

Report on
62nd SESSION
OF THE
**UN HUMAN
RIGHTS COUNCIL**

15 JUNE – 7 JULY 2026



HUMAN RIGHTS
ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.
OUR FUTURE IS.



DIGNITY.
EQUALITY.
JUSTICE.



GENEVA DIARIES:

HUMAN RIGHTS, CLIMATE ACTION
AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES



ONE PLANET.
MANY RIGHTS.
ONE FUTURE.



ENVIRONMENT



PEOPLE



FOOD SYSTEMS



WATER



FOR PEOPLE.
FOR PLANET.
FOR **FUTURE.**



CLIMATE
JUSTICE
Now.



Introduction



The 62nd regular session of the UN Human Rights Council (15 June–7 July 2026) addressed a broad agenda of thematic and country-specific human rights issues, with a strong focus on climate/environment and crisis situations. Key activities included thematic panels (e.g. on climate finance and women in sports), numerous Interactive Dialogues (e.g. on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Sudan, Venezuela, DRC, and with Special Rapporteurs), as well as side events highlighting human rights in environmental contexts. Several resolutions were adopted on topics such as climate change, poverty, health in conflict, and corporate accountability (often by consensus); official vote tallies were generally not specified, implying broad agreement or consensus. The Council's 20th anniversary was marked by calls to strengthen its mandate and civil society participation. Civil society remained highly engaged throughout the 62nd session of the Human Rights Council through side events, advocacy campaigns, and public activities at Broken Chair Square (Place des Nations), including the "Right to a Healthy Environment" march on 25 June, despite concerns over constraints on NGO participation within the Council. Among the active participants, the India Water Foundation (IWF) contributed both inside and outside the Council by delivering an intervention through Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, during the 10th Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food on food and climate change, while also organizing an exhibition at Broken Chair Square showcasing India's achievements in health, nutrition, water, and sanitation as examples of integrated, rights-based sustainable development. Overall, the session underscored the intersection of human rights with climate change and food systems, continued scrutiny of country crises (Middle East conflict, Sudan, Venezuela, etc.), and sustained engagement of States, UN officials, and civil society.





Civil society and NGOs were prominent, as usual. Hundreds of organizations attended the Council, sponsoring side events (as above) and submitting written statements (albeit reduced by funding cuts). ISHR and others documented how access constraints (visa issues, WebEx fees, limited travel funding) hampered NGOs from the Global South. For HRC62, NGOs in consultative status could only make three written statements instead of five (due to UN budget

restrictions). Despite this, civil society used universal speaking time to raise issues like reprisals (weakened in some countries), indigenous rights, and tech & privacy. The Council's High-Level segment (19 June, marking HRC@20) featured prominent figures (former Council Presidents, academics) calling for reforms. No NGO-led walkouts or disruptions inside the chamber were reported. Outside, activists staged the aforementioned "Right to Healthy Environment" march on 25 June at Place des Nations, underscoring a popular demand to recognize environmental rights (symbolically at the Broken Chair site).



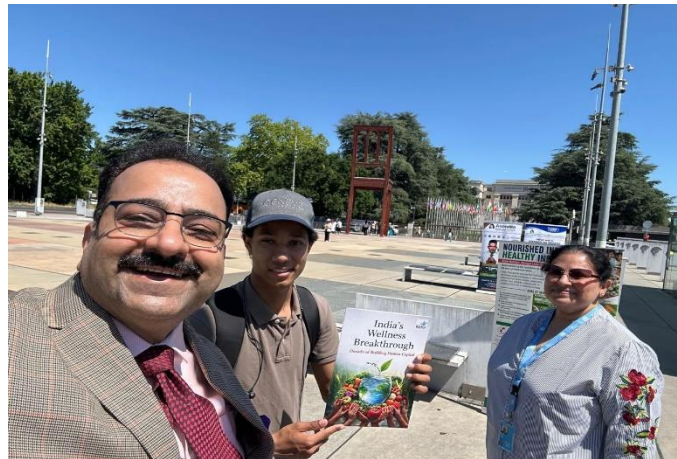
India Water Foundation's Engagements

The India Water Foundation's (IWF), engagement was strategically bifurcated into two interlocking spheres: a substantive, evidence-based oral intervention during the high-level interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on climate change and human rights, and a visually compelling public exhibition at the iconic Broken Chair Square an act of diplomatic storytelling that successfully bridged domestic policy achievements with global human rights discourse.

On 19 June 2026, during the 10th meeting of the session, which was dedicated to the presentation and discussion of the Special Rapporteur Elisa Morgera's thematic report on transforming food systems for a safe climate and healthy environment (A/HRC/62/44), Dr. Arvind Kumar, Founder and President of IWF delivered a formal intervention that was both technically rigorous and politically resonant. Speaking from the floor, Dr. Kumar began by unequivocally endorsing the Special Rapporteur's core thesis: that the current global food system is a primary driver of planetary overshoot, contributing to nearly one-third of greenhouse gas emissions and violating multiple human rights simultaneously, including the rights to adequate food, clean water, health, and a healthy environment. He stressed that for countries like India, which are acutely vulnerable to climate-induced agricultural stress, food system transformation is not a mere developmental choice but an existential and rights-based imperative.



Dr. Kumar then pivoted to showcase India's homegrown policy and technological responses, framing them as concrete examples of how a large, diverse, and climate-vulnerable democracy can operationalise the Special Rapporteur's recommendations. He detailed that India's agricultural research system has successfully developed over 1,900 climate-resilient varieties of major crops, including a drought-tolerant rice strain that consumes 25% less irrigation water than conventional varieties a critical adaptation for regions facing erratic monsoon patterns. He further highlighted the release of 109 high-yielding biofortified varieties covering 61 different crops, designed to address micronutrient deficiencies (particularly iron, zinc, and vitamin A) that affect millions of marginalised communities. These varieties, he emphasised, are not just agronomic innovations but tools for realising the right to health and nutrition.



On the institutional side, Dr. Kumar provided an authoritative update on the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), a centrally sponsored programme approved by the Indian Cabinet in 2024 with a financial outlay of approximately ₹2,400 crore (about USD 290 million). This mission, he explained, aims to transition 10 million farmers to ecosystem-based, chemical-free cultivation methods over the next five years, reducing input costs, restoring soil health, and building long-term climate resilience. He also referenced India's ambitious Jal Jeevan Mission, which has provided tap water connections to over 140 million rural households, thereby addressing the water-nutrition-health nexus directly a point he explicitly connected to the Special Rapporteur's call for "defossilising and detoxifying" food systems. Dr. Kumar concluded his intervention by urging the Human Rights Council to recognise that climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building must be scaled up for developing countries, and that the multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI) should be operationalised as a fair metric for allocating adaptation and loss-and-damage funds. His speech was received with notable attention from delegations representing the Global South, who saw in it a practical blueprint for aligning national agricultural policy with international human rights obligations.



Parallel to the formal proceedings inside the Palais des Nations, IWF team curated and mounted a large-scale photographic exhibition in the open-air plaza facing the Broken Chair. The exhibition, titled "Water, Nutrition, and Community Well-being: India's Journey Towards a Climate-Resilient Future". The visual narrative was organised into four thematic clusters: (i) safe drinking water and sanitation (WASH) (ii) nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and (iv) health and climate adaptation in action.

In the broader calculus of India's diplomatic positioning at the 62nd UNHRC session, the IWF's dual engagement policy intervention plus public exhibition—served as a soft-power amplifier. It projected India not as a passive recipient of international climate rhetoric but as an active laboratory of scalable, rights-based solutions. The Broken Chair exhibition, in particular, reclaimed a site traditionally associated with humanitarian

tragedy and repurposed it as a beacon of developmental hope, while Dr. Kumar's intervention anchored that hope in scientifically validated policies and measurable outcomes. Together, they constituted a coherent, memorable, and highly professional advocacy campaign that will likely be cited as a model for how national think tanks can effectively engage with multilateral human rights forums.

Alongside its formal interventions and public exhibition, the India Water

Foundation (IWF) team, headed by its President and Founder Dr. Arvind Kumar, also leveraged its presence in Geneva to engage in high-level diplomatic outreach beyond the UNHRC. The team had the privilege of meeting with India's Ambassador to the World Trade



Organization (WTO) **Dr C Senthil Pandian, IAS** in Geneva, during which discussions were held on India's stance at the WTO and various other trade-related and developmental matters. While the specific details of the WTO discussions remain part of ongoing diplomatic engagements, the meeting underscored IWF's commitment to fostering multi-sectoral dialogue—bridging the intersections of water security, climate-resilient agriculture, food systems, and international trade



policy. This high-level interaction complemented the Foundation's broader advocacy at the 62nd UNHRC session, where Dr. Kumar delivered a pointed intervention stressing that transforming food systems is essential to ensuring fundamental human rights, including the rights to food, health, a clean environment, and a life of dignity.

The 62nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council reaffirmed that the global



human rights agenda can no longer be pursued in isolation from the interconnected crises of climate change, food insecurity, biodiversity loss, public health, water scarcity, and sustainable development. Throughout the session, the Council increasingly recognised that these challenges are mutually reinforcing and require integrated, rights-based responses supported by stronger international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement. The adoption of resolutions on climate change, extreme poverty, health in armed conflict, and neglected tropical diseases, together with the thematic discussions on transforming food systems and climate finance, reflected the Council's evolving understanding that environmental sustainability and human dignity are inseparable.

Against this backdrop, the contribution of the India Water Foundation demonstrated the growing value of evidence-based civil society engagement within multilateral diplomacy. By combining a substantive intervention during the Interactive Dialogue on food systems and climate change with a public exhibition at Broken Chair Square, the Foundation successfully illustrated how national experiences can contribute practical, scalable, and rights-based solutions to global policy debates. The intervention highlighted that investments in climate-resilient agriculture, water security, nutrition, ecosystem restoration, and community-led adaptation are not isolated sectoral initiatives but fundamental enablers of multiple human rights and sustainable development outcomes. It also reinforced the importance of recognising water as the central connector across food systems, public health, climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and socio-economic development.

Conclusion

Looking ahead, the momentum generated during the 62nd session should serve as a foundation for strengthening the integration of human rights within global climate and sustainable development governance. Future efforts should prioritise scaling up climate finance, strengthening technology transfer and capacity-building for developing countries, expanding blended finance mechanisms for water security, and ensuring that adaptation investments are directed towards the most vulnerable communities through equitable financing instruments such as the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index. Equally important is the need to institutionalise meaningful participation of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, academia, and civil society in international decision-making processes, recognising that inclusive partnerships are indispensable for achieving durable and locally owned solutions.





Media Coverage

WED, JUL 01, 2026 | UPDATED 13:21 IST

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Arvind Kumar of the India Water Foundation addresses the 62nd session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on climate-resilient food systems and food security. (Photo/ANI)

India showcases climate-resilient food systems at UN Human Rights Council

ANI | Updated: Jun 22, 2026 18:26 IST

Geneva [Switzerland], June 22 (ANI): India has highlighted its efforts to build climate-resilient food systems and strengthen food security while addressing the impacts of climate change at the 62nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva.

During his intervention, Arvind Kumar of the India Water Foundation stressed that transforming food systems is essential to ensuring fundamental human rights, including the rights to food, health, a clean environment, and a life of dignity.

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Climate Crisis and Food Security Take Centre Stage at UNHRC as India Showcases Sustainable Solutions

By Aryan Age Bureau On 24 Jun 2026 14:46:32



Climate change and food security dominated discussions at the 62nd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, where India highlighted climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable farming, water management and public health initiatives. The India Water Foundation also showcased achievements in nutrition, sanitation and community welfare through an exhibition in Geneva. [South Asians & Diaspora](#)

Climate change and food security emerged as critical human rights concerns at the 62nd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, where India highlighted its efforts to build climate-resilient food systems and strengthen sustainable development amid mounting environmental challenges.

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India's Climate-Resilient Agriculture Model Resonates at 62 session of UNHRC

PTI 3 hours ago • 5 min read

Speaking at the 62nd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Context of Climate Change, Dr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation (IWF), underscored that transforming global food systems is fundamental to safeguarding human rights in an era of accelerating climate change.

Dr. Kumar emphasized that Climate change and food insecurity are deeply interconnected challenges. Addressing one requires addressing the other. The transformation of food systems is therefore not merely an agricultural priority but a human rights imperative. Climate change disrupts global food systems by reducing crop yields, straining livestock productivity, and damaging supply chains through extreme weather. Warmer temperatures, droughts, and floods lower nutritional value, accelerate food spoilage, and increase food prices, ultimately threatening worldwide food security.

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By ANI | Updated: June 22, 2026 18:30 IST

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