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The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, and would like to refer to the note verbal dated March 20, 2023 regarding the call for inputs for the report on "Older persons in the context of climate change-induced disasters and building back better". In that regard, the Permanent Mission has the honor to attach herewith contribution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the afore-mentioned report.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, the assurance of its highest consideration.



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## Most prominent measures taken by the Kingdom on the issue of the elderly in the context of disasters caused by climate change

This Memorandum has been drafted in response to the request of the Special Rapporteur on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons to contribute to responding to the questions related to the preparation of his thematic report to be submitted to the UN General Assembly during its 78<sup>th</sup> session in October 2023 on “Elderly people in the context of disasters caused by climate change and better reconstruction.” Following is an account of the Kingdom’s contributions to responding to said questions:

**legal, policy and institutional frameworks: Is there national legislation on emergency disasters? Does the legislation address the specific needs of older persons? Is there a national plan, policy or strategy to address the prevention, mitigation, and/or response to climate change-related disasters, and does it include older persons? Please provide detailed information and relevant documents, if applicable.**

Do these laws address the specific needs of older persons? Is there a national plan, policy or strategy to address, prevent, mitigate and/or respond to disasters caused by climate change, and does it include older persons? Please provide detailed information and relevant documents. How would you raise public awareness about the existing measures in relation to prevention, mitigation and response to disasters caused by climate change?

- The launch of the National Strategy for Health and Environment has been a significant measure taken to keep step with the pace of progress in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030. Saudi Vision 2030 aims to provide a healthy and clean environment, develop national capabilities, manage disasters, achieve a balance between development and the environment, and improve the quality of life and public health of the population, including the elderly. It also aims to establish protected areas in the Kingdom, as well as centers concerned with environmental research, most notably the King Khaled Wildlife Research Center. In this context, Royal Order no. A/219 was issued on 1/6/2018. Likewise, a set of regulations, plans, procedures and laws have been approved, aiming to protect lives and property from all natural hazards. These plans include the following:



- The National Plan to Confront Natural Disasters, which covers a range of potential scenarios, including torrential rains, rapid surface winds, destructive earthquakes, severe sand and dust storms, volcanic eruptions, severe hurricanes, landslides, building collapses, and collapses of dams or water reservoirs.
- The National Plan to Confront Maritime Disasters, which includes a set of measures and procedures to address any potential disasters in the Kingdom's seas.
- The Implementing Regulations for Evacuation and Sheltering, which entails procedures, measures and responsibilities for evacuation and provision of shelters before the occurrence of disasters to protect civilians from exposure to calamities.
- The National Center for Meteorology, the National Center for Vegetation Cover Development and Combating Desertification, the National Center for Monitoring Environmental Compliance, and the National Center for Wildlife Development were established pursuant to the Council of Ministers Resolution no. 417, dated 26/3/2019. In addition, Royal Order no. 13662, dated 19/12/2016, corresponding to 19/12/2016 was issued to approve the establishment of environmental units for protection from pollution. These units monitor compliance with the environmental laws, standards and criteria issued by the competent agencies, and collect information on the environmental condition of installations within their facilities on an ongoing basis. They also enable competent agencies to enter these facilities for inspection, monitoring pollution levels, and reviewing the implementation of the Environmental Law.

**Examples of national laws in the kingdom:**

- The Civil Defense Law
- The Implementing Regulations for the Functions and Responsibilities of Government Agencies
- Regulations for Means of Warning at Peace and Wartime
- Regulations for Evacuations and Sheltering
- Regulations for Immediate Relief within the Kingdom
- Regulations for Securing Meals for Civil Defense Workers during Emergencies and Wartime at the Expense of the State
- Regulations for Coordinating Actions for Aircraft Accidents.



- Procedural regulations for calculating the damages of disasters and emergencies and for estimating and disbursing government assistance to affected people
- Regulations for the Rights and Duties of Persons Supporting Civil Defense Work.

In addition to a few national plans that give priority to groups in need of special care, including the elderly, such as:

- The National Plan for Chemical and Bacterial Incidents
- The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
- The General Plan for the Implementation of Civil Defense Activities in Wartime
- The General Emergency Plan in the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah during the Holy Month of Ramadan
- Hajj General Emergency Plan

**Access to information: How do you raise awareness about existing measures in relation to prevention, mitigation, and response to climate-change related disasters in the public? How is information about access to essential services (e.g. access to shelters, food security, healthcare, legal assistance, social services) made accessible and available for older persons? Please provide detailed information.**

- Saudi Arabia has one of the most advanced internet and social media penetration world-wide. The e-government channels are well established. Citizens, including vulnerable segments of population are provided with effective information .
- One of the measures taken by the Kingdom in order to communicate information about basic services to all segments of society is through the Ministry of Media and its affiliated bodies. They send circulars to all local newspapers, magazines, electronic newspapers, and satellite radio and television channels represented in the Kingdom, to shed light on the efforts exerted to educate society about the dangers of environmental pollution, and conduct media coverage and campaigns in this respect. They also emphasize the importance of adhering to regulations and instructions, and protecting the marine and terrestrial environment.

**How do climate change-related disasters affect specific groups of older persons in all their diversity (including older women, older LGBTI persons, older persons**



**belonging to national, religious, and linguistic minorities and older indigenous people, refugees and internally displaced persons, older persons with disabilities, older persons based in urban and rural areas, among others). Please provide detailed information.**

Climate change can affect all segments of society, including the elderly, by affecting the availability of water, agricultural and other sources contributing to food sustainability.

**Please provide examples of good practices for addressing the needs of older persons in preventing, mitigating and responding to climate change-related disasters.**

The central government has put in place an efficient communication channels for citizens to raise their concerns. These channels are based on e-government technologies (digital means) or more traditional grievance procedures through local representation of central governmental authorities.

Since the Kingdom and the region face significant climate challenges, such as desertification, an immediate economic risk to the Kingdom and the region (USD 13Bn is currently lost due to dust storms in the region every year), HRH Crown Prince Announces "The Saudi Green Initiative and The Middle East Green Initiative" on 27 March 2021, which represents the Kingdom's contribution of more than (4%) in achieving the goals of the global initiative to limit the degradation of lands and fungal habitats, and (1%) of the global target to plant (1 trillion) trees, these joint efforts will achieve a reduction in carbon emissions by more than (10%) of global contributions. The Kingdom will work with all international partners to further develop these two initiatives and the various programs and timelines entailed in them.