Welcome Remarks by

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At Briefing to LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS
By Social Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, Mr David Boyd

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10.30 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.
Conference Room 11, UN secretariat building, New York
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I very much welcome you to our briefing on the connect between human rights and the environment.

Thank you all for being here at this time of the busy General Assembly period.

It is my distinct honour to introduce the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, Mr. David Boyd.

In March 2018, the Human Rights Council decided to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment. The Council appointed Mr. David R. Boyd beginning 1 August 2018. He succeeds John Knox, who served in this role since 2012.

I will not list Mr. Boyd many achievements.

I just wish to underline that since his appointment, he has presented a report on the right to a healthy environment to the UN General Assembly in 2018.

The call is clear, is unequivocal: it is a call on the global community, on all of us to recognize the right to a healthy environment FOR ALL! Let us not make access to a healthy environment the next big inequality!

Since, he also submitted a report on clean air to the UN Human Rights Council in March 2019, as well as his latest report on safe climate, which he will introduce to the Third Committee on 24 October in the afternoon.

OHRLLS organized today’s briefing to give us all an opportunity to discuss these issues in terms of what they mean, how they impact the peoples in countries in special situations.

It is well established that LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are nations most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.

As I often say, yes beautiful pictures of islands but once you have lived in such setting you acutely become aware of not just the environmental
fragility of scarce land resources but also that of our precious oceans! You become aware of how environment and human existence are so intricately interwoven!

During the Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit and the SAMOA Mid-term Review, we heard numerous world leaders express solidarity with those who have suffered the devastating impacts of climate-related disasters.

It is so encouraging that important pledges were - I dare say FINALLY - made for stepped-up mitigation action together with commitments for further financial resources.

This is a momentum we MUST MAINTAIN, we MUST BUILD ON. The momentum of the Climate Summit must carry through to COP25 and beyond - we must translate words and pledges into action through greater ambition in NDCs and in the form of additional resources.

The report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights obligations related to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment comes at the right moment.

How much more evidence do we need! Just think of the impact of Hurricane Dorian on the Bahamas resulting in huge loss of livelihoods, lives and the devastating effects on health, food, water and sanitation, children and vulnerable groups.

We have the evidence, now must act.

So, without further ado, Mr. Boyd, I give you the floor.