

Delegation of the Swiss Confederation

Position Paper for the General Assembly

The topic on the agenda of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) is “Addressing Climate Change and Ensuring Protection for Persons Displaced Due to Adverse Effects of Climate Change.” The Swiss Confederation (Switzerland) recognizes this topic to be of great importance for the international community and for the work of the General Assembly. Switzerland looks forward to cooperating multilaterally with all Member States to address this issue in a constructive and effective manner.

I. Addressing Climate Change and Ensuring Protection for Persons Displaced Due to Adverse Effects of Climate Change

Climate change increases the frequency and intensity of floods, droughts and storms, which forces people to leave their homes and creates growing humanitarian needs worldwide. Recent figures show that weather-related disasters have caused around 25.4 million displacements every year on average, and this number reached 24.9 million displacements in 140 States in 2019 alone, affecting almost three quarters of the world, according to the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre’s 2020 Global Report*. Over the past ten years, weather-related disasters have caused 220 million internal displacements, which equals about 60,000 people displaced every day due to extreme weather, as noted in the *IDMC Global Internal Displacement Database (2023)*. Projections further indicate that over 216 million people may be displaced by climate impacts by 2050 if global temperatures continue to rise, as highlighted in the *World Bank’s Groundswell Report (2021)*. Many regions lack the capacity to prepare for climate impacts, which leads to higher risks for communities living in vulnerable areas. By mid-2024, 90 million of the world’s 123 million forcibly displaced people were living in States highly exposed to climate hazards, as an increase of 5 million compared to the previous year, according to the *UNHCR Global Trends Report (2024)*. The *UNHCR Climate Change and Displacement Overview (2023)* research shows that the number of States facing extreme climate-related hazards is expected to rise from 3 to 65 by 2040, affecting many major refugee-hosting countries such as Cameroon, Chad, South Sudan, Nigeria, Brazil and India. The global trends make climate-related displacement a key topic for the United Nations. Extreme weather linked to climate change damages habitats, wrecks infrastructure and makes many regions uninhabitable. That increases pressure on humanitarian systems and creates additional risks of poverty, food shortage and conflict. These combined make protection of people displaced by climate impacts an urgent issue that requires coordinated action, as emphasized in the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030)*. Switzerland supports stronger implementation of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*, which guides better early warning systems, resilient infrastructure and risk reduction in highly exposed areas. For Switzerland, addressing climate-induced displacement is relevant because such developments affect global stability, human security and it demands cooperation among all Member States. This cooperation is a central priority in its multilateral engagement.

Switzerland supports global efforts to address climate-induced displacement through its long-standing engagement in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its commitments as an Annex II Party, where it contributes to international climate finance aimed at supporting adaption measures in vulnerable regions. As outlined in *Switzerland’s Eighth National Communication to the UNFCCC (2022)*, this contribution focuses on strengthening resilience in States that lack sufficient resources. Switzerland also supports the implementation of the *Paris Agreement (2015)*, which is relevant because it recognizes adaption as a core pillar of climate action and calls for preventing displacement. The country also takes part in discussions on loss and damage, recognizing that many States lack the resources to prepare for or recover from climate impacts. Switzerland engages actively in these negotiations by supporting technical work that strengthens the capacity of developing countries

to assess climate risks and implement adaption measures, as noted during UNFCCC Process at COP28 (2023), because it improved risk assessment helps States plan for displacement before it occurs. The country supports under the *Sendai Framework for Disaster risk reduction (2015 – 2030)* to strengthen early warning systems, disaster preparedness and community resilience. Through its cooperation with these agencies, the State supports projects that improve data collection and risk monitoring, as reliable information is essential for identifying areas where displacement is likely and for guidance protective action. At the national level, Switzerland has adopted a comprehensive climate adaption strategy and invests in measures that protect communities from floods, landslides and extreme weather, while maintaining strong humanitarian policies that ensure access to protection for people in need. This strategy includes seventy-five specific measures across different sectors, such as water management, health, and agriculture action among federal, cantonal and local authorities, as stated in the *Swiss Climate Adaptation Strategy 2020 – 2025*. The importance lies in providing a structured plan for reducing climate-related risks domestically. Additionally, programs such as *Adapt+ Programme* have supported more than thirty local projects with several million Swiss francs to improve resilience at the community level, including through measures that reduce heat stress, enhance natural flood protection and strengthen local preparedness. The State also contributes to the work of the *Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD)*, which promotes practical tools for planning relocation and coordinating cross-border cooperation. The country also participates in regional dialogue under the *Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda (2015)*, which supports shared preparedness. The State also continues to study the long-term implications of climate change on migration patterns, to contribute to future regional solutions rather than responding only at the national level.

Switzerland believes that future solutions must focus on reducing the risks that lead to displacement and on strengthening the ability of States to protect affected communities. The country emphasizes building on existing international frameworks and taking practical steps, as highlighted in the *Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda (2015)*. To support this objective, Switzerland proposes a Climate Resilience Support Initiative (CRSI) to assist climate-exposed countries in improving early-warning systems. This approach focuses on prevention and helps reduce the conditions that force people to leave their homes. This initiative will be implemented in cooperation with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, together with Partners such as UNHCR, IOM and Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD). These actors are already engaged in climate-related risk reduction, which makes the proposal realistic and consistent with Switzerland's existing multilateral engagement. CRSI would be financed through Switzerland's existing international climate-finance contributions, as outlined in *Switzerland's Eighth National Communication to the UNFCCC (2022)*. In this way, there are no new financial obligations created and an ensured predictable support for countries that are highly exposed to climate hazards. It also will reduce displacement risks by improving preparedness, supporting local adaptation measures and strengthening data-sharing. To manage climate impacts before displacement occurs, it also seeks to increase the capacity of vulnerable States to manage climate impacts. In addition, CRSI will promote technical exchanges and training opportunities, allowing partner countries to benefit from Switzerland's experience regarding risk napping and local adaption planning. The State also supports cooperation with regional early-warning networks, as they help detect hazards earlier. Therefore, the need for emergency displacement will be reduced. To ensure transparency, this initiative will include regular monitoring through existing UNFCCC reporting processes. Switzerland remains committed to working with all Member States on balanced and practical solutions that strengthen protection for affected people. Additionally, it will support long-term stability within the United Nations system.