GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Human Rights Council
Fifty-ninth Regular Session
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Item 3: ID With the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change

Statement delivered by Ellamae Hamm on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
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Mr. President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur for their report *A/HRC/59/42* and activities undertaken.

We wish to draw the Council's attention to a recent report entitled "*Chinese Hydropower: Damning Tibet's Culture, Community, and Environment"*[1] . This report documents that since 2000, at least 193 hydropower dams have already been operating or are planned in Tibet. Hydropower construction has already forcibly displaced thousands of Tibetans, destroyed centuries-old monasteries, and severely damaged fragile ecosystems across the Tibetan plateau. If China's plan is completed, 1.2 million people could be expelled from their homes and lands.

Despite being promoted as "clean energy", large-scale hydropower undermines the just, effective, and human rights-based climate transition outlined in the Special Rapporteur's report[2]. Science demonstrates that dams emit substantial methane emissions[3] and can cause environmental and cultural harm for generations.

The Chinese government must immediately halt the planning and construction of large-scale hydropower dams in Tibet and respect Tibetans' right to free, prior and informed consent.

We call on States, international bodies, and financial institutions to refrain from supporting hydropower projects in Tibet, to promote a rights-based energy transition, and the rights of the Tibetan people.

Thank you.

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[1] International Campaign for Tibet, "Chinese Hydropower: Damning Tibet's Culture, Community, and Environment", December 2024. Available at: *https://savetibet.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/FINAL_2024_dam-report_A4_web_low_reso.pdf*.
[2] A/HRC/59/42, para. 5-6.
[3] Ilissa B. Ocko and Steven P. Hamburg, 'Climate Impacts of Hydropower: Enormous Differences among Facilities and over Time,' Environmental Science and Technology, Vol. 53 (23), 2019, pages 140070-14082.