

Parliament of the World's Religions Supports Environmental Organizations Gathering for COP27

The Parliament of the World's Religions Stands in Support of Environmental Organizations Gathering at Sharm el-Sheikh.

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, November 4, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Parliament of the World's Religions condemns the actions of the Government of Egypt in restricting access and meaningful participation by civil society in the COP27 climate summit as entirely unacceptable. The silence of the United States and other nations concerning Egypt's authoritarian control of participation is equally unacceptable.



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Mr. Nitin Ajmera

The Parliament calls on governments attending COP27 to publicly condemn Egypt's authoritarian and undemocratic actions. The Parliament also calls for the Conference of Parties to set clear standards, both substantive and procedural, for consideration of the locations of future

COP events. Paramount among those standards must be respect for human rights and openness to civil society participation.

While fully supporting the location of COP27 on the African continent – as the first COP to be held there – our apprehensions of possible authoritarian actions by the Egyptian presidency to limit civil society participation have been realized. This decision, when made, should have ensured the full and meaningful participation of African civil society, but on the contrary, those voices have now been limited.

The [October 7, 2022 statement](#) by the Special Rapporteurs of the UN Human Rights Council clearly summarizes the failings of the Government of Egypt:

"Arrests and detention, NGO asset freezes and dissolutions and travel restrictions against human rights defenders have created a climate of fear for Egyptian civil society organizations to engage visibly at the COP27...A lack of information and transparent accreditation criteria for Egyptian NGOs, a coordinated increase in hotel room rates, undue restrictions to freedom of peaceful

assembly outside the COP27 venue, and unjustified delays in the provision of visas to those travelling from abroad were the main concerns for civil society activists, the experts said. Civil society plays an essential role in the advancement of climate action, and the experts underscored that Egypt should ensure safe and meaningful participation at COP27, including for independent civil society. Instead of further limiting their rights, civil society actors and human rights defenders, including those working on climate rights, must be given an opportunity to raise awareness about their views and protection needs.”

The Parliament strongly endorses the [November 2, 2022 statement](#) by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk, who concludes that it is “essential that everyone, including civil society representatives, is able to participate meaningfully at the COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh. Decisions about climate change, including at this meeting, need to be transparent, inclusive and accountable, particularly for those most affected.”

“The climate crisis is both universal and existential — everyone is affected, and the wellbeing of everyone is threatened,” said Nitin Ajmera, Chair of the Parliament’s Board of Trustees. “There is no challenge for which openness and participation are more critical.”

“The deliberations of the Parties are deeply consequential to everyone alive today and to future generations. Egypt’s unwillingness to accommodate openness and participation in the Conference of Parties was imminently predictable,” Ajmera continued.

“Excluding the people of the world from these critical climate deliberations is a great deal more than an uncomfortable inconvenience — it’s an unacceptable violation of the rights of all to participate in decisions that will profoundly affect their very existence and wellbeing.”

As people of faith and ethical conviction, we have a duty to speak out on violations of human rights and dignity and on all actions that affect the well-being of the natural world and Earth, our common home, as stated in the Parliament’s signature document, The Global Ethic.

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