanitarian organizations could achieve their ambitions, including by embracing local leadership, increasing capacity to understand climate and environmental risks, nurturing collective action and using their influence to mobilize more ambitious climate action. The seventh commitment was for organizations to adopt specific targets and action plans so they could measure their progress.

IFRC was now encouraging widespread adoption of the Charter and was developing tools and guidance to support organizations in implementation. It planned to share the Charter widely ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in November 2021, thus signalling the strong commitment of the humanitarian community to scaling up its response to the climate and environment crises.

The full ICRC news release can be found [here](#).

Announcements

Catherine Huissoud, for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said that on Tuesday, 29 June at 3 p.m., UNCTAD would hold a press conference to present its report on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism. Speakers would include an UNCTAD economist and an expert from the World Tourism Organization. The report would be under embargo until 30 June at 7 a.m. CEST.

According to the report, economic losses were mounting in developing countries as the absence of widespread COVID-19 vaccinations kept tourists away. The tourism sector's recovery would largely depend on the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines globally.

Furthermore, on 7 July, UNCTAD would publish the 2021 edition of its *Commodities and Development Report*, entitled *Escaping from the Commodity Dependence Trap through Technology and Innovation*. The report explored how technological development and innovation could help commodity-dependent developing countries achieve economic diversification and value addition.

Sarah Bel, for the United Nations Development Programme, said that UNDP was launching a new policy brief that assessed the opportunities of the upcoming special drawing rights allocation of the International Monetary Fund. The policy brief would be under embargo until 24 June at 6 a.m. A media briefing would be held today at 3.30 p.m., with speakers including the author of the brief, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner; UNDP Chief Economist Georges Ronald Gray; and author and senior economist Lars Jensen.

UNDP had also just released a series of research papers on the regulation of global financial technology platforms (BigFintechs). The summary paper entitled [BigFintechs and Sustainability: A Necessary Convergence](#) brought together key recommendations to regulate that growing sector.

The UNDP press release is available here: [Antitrust and data privacy regulations are insufficient to manage BigFintechs' economic, social and environmental impacts, says a new UNDP/UNCDF study | UNDP in Geneva](#)

Tomson Phiri, for the World Food Programme (WFP), said that, following the address of Executive Director

David Beasley to the WFP Executive Board on 21 June, a news release had been issued on the risk of famine and the urgent need for funding and humanitarian access.

The news release is available here: [WFP says 41 million people now at imminent risk of famine without urgent funding and immediate humanitarian access | World Food Programme](#)

Furthermore, on Wednesday, 23 June, WFP would circulate a video news release on Madagascar, where severe drought had caused a catastrophic hunger crisis. WFP was concerned that unless swift action was taken, a full-blown famine could become a reality. The video news release would be accompanied by photographs and text and the WFP Regional Director for Southern Africa and the Deputy Country Director in Madagascar would be available for interviews.

Vittorio Cammarota, for the International Trade Centre (ITC), said that on Wednesday, 23 June at 10 a.m., ITC would hold a media briefing to launch the report *SME Competitiveness Outlook 2021: Empowering the green recovery*. The briefing would be held in Room XIV, Palais des Nations, Geneva, and livestreamed on UN Web TV. Speakers would include ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton and Chief Economist Barbara Ramos.

The report featured new findings on how small businesses could rebuild from the pandemic in a way that prepared them for the climate crisis. It showed that with the support of a network of partners, and by investing in the right business fundamentals, small firms could emerge greener, more competitive and more resilient.

Rhéal LeBlanc, Chief of the Press and External Relations Section of the United Nations Information Service (UNIS), on behalf of the Human Rights Council, said that the Council's forty-seventh session had begun on 21 June with an update by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet. The Council was currently engaged in an interactive discussion with statements on the High Commissioner's update. At about 4 p.m., the Council would hear the presentation of a report of the Secretary-General on Iran, followed by an oral update by the High Commissioner on Nicaragua. Thereafter, it would hear the presentation of a report by the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing.

The Conference on Disarmament was holding a public plenary meeting today from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. The meeting was the first under the presidency of Ambassador Leslie E. Norton of Canada and would be devoted to a debate on item 6 of the Conference's agenda (comprehensive programme of disarmament).

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which had opened its seventy-ninth session (online) on 21 June, would hold a day of general discussion on the rights of indigenous women and girls on 24 June from 12.30 to 2.30 p.m. and from 4 to 6 p.m.

Mr. LeBlanc noted that the UN Secretary-General would this week travel to Brussels to meet with European leaders and Belgian authorities. On 24 June he would deliver a solemn address to the European Parliament in which he would reiterate the importance of the partnership between the United Nations and the European Union to address the challenges they faced.

Mr. LeBlanc also noted that the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) had announced that it intended to convene an in-person meeting of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum in Switzerland from 28 June to 1 July. The meeting would be an opportunity for the members of the Forum to develop proposals to further facilitate the holding of national elections on 24 December 2021.

The announcement is available here: <https://unsmil.unmissions.org/unsmil-facilitate-meeting-libyan-political-dialogue-forum-switzerland-28-june>. More details on the meeting programme would be shared with journalists in the coming days.

Finally, Mr. LeBlanc said that the Berlin II Conference on Libya would take place on 23 June. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, would lead the United

Nations delegation on behalf of the Secretary-General, who would address the Conference via a video message.