

**Network Session
Human Rights Activists Workshop**

**In Climate Crisis Era, the Youth Taking
Actions in the Face of Human Rights Threats**

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“Climate change is the greatest threat to human rights in the 21st century.”

– Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The discourse that climate crisis is the greatest predicament of human rights has recently emerged. The reason that the climate crisis could be viewed as a human rights crisis lies in that the crisis and its consequences are usually man-made, so that we could hold someone to take responsibilities. Most people, however, are trapped in silo effect in their thinking. They tend to separately deal with the human rights crisis as one issue and the climate crisis as another. Therefore, many have failed to implement a united response until now.

“The most important thing that the youth can do today is climate action.”

-Kumi Naidoo, Former Executive Director of Green Peace-

Under the overall crisis of human rights-climate, the youth gathered together to organize the Youth Climate Emergency Action (hereinafter referred to as ‘Emergency Action’) in January 2020. Indeed, one of the noticeable traits of climate movement is that the time for response falls short of compared to the movements for other purposes. Therefore, the Emergency Action has been conducting various activities very ‘urgently’. Scientific and sociological solutions for the climate crisis have already existed, however, none of them have been implemented properly. In this regard, a driving force is badly needed in order to turn the solutions into a comprehensive social transformation. Under the circumstances, the Emergency Action aims at creating the very driving force through ‘direct action’. Meanwhile, a question could arise, ‘Why the direct action is needed here?’. First of all, the direct action is a very intuitive and reasonable way of resistance that one individual or organization could consider in confrontation of a huge force. That is to say, the direct action is the last resort and strategy that people could choose when they want to bring changes to the world. Thus, the organization has directly planned and conducted various direct actions over the last two and half years.

Now, let us discuss ‘how to bridge the disengaged crises of climate and human rights ultimately to cope with them as one combined issue?’. I would like to propose one approach to find out the answer to the question since the answer is something that all of us have to figure out while moving forward during this forum. Especially, I would like to offer the following direction as for how to connect climate and human rights in the field of activists. That is for climate activists and human rights activists to get together to hear the voices of those on the forefront of climate crisis and its ensuing human rights crisis. By doing so, the activists need to explore various ways

to improve the situation of the people in need. I expect that we could find out ways to make the voices of residents in a small room of shanty towns, migrant workers, and farmers heard throughout our society. In so doing, if we were able to make it as a social issue, then, I guess we could address the climate crisis issue and human rights issue all together.