

**Contribution by the Syrian Arab Republic to the report of the of the
SR on the human rights of IDPs**

Climate change and internal displacement

Although the Syrian Arab Republic is not a major contributor to the emission of greenhouse gases globally, therefore is not among the countries that have a fundamental impact on the phenomenon of climate change comparing to other countries. With its geographical location within the arid and semi-arid regions, it is considered one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of global warming and climate change in its multiple dimensions. This is evident through the climatic phenomena that it has suffered from during the past decades, such as rain entrapment, changes in the distribution and intensity of precipitation, rainstorms, the drying up of some rivers or the decrease in the levels of rivers, natural and artificial lakes, the recurrence of drought seasons and its increased risks, the high unprecedented temperatures, the occurrence of heat waves and forest fires, the increase in the number and frequency of sand and dust storms annually, desertification and the impact of global climate changes on land use patterns which caused pressure on natural resources, energy resources, water resources and natural ecosystems, in addition to the overall repercussions on public health and other productive, service, social and economic sectors.

- **The impacts of climate change leading to internal displacement are various:**

In addition to the deterioration of living conditions, such impacts affect the return of people who were originally displaced. Some challenges are also increased in particular those related to the limited natural resources such as drinking water which becomes increasingly scarce in many regions of the world. In addition to the impact on livestock and agricultural crops, as climatic conditions become extremely hot and dry, which threatens livelihood.

The risks resulting from the increase in the severity and frequency of severe weather conditions such as torrential rains or prolonged drought, desertification, environmental deterioration, rising sea levels, seasonal hurricanes. People are forced, in such cases, to move to other areas (from rural areas to cities) in the context of climate change and related disasters. These factors had a direct negative impact on the people and caused major waves of internal displacement in many areas, especially with the droughts that the country is exposed to, the decrease in rainfall levels, the limited ability to adapt to climate changes with

water scarcity, and the need to recycle gray water to secure an alternative source of irrigation in agricultural areas, especially in the most vulnerable communities. This situation comes with the need to support reconstruction and recovery. Based on the abovementioned and in order to strengthen the ability of local communities, especially in the most vulnerable areas in terms of climatic changes in the country, it is necessary to take immediate measures to enhance conditions to achieve durable solutions for displacement by supporting developing countries in facing climate change by securing the necessary funding, technology transfer, capacity building, dissemination of climate information, and updating policies and approaches for adapting to climate change, in addition to:

- Implement immediate projects and interventions to enhance the resilience of the people in rural areas, including the returnees, by securing alternative sources of irrigation and reusing gray water by establishing treatment station to serve small areas at relatively low costs and provide a continuous source of irrigation.

- Provide heat-resistant agricultural varieties, rehabilitating farmers, and supporting rural women.

- Reuse agricultural crop residues as fodder and spreading climate-smart agricultural practices.

- **The most vulnerable groups regarding to climate change:**

Communities in rural areas, especially those exposed to the impacts of the terrorist war against the country are considered the most affected by climate change, in addition to the factor of poverty. Poverty alleviation and ensuring environmental sustainability have already emerged as major domestic challenges, in particular challenges related to water. Addressing poverty will be central to all efforts to revive the economy, reducing poverty in a sustainable way requires the support of Syrians in general, and in particular the displaced persons and returnees in restoring their livelihoods, especially in the agricultural sector. Focusing on livelihood security, special attention should be given to enabling women to secure livelihoods, many of whom are now heads of their families and having lost their husbands or fathers in the war. Particular attention should be given also to youth, who are considered vulnerable and essential for effective long-term economic development. Children, elderly, disabilities are also among the most vulnerable to climate change.

It is necessary to take effective measures to address the issues of climate change in general and its impact on local communities and internal displacement in particular, through supporting legislation and adopting environmental laws related to adaptation to climate changes and introducing legislation related to

climate change and climate adaptation, in addition to supporting developing countries financially, scientifically and technically. We would like to stress on the importance of taking into consideration the particularities and the circumstances of each state and their national priorities. In the case of Syria the impacts of the practices of the terrorist groups and the illegal presences of the United States is the main root cause behind the displacement which culminated with the impacts of climate change. We would like to stress also that the unilateral coercive measures is a main hindrance before addressing the impact of climate change at the national level in general, including those related to displacement and the efforts to building the resilience of idps and their host communities and providing the conditions for their returns to their areas.

To prevent internal displacement caused by the climate, effective measures must be taken to enhance the livelihoods of residents in areas exposed to climate change and support them, especially in the case of climatic phenomena that lead to damage to crops and livestock, and to find an appropriate mechanism to compensate for losses and activate the mechanism for losses and damages of the Framework Convention on Changes Climate and the formation of a fund to support those affected in developing countries.

In order to build resilience related to climate change, support sustainable development, enhance social cohesion and improve people's livelihoods and well-being, recovery and planning need to carefully consider all social and environmental impacts. Regional and urban planning must focus on environmental principles and natural resource management, and this will require comprehensive assessments, planning and management of water resources, including linkages between urban and rural areas and responding to the specific needs of people who depend on water-dependent livelihoods (i.e. farmers) and people who need support to restore livelihoods and access to basic services, especially for IDPs, returnees, women and youth.

- **Proposals for adaptation and planning measures in the sectors (agriculture, water, and coastal areas):**

The following measures aim to enhance resilience and adaptation to address climate change and increase resilience, in addition to benefits in the field of mitigating emissions, noting that the implementation of these measures will require cooperation between all sectors nationally, in addition to international cooperation and support and the provision of financial resources:

- **Institutional Strengthening Policies and Procedures:**

Agricultural sector:

- Develop a comprehensive adaptation plan for crop and livestock production to address drought risks.
- Incorporate agricultural practices that are resistant to climate change within national and sectoral plans and strategies.
- Enhance capabilities in the field of agricultural monitoring control, development of customized forecast products, data management and applications on climate information at the farmer level.

Water sector:

- Incorporate climate change into water-related policies and plans, and enhance planning and activities implemented jointly by sectors.
- Update the water information system and study the alternatives for implementing a better water inventory information system.
- Encourage the application of integrated water resources management at the basin level supported by climate information.

Coastal areas:

- Incorporate the impact of climate change and risk assessment into future coastal strategic planning.
- Enhance coordination between sectors in coastal areas.
- Improve the protection of areas that enjoy special status as nature reservoir.
- Establish a national coastal monitoring system in addition to the early warning system.

• **Administration practices:**

Agricultural sector:

- Enhance climate services for the agricultural sector to provide farmers with updated climate data in an easy-to-use format.
- Strengthen early warning systems to focus on forecasting crop-specific droughts.
- Introduce new varieties of agricultural crops that are more tolerant of hotter climates and more frequent severe weather events.
- Adjust the agricultural calendar (such as planting dates) to better respond to seasonal shifts.
- Enhance agricultural monitoring practices to protect soil and water.

- Promote climate-smart water-use efficiency practices (such as drip irrigation and water harvesting).
- Improve post-harvest cooling and storage systems for crops, livestock and fish products.
- Develop weather risk insurance or other financial services to support smallholders during drought waves.

Water sector:

- Protect water resources (and preventing pollution of surface and groundwater sources)
 - Reduce water losses, including water seepage from canals, and maintain soil moisture by improving its organic matter content.
 - Improve the efficiency of water use for irrigation, support water harvesting projects using modern irrigation methods, improve the actual quantities of water required for plants, and use supplementary irrigation for rain-fed crops during dry seasons.
 - Promote the use of non-traditional water sources (treated wastewater and agricultural drainage, support factories to treat wastewater from major rivers such as the Euphrates and Orontes, water treatment plants at the village level, treatment plants for small communities, and the production of irrigation water.
- Improve the current agricultural practices (change and deepening sowing dates, improve plant nutrition, using crops with low financial needs, using drought-tolerant crops, diversifying cultivated crops, using cropping combination, domestic animal reproduction, providing agricultural and rural extension services for males and females, strengthening links market).

Coastal areas:

- Encourage erosion control measures such as dune reshaping and coastal rehabilitation
- Adopt integrated coastal zone management based on vulnerability and risk maps.
- Adopt nature-based solutions to protect against floods.

- Stabilize sand dunes through the use of rocks and local plant varieties to encourage dune growth by trapping and stabilizing sand.
