To the UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee

27th session

**Statement from ETC Group** (Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration) on Agenda Item 3.(d) **Impact of new technologies for climate protection,** February 21, 2022.

Distinguished members of the HRC Advisory Committee, Mr. Chair, we thank you for the opportunity to address this agenda item.

I am speaking on behalf of ETC Group, an international civil society organization

that has been following the issue of geoengineering and its potential impacts

for over a decade. We are also part of several large international networks and

constituencies within UN biodiversity, climate and food organizations that have

expressed positions against geoengineering.

We recognize the importance of the Human Rights Council addressing this issue, as the proposed geoengineering technologies could have very serious negative

implications on Human Rights, the environment, biodiversity and humanity’s very

means of subsistence, especially in the Global South. According to scientific

studies, solar geoengineering could even further disrupt climate and pose

threats to millions of people.

These technologies cannot be legitimately called “technologies for climate protection” as they are more likely to function as technologies for climate destruction.

We welcome resolution 48.14 of the HRC to elaborate a study and a report on the

impacts of these technologies. This resolution must be implemented ensuring the

full participation of civil society organizations, Indigenous peoples, peasant

and rural workers, women and youth organizations, among others, and especially

inclusion of those in the Global South.

This involvement is crucial, particularly given that experiments on solar

geoengineering and carbon dioxide removal have already taken place in violation

of the rights of Indigenous peoples and peasants. Several geoengineering

projects are planned to be carried out in the territories of Indigenous peoples

in violation of their right to free prior and informed consent.

We are very concerned that the panel invited by the HRC Advisory

Committee to make presentations on the issue is only composed of researchers

from the Global North. It is a matter of public record that each of them has taken positions in favour of the advancement of geoengineering technologies.

Despite having won the financial backing of powerful polluting industries, some

governments and extremely rich individuals, the majority of geoengineering

technologies are today merely speculative proposals, or at very early stages of

development. None of the schemes are aimed at addressing the root causes of

climate change. Even if some technologies were developed in the future, they

would only disguise some symptoms of climate change rather than addressing its

root cause: climate change would continue. These technologies could provide a

new captive market for those who control them.

The most immediate impact of the proposed geoengineering technologies may be that they provide an alibi for high emitting countries and industries to avoid

making the urgently needed reduction of greenhouse gases and continue their high

level of emissions. The schemes merely sustain the illusion, propagated by many

of the largest emitters, that there would be new technological means by which

making these reductions can be avoided, for which there is no hard evidence.

Geoengineering wastes the short time we have to make real changes while also entrenching environmental and climate injustice.

We call the HRC AC to correct the process to ensure that Indigenous peoples and

peasant organizations, as well as others who are potentially affected, are included in further discussions on this issue.