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The evolution of human rights norms in light of climate change

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Abstract:

This study presents climate change, which imposed itself as a fundamental issue that carries with it major problems that made humanity face serious risks, especially to humans as an element of the environment, especially after the Stockholm Conference 05 to 16 June 1972 in Sweden, and accordingly, the international community appeared that the close link between climate change and human rights, as its rules have been greatly affected since the issuance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, as efforts continue until the twenty-first Conference of the Parties COP21 in Paris in 2015 to reach an agreement aimed at curbing climate change, embodying the legal impact of the relationship between climate change and human rights at the international level.

This paper discusses the most important problems facing the application of international legal instruments related to climate change, especially when it comes to the issue of human rights, and refers to the proposal of some solutions that came up with them to prevent or slow climate change from progressing.

Keywords: climate, environment, global warming, human rights, responsibility.

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1. Introduction:

The depletion of the ozone layer and climate change are the main threats to the composition and natural changes of the global atmosphere, a phenomenon that is now indisputably linked to the production and use of ozone-depleting chemicals and anthropogenic increases in greenhouse gases.

In the face of the evolution of the negative effects of climate change, we must admit that the world faces the challenge of overcoming the risks of climate change, considering that the global atmosphere has a distinctive position that requires treatment as a global unit so that any threat to its sustainability is treated as a common concern for humanity.

It is clear at present that the expansion of the almost universal awareness among the peoples of the world is the link between human rights stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and the issue of the threat posed by climate change, so the international

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community has worked to try to develop a legal framework that allows bridging the paradoxes between members of the international community to mitigate its effects, and among those attempts that culminated in (Rahmouni, 2018) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 1992, which resulted in a series of conferences, the most important of which was the 21st Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention (COP21), held in Paris from November 30 to December 11, 2015, to reach binding legal instruments.

The state of common interest is particularly important in understanding the current approach to preventing the harm of climate change and enforcing compliance with legal principles as matters in which all States have a legal interest as part of their global environmental responsibility and from which they derive co-benefits, and taking preventive action in response to changes in the atmosphere and their adverse effects.

Importance of the study:

The importance of the research is highlighted by showing the role of the current international climate change system in consecrating human rights rules on the one hand and preserving the global atmosphere as a common heritage.

The problem of the study:

The problem of the research is limited to answering the following question: How effective is the current international climate change system in reducing global climate change and linking climate change policies to sustainable development strategies in both developing and industrialized countries in a way that preserves human rights?

The objective of the study:

Through the problem, we try to shed light on the current international climate change regime and legal challenges and demonstrate its necessity in enforcing human rights principles.

Study Methodology:

In light of the problem posed, we will rely on the descriptive and analytical approach, using the international legal texts in force in this regard, to try to uncover the effects of the current international climate change system in mitigating the risks of climate change in the context of human rights principles.

Study Plan:

We will try to solve the problems posed by dividing this research into three sections, in the first section we address the scope of climate change within the framework of human rights, in the second section the impact of climate change on human rights rules, and in the third section the effects of applying the effects of the application of climate change and human rights rules.

2. The scope of climate change within the human rights framework:

There is practically no doubt today that climate change is already happening, that it is caused by the emission and accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and that it poses the most serious threat to life on the planet through its violation of human rights, so in the first section we will address both defining the definition of climate change and its relationship to human rights.

2.1. Defining the concept of climate change:

The word "climate change" literally refers to the long-term change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns (such as temperature, precipitation, etc.) over decades to millions of years. The climate on Earth has changed on all time scales even long before human activity played a role in its transformation, but the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change defined climate change as "climate change directly or indirectly attributable to human activity." which changes the composition of the global atmosphere and which is added to the natural climatic variability observed over similar periods."

(Rahman, 2013) The IPCC's definition includes: Climate change is the change resulting from natural variation along with human activity, where gases absorb heat from the sun in the atmosphere and reduce the amount of heat escaping into space since excess heat has been considered the main cause of observed changes in the climate system during the twentieth century.

(Ulrich & Donald, 2017) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2011) defined climate change as a change in the state of a climate that can be identified (for example, using statistical tests) by changes in the average and/or variability of its characteristics that last for a long time, usually decades or more.

She also noted that climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forces, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or land use.

(Chimezie, 2016) Evidence suggests that the average global temperature increased by 0.60°C during the twentieth century, with the six warmest years occurring between 1997 and 2007 (IPCC, 2007), as this warming in the world's climate has been associated with higher concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which are predominantly of human origins such as fossil fuel combustion, land use, and deforestation.

2.2. The relationship between climate change and human rights:

International attention to the linkages between climate change and human rights is a relatively recent phenomenon. It was only since 2005 that a small number of vulnerable States, indigenous groups, and NGOs have begun to take a series of separate steps that reinforce each other to understand, highlight and benefit from these linkages. These actions were motivated by three reasons (Marc, 2009, p. 440).

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First: there has been general frustration on the part of vulnerable communities with the slow pace of progress in tackling climate change using the traditional scientific policy approach.

Second: there was a growing sense on the part of these groups that, with a large scientific consensus on climate change, it was time to shift the debate to the victims of the problem – individuals and communities around the world.

Third: these people and communities most at risk of climate change are becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of any kind of accountability mechanism to deal with a human-induced phenomenon that has serious consequences for humans.

As a result of the foregoing, a petition was filed with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights that the human rights of the plaintiffs had been violated and further violated due to the failure of the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, because the effects of global warming constituted human rights violations for which the United States was responsible.

It can therefore be argued that (SAVARESI, 2021) the world will have to understand the "human dimension of climate change", including the human rights impacts of climate change.

In the midst of this, (Marc, 2009, p. 442) the Maldives convened the Conference of Small Island States to address these and their implications, and the outcome of the meeting - the Malloy Declaration on the Human Dimension of Global Climate Change - explicitly stated (for the first time in an international convention) that "climate change has clear and immediate implications for the full enjoyment of the human person, and called on the United Nations human rights system to address this issue expeditiously.

(Marc, 2009, p. 442) The Malloy Declaration was also conveyed to the 13th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ("COP 13") in Bali and advocated that climate change must not only be seen as a threat to natural systems but also as a direct threat to human survival and well-being.

In parallel with these initial steps, a range of other actors has begun to explore the relationship between climate change and human rights, including the International Council for Human Rights Policy, the Organization of American States, Oxfam International, Mary Robinson Realizing Rights, the Kofi Annan Global Humanitarian Forum, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which in the Human Development Report 2007/2008, considered climate change to be "a systematic violation of the human rights of the world's poor and future generations, and a step backward from universal values.

In March 2007, these different threads were drawn together at the seventh regular session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, where Bolivia, Bhutan, Greece, Maldives 25, Nigeria, Indonesia, and the Philippines all noted the serious consequences of climate change on the full enjoyment of human rights and called on the Council to address human rights. On 28 March

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2008, the Maldives, together with seventy-eight co-sponsors from all regional groups, secured the unanimous adoption of UN Human Rights Council Resolution 7/23 on "Human Rights and Climate Change", which, for the first time in a formal UN resolution, explicitly states that climate change "constitutes an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world and has implications for the full enjoyment of human rights".

(Marc, 2009, pp. 442-443) The resolution requested the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ("OHCHR") to prepare a "detailed analytical study on the relationship between climate change and human rights, for submission to the Council before its tenth session", and requested that the study and summary of the Council's discussion be sent to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change before the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen, to Enriching negotiations.

The Scientific Consensus Group, which in turn is divided into three groups, the first is concerned with scientific goals, the second is concerned with impact, adaptation, and impact, and the third working group is concerned with climate change mitigation, and this group is referred to in the fourth assessment report to the relationship between climate change and human rights, as stated in the annual report of the United Nations Commissioners. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General on the relationship between climate change and human rights, issued by the General Assembly, document A L HRCL10161 of 15 January 2009, pp. 4 and 5, which referred to the dwindling areas covered by snow, the reduction of sea ice, sea level rise and water warming, the increase in the frequency of extreme temperatures and heat waves, heavy rainfall and drought-affected areas, and finally the intensification of tropical cyclones.

3. Impact of climate change on human rights norms:

International legal norms derive their force from Article 38 (1) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice as the sources normally considered by the International Court of Justice in determining whether a particular rule or principle has binding legal force, namely international conventions setting out rules expressly recognized by States parties; customary international law as evidence of general practice accepted as law; general principles of law; and finally, the sub-sources, namely the provisions. Judicial and the writings of recognized jurists, it has already been mentioned that there is a relationship between climate change and human rights, as rising temperatures affect ecosystems and the products or services they provide that are directly related to human rights so that the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment linked in the Stockholm Declaration in 1972 in the first principle to the right to freedom and equality inadequate living conditions in an environment that allows for a life of dignity and well-being. (Nations U., 1972) Climate change affects fundamental rights, the right to life, the right to health, the right to food, the right to housing, and the water right.

3.1. Right to life:

It is expressly protected by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights under article 06, as well as by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in article 03: "Everyone has the right to life."

(United A., Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948), so that any climate change is considered a violation of the environment in which the human being lives and any violation of it threatens his fundamental rights, including the right to life as a result of the current and expected effects of climate change so that the reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General predict an increase in the number of deaths and diseases caused by high temperature, floods, storms and fires (United A., Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

3.2. Right to health:

(United H., International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) 1966 The provisions of article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights refer to the protection of this right by Member States that are obliged to take measures aimed at:

- Reducing the neonatal mortality rate and infant mortality rate and ensuring the child's clean development.
- Improving environmental and industrial hygiene.
- Prevention, treatment, and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases.
- Creating conditions that will ensure medical services and medical attention for all in the event of illness.

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights commented on the right to health in 2000, that this right is not limited to the timely provision of health care services, but also includes various elements, namely, the adequate availability of public services, goods, services and programs, and the benefit of all from the latter through non-discrimination and economic accessibility, in addition to the quality of medical goods and services (Al-Alami, 2022). Concerning international health care, the World Health Organization (WHO) has established its objective to improve health, housing, nutrition, and working conditions, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to develop healthy standards for the environment by setting permissible limits for all pollutants.

- Provide information on the relationship between environmental pollutants and human health.
- Work on the development of guidelines to establish the boundary between influential pollutants to make them compatible with health standards and new pollutants from industry, agriculture, and others.

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- Preparation of data on the impact of components on health and the environment.
- Encourage the development of research in areas where information is lacking to obtain convergent international results (Zarbani, 2019, p. 132).

3.3. Right to food:

Climate change affects the increase in food production between middle and upper latitudes with an expected global temperature increase of 1 to 3 degrees Celsius, while productivity decreases in lower latitudes, increasing the risk of hunger and threatening food security in poor regions of the world (United e., Annual Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009, p. 09). Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights refers to the right to food, as States recognize for individuals in society their right to a standard of living that provides food, freedom from hunger through individual effort and international cooperation, through scientific knowledge and techniques for the development of agricultural production, as well as measures for the equitable distribution of food resources among the countries of the world.

Work has also been done to preserve the rights of special groups such as women, children, indigenous peoples, and refugees under special international conventions (Qatat and Bqneish, 2019).

3.4. Right to housing:

The provisions of Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 included a reference to the right to housing, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate to ensure the health and well-being of himself and his family, especially in terms of food, clothing, and housing", and Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights referred to the right of everyone to provide shelter for his family so that this term was used to express housing, but the United Nations Committee has provided adequate housing and the extent of suitability is determined by consideration of factors Economic, social, ecological, etc., the criteria for appropriateness have been defined as follows:

- Legal guarantee of occupancy of housing, including legal protection against forced eviction.
- Provision of services, materials, facilities, and infrastructure.
- Affordability.
- Habitability.
- Access to housing for disadvantaged groups.
- Site.
- Culturally adequate housing (Abadah, 2017).

3.5. Right to water:

According to the Economic, Social and Cultural Commission (United H., Annual Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009, p. 10), the right to water means "the right of everyone to have an adequate, acceptable, accessible and affordable amount of water for personal and domestic use", so that climate change affects water-related challenges, especially when extreme weather events such as floods and earthquakes occur, which negatively affect the supply of water of acceptable quality and its decrease in place A specific time for supply level design is the result of climatic factors or human intervention by extracting, diverting and using them from a particular natural resource, or storing a quantity of them in a natural source, dam or water structure (Fao, 2020).

When the issue of competition for water and the effects of climate change turns into conflicts between stakeholders, resulting in unequal access to water, including children, women, and indigenous peoples, the right to water turns into conflicts between stakeholders, including children, women, and indigenous peoples, for example, the different stages of exploitation of the waters of the Nile River by the countries through which the latter passes. The last agreement in Khartoum between the Republic of Sudan, the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, on March 23, 2015, was Agree on a set of principles, including the principle of equitable and appropriate use of water (Raslan, 2015).

4. Impacts of the application of climate change and human rights rules:

Whereas the question of the relationship between climate change and human rights faces a challenge in the application of the legal text of the Framework Convention the one hand, which the international community is trying to address through successive efforts.

4.1. Legal Challenges:

The challenge facing the relationship is reflected in the differentiated contribution of States to climate change, as the industrialized countries listed in Annex I to the Framework Convention on Climate Change referred to the unequal distribution of the effects of climate change, especially on the peoples of poor countries, which had minimal anthropogenic change and recognized the principle of equity. Article 03, stipulates that the burden of climate change is unequal bearing, the provisions of this article require the parties to protect the climate system based on equity following their common responsibilities, even if they are unequal according to their respective capabilities, as developed countries are supposed to assume a major role in combating climate change compared to developing and poor countries (United H., Annual Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009, p. 05), and this entails that the application of the principle of equity faces challenges In the negotiations to combat climate change.

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As the Secretary-General of the United Nations (Guterres, 2021) expressed this situation by saying that "adoption is a compromise solution", it reflects the true picture of the intersection of interests, circumstances, contradictions, and the state of political will that the world is experiencing today, but collective political will is insufficient to overcome some deep contradictions so that the emission of global warming continues to threaten the climate.

During the Paris Conference, there were fierce debates on the issue of financing, with representatives of the Nordic countries opposed, as well as the Group of 77 and China, threatening the existence of the Paris Agreement (Rahmouni, 2018, p. 235).

This reflects negatively on human rights and constitutes an obstacle to reaching compromise solutions in the international community.

4.2. Climate Change Adaptation and Human Rights Efforts:

The efforts are reflected in the strategy of the United Nations since the 1972 Stockholm Declaration aimed at promoting international conventions dealing with environmental issues, through the following:

- Promote the conclusion of international and bilateral agreements on specific environmental issues within specific geographical areas, such as international rivers and the reduction of transnational pollutants.
- Adaptation of national laws to the requirements of international environmental law.
- Providing technical assistance to developing countries to develop their environmental legislation (Zarbani, 2019, p. 121).

As a result, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established, and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, where the final document entitled "The Future We Aspire to" was issued, which referred to the need to build a green economy in the context of sustainable development because it is linked to human rights in paragraph 56/b: "respect the national sovereignty of each country over its natural resources, taking into account (Zarbani, 2019) its circumstances and responsibilities." d) of the same article, which reads "to achieve sustained economic growth for all, to promote innovation, to provide opportunities and benefits for all, and to respect all human rights" (United Nations, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012).

To complement the efforts of the United Nations in the field of harmonization of human rights norms to climate change, the Paris Agreement was concluded on December 12, 2015, which represents the latest step in the evolution of the United Nations climate change regime and builds on the work done under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and its central objective is to strengthen the global response to climate change by keeping global temperature rise this century well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and

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following up on efforts To limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C, this treaty is legally binding however, it must be ratified by a sufficient number of parties (Med & Wewerink, 2021).

5. Conclusion:

It is clear that climate systems around the world have changed in different patterns that are increasingly difficult to predict, and the devastating effects on livelihoods and economic systems have highlighted the fact that global climate change caused primarily by human activities is a physical reality that has direct consequences for environmental processes and systems that extend beyond the area of direct impact and are cumulative over time, leading to a significant deterioration of human well-being over the coming decades.

Accordingly, the most important findings and suggestions can be presented as follows:

I. Results:

- There is a legal complexity surrounding the protection of the atmosphere if it exists in conflict with the levels of economic and industrial development.

Climate change highlights the shortcomings of current international human rights law in a globalized world.

Human rights principles and concepts can complement traditional climate change negotiations and improve climate change policy by, inter alia, focusing attention on impacts on individuals, especially vulnerable individuals, by emphasizing accountability, and by encouraging and strengthening international cooperation.

Second: Recommendations:

- Develop a framework for thinking about climate change within the broader context of sustainable development in a manner that preserves human rights principles.

- Strengthen institutions to address climate change in an integrated manner across and within institutions that govern the global environment, national ministries, and different sectors and levels of government.

- Extension of the international system to address climate change.

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