

Advisory Opinion to Action: Advancing Human Rights and Climate Justice

February 10 to 11, 2026 | Bangkok, Thailand

Symposium Statement

Preamble

Whereas legal practitioners, policymakers, youth advocates, health experts, academics and civil society organizations across Asia and the Pacific convened in Bangkok on 10–11 February 2026 for the Regional Symposium on “Advisory Opinion to Action: Advancing Human Rights and Climate Justice”,

Recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ AO) on the obligations of States in respect of climate change, which authoritatively clarified binding obligations under international law;

Noting legal developments including human rights-based climate jurisprudence from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights, as well as from domestic jurisdictions;

Acknowledging the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, as recognized by the United Nations General Assembly, as a precondition for the enjoyment of all human rights, and the ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment and General Comment No. 14 of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) that defines the Right to Health;

Recognizing that these developments affirm climate change and environmental degradation as matters violating human rights, intergenerational equity, and the obligations of States to prevent, mitigate, and remedy transboundary environmental harm;

Acknowledging that climate change is anthropogenic while recognizing the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities on States’ obligations of conduct to take all appropriate measures to prevent harm;

Recognizing the critical links between climate change, public health, planetary health, food security, displacement, and social equity, and the need for integrated responses grounded in the best available science;

Recognizing that women, children, and Indigenous Peoples experience distinct and disproportionate impacts of climate change and environmental degradation and must be considered in the implementation of environmental and climate laws;

Acknowledging the leadership of Pacific Island States and youth movements, indigenous peoples, frontline communities, and civil society in advancing climate justice through international law, including through strategic litigation and policy development;

Acknowledging that Asia and the Pacific are among the regions most severely affected by climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and transboundary environmental harm, with disproportionate impacts on vulnerable and marginalized communities;



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The Symposium affirms:

1. The ICJ AO is a normative reference that must inform concrete decision-making at regional, national, and local levels.
2. Implementation by States and other stakeholders requires the translation of the ICJ AO into institutional practices, regulatory standards, effective accountability mechanisms, remedies and reparations.
3. Affirm that the right to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, together with intergenerational equity, must guide legislative and regulatory reform and inform judicial interpretation.
4. Climate-related harm is inseparable from public health impacts, planetary boundaries, and social inequities, posing threats to human health and human security.
5. Actions on loss and damage for climate-related harm are necessary, critically examining development financing models that perpetuate climate injustice.
6. Climate governance must be approached through the systemic integration of environmental and human rights law, public health frameworks, and best available science.
7. Regional approaches must evolve toward rights-based, and accountability-oriented frameworks, consistent with the ICJ AO.

Through the Conference, we therefore commit to:

1. Strengthening a regional community of practice linking legal, health, policy, and youth actors to support the uptake of the ICJ Advisory Opinion across jurisdictions.
2. Advancing the use of the ICJ AO in law and policy, including through litigation, legislative and regulatory reform and environmental and health governance.
3. Ensuring protection for environmental human rights defenders, lawyers, and affected communities, recognizing their essential role in advancing climate justice.
4. Embedding climate justice within public health systems, recognizing climate harm as a determinant of health and advancing collaboration between legal, policy and health communities
5. Strengthening of a regional knowledge hub to advance capacity building, technical assistance, and knowledge sharing on environmental rights and climate law;
6. Engaging regional bodies, including ASEAN, towards collective approaches for transboundary harm prevention, environmental rights, cooperation, and accountability consistent with the ICJ AO.