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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[30 January 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Sustaining Lives, Nurturing Environment: Commitment to a Safe, Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable World

All human beings depend on the environment in which we live. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. Without a healthy environment, we are unable to fulfil our aspirations. We may not have access to even the minimum standards of human dignity.(i) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development explicitly recognises the links between human rights, development and the environment, including biological diversity and climate. The interrelation between environmental sustainability and the different Sustainable Development Goals is based on reducing environmental damage but also on preserving the role of natural resources and ecosystem services in promoting human wellbeing, economic opportunities, and social and ecological resilience.(ii) The triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss threatens to reverse decades of human development progress, with disproportionate effects on the rights of marginalized or vulnerable people and communities. In turn, these events act as threat multipliers, amplifying conflicts, tensions, structural inequalities and imperiling the 2030 agenda. This critical connection between human rights and our natural world makes the pursuit of environmental justice an urgent priority. Without a clean and healthy environment, economic and social development cannot be sustained. In a world of colliding crises, we cannot afford to address these challenges sequentially. Now more than ever our efforts must focus on root causes through long-term integrated solutions based on stronger environmental laws and expanded protections for people and planet.(iii)

Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan firmly believe that the well-being of all human beings is intricately linked to the environment in which we live. A secure and sustainable environment is not only vital for the enjoyment of basic human rights but also serves as the foundation for a fulfilling and dignified life. Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan's successful initiatives in the domains of food distribution, hygiene awareness, water and sanitation advocacy, promotion of organic farming, and the distribution of fruitful grafted trees has been contributing towards fulfilling fundamental Human Rights through Environmental Stewardship. A safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a broad spectrum of human rights. Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan recognizes that rights such as the right to life, health, food, water, and sanitation are interdependent and closely tied to the state of the environment. Therefore, Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan has undertaken multifaceted programs to address these interconnected issues and create an environment where individuals can flourish. Some of these initiatives are as follows:

Food Distribution and Nutrition Programs: Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan places a significant emphasis on addressing food insecurity by implementing targeted food distribution and nutrition programs to the people and families in need. By providing nutritious food items, especially to marginalized communities, we contribute to ensuring the right to food and better health. Additionally, knowledge-sharing initiatives on nutrition empower individuals to make informed choices about their diet, promoting overall well-being.

Hygiene and Sanitation Awareness: A clean and hygienic environment is crucial for preventing diseases and promoting health. Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan conducts awareness campaigns on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) to educate communities and children about the importance of maintaining cleanliness and adopting hygienic practices. Distribution of hygiene and sanitary kits to the women and girls further supports individuals in maintaining personal hygiene, contributing to the realization of the right to health.

Organic Farming and Kitchen Gardens: Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan is actively involved in promoting sustainable agricultural practices. Through initiatives like organic farming and the establishment of kitchen gardens, we encourage communities to adopt environmentally friendly methods of cultivation. This not only supports better health through the consumption of chemical-free produce but also contributes to a healthier environment by reducing the reliance on harmful agricultural practices.

Distribution of Fruitful Grafted Trees: Recognizing the vital role of trees in environmental sustainability, Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan distributes fruitful grafted trees to marginalized farmers. These trees not only serve as a source of nutritious fruits but also contribute to environmental conservation. The initiative aligns with our commitment to improving livelihoods while simultaneously promoting a healthier environment.

India's commitment to environmental protection is enshrined in its constitution. Article 51-A (g) places a duty on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife. This constitutional mandate reflects the understanding that environmental conservation is not just a responsibility of the state but also a duty shared by every individual. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 defines environment as “environment includes water, air and land and the interrelationship which exists among and between air, water and land and human beings, other living creatures, plants, micro-organism and property”. Article 48 -A of the constitution also says that “the state shall endeavor to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wild life of the country”.(iv)

While Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan and India are actively working towards a safer and more sustainable environment, the interconnected nature of environmental issues calls for a united global effort. Therefore, we appeal to the United Nations to frame comprehensive rules and regulations that every country and organization should implement to ensure a better environment for all. This global framework should encompass:

Common Environmental Standards: The United Nations can play a pivotal role in formulating universal environmental standards that address issues such as air and water quality, waste management, and sustainable land use. These standards can provide a baseline for countries and organizations to adhere to, ensuring a collective commitment to environmental stewardship.

Collaborative Research and Innovation: Encourage global collaboration in research and innovation for sustainable practices. By sharing knowledge and technological advancements, nations can collectively work towards environmentally friendly solutions, promoting a more sustainable future.

Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan remains steadfast in its commitment to creating a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. We believe that by addressing interconnected issues such as food security, hygiene, sustainable agriculture, and environmental conservation, we contribute to the well-being of communities and the realization of fundamental human rights. We extend our appeal to the United Nations to take the lead in framing global rules and regulations that guide nations and organizations towards a collective effort in preserving and nurturing our shared environment. We all Together, can build a sustainable future where the enjoyment of human rights is intricately linked with the health and vitality of our planet.

(i) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-environment/about-human-rights-and-environment>

(ii) <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/Human-Rights-and-the-Environment.pdf>

(iii) <https://www.undp.org/blog/critical-connection-between-human-rights-and-our-natural-world>

(iv) <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=105411>