

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes

Ref.: AL OTH 124/2025

(Please use this reference in your reply)

8 October 2025

Mr. Laophanphol and Mr. Saengpoem,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 52/4, 53/3, 55/2, 52/9 and 54/10.

We are independent human rights experts appointed and mandated by the United Nations Human Rights Council to report and advise on human rights issues from a thematic or country-specific perspective. We are part of the special procedures system of the United Nations, which has 60 thematic and country mandates on a broad range of human rights issues. We are sending this letter under the communications procedure of the Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council to seek clarification on information we have received. Special Procedures mechanisms can intervene directly with Governments and other stakeholders (including companies) on allegations of abuses of human rights that come within their mandates by means of letters, which include urgent appeals, allegation letters, and other communications. The intervention may relate to a human rights violation that has already occurred, is ongoing, or which has a high risk of occurring. The process involves sending a letter to the concerned actors identifying the facts of the allegation, applicable international human rights norms and standards, the concerns and questions of the mandate-holder(s), and a request for follow-up action. Communications may deal with individual cases, general patterns and trends of human rights violations, cases affecting a particular group or community, or the content of draft or existing legislation, policy or practice considered not to be fully compatible with international human rights standards.

In this connection, we would like to bring to your attention information we have received concerning the **escalating death threats against human rights defenders Mr. Jorn Naowa-opas and Mr. Sumet Rianpongnam in the Eastern Region of Thailand in 2025**. Their situation reflects a wider pattern of reprisals against communities resisting industrial projects under the Eastern Economic Corridor. This happens in the context of reported pollution of water, land, and air caused by toxic waste facilities in Eastern Thailand, reportedly involving the Thailand-based companies Waste 2 Energy Co. Ltd., KSD Recycle Co. Ltd., and Fusion Development Co. Ltd..

Waste 2 Energy Co. Ltd.

Mr. Jorn Naowa-opas is a human rights defender and member of the Volunteer Network for the Protection of Natural Resources and the Environment in the Phanom Sarakham District in Chachoengsao Province. Mr. Jorn was appointed Head of the Waste and Environmental Issues Working Group of the volunteer network. The network has over 500 members from several villages that have long been affected by severe pollution caused by industrial projects.

Mr. Sumet Rianpongnam is a human rights defender and leader of the Khon Rak Krok Sombun Group in Prachinburi Province. The group was formed by residents of several communities, comprising around 800 people. Mr. Sumet and other members of the group defend Prachinburi Province against pollution caused by companies operating in the area. Mr. Sumet's work is particularly focused on opposing the construction of a waste landfill by Waste 2 Energy Co. Ltd.

We have previously written to the Government of Thailand in 2013 ([THA 3/2013](#)) concerning the killing of environmental human rights defender Mr. Prajob Naowa-opas, the brother of Mr. Jorn Naowa-opas. Mr. Prajob was monitoring the activities of Fusion Development Co. Ltd., and prior to his assassination received death threats. The reply of the government dated [2 July 2013](#) outlines that one of the suspected perpetrators of the killing was a board member of Fusion Development Co. Ltd.

According to the information received:

Context of the Eastern Economic Corridor:

The Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) is a special economic zone of three provinces in Eastern Thailand - Chachoengsao, Chonburi and Rayong. It reportedly accounts for over US\$80 billion in business investments, mostly foreign investment, contributing nearly 15% of Thailand's annual GDP. This State-led initiative aims at transforming the eastern provinces of Thailand into a hub for high-tech industries and innovation, driving economic growth and attracting foreign investment. Consequently, vast areas have been transformed into industrial zones.

The operations in the EEC designated area are governed by the Eastern Economic Corridor Act B.E.2561 (2018), establishing the EEC Policy Committee. This committee has broad discretion, including the power to designate the areas, and amend the criteria, procedures and conditions for business operations in the EEC. This includes exemptions from Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures and bypassing community hearings. Thailand's Environmental Law (NEQA) normally requires EIAs and public consultations for large-scale projects. However, in EEC practice, projects are often structured or screened to fall outside the thresholds, or approvals are expedited, resulting in minimal or no consultation of the communities affected by the industrialisation and concomitant pollution of air, water, and land. This pollution is caused by, amongst other, facilities that manage toxic wastes from industrial operations, including Waste 2 Energy Co. Ltd., KSD Recycle Co. Ltd., and Fusion Development Co. Ltd.

The EEC's impact on human rights defenders and the right to a healthy environment:

Most toxic waste facilities in the EEC are located close to communities, agricultural land, and bodies of water. This has led to the contamination of surface and groundwater, toxic residues in soil that undermine agricultural production, emissions causing serious health risks to nearby residents, and the displacement of farming communities.

Human rights defenders and activists who expose violations and abuses of businesses suffer from intimidation and targeted violence, reportedly from state and private actors. As a result of their work, human rights defenders have been the target of surveillance and intimidation, bribery attempts to silence them, criminalisation through lawsuits, death threats, and assassinations. Community-based human rights defenders are at heightened risk as both their personal safety and their livelihoods are threatened.

In 2014, KSD Recycle Co. Ltd. paid a fine of 29 million Thai Baht to Mr. Jorn and over 200 other members of the Volunteer Network for the Protection of Natural Resources and the Environment, after they had filed a civil lawsuit against the company for illegally dumping toxic chemicals. In 2020, Waste 2 Energy Co. Ltd. filed a 50-million-baht civil lawsuit and criminal defamation lawsuit against Mr. Sumet and other members of the Khon Rak Krok Sombun Group, after they filed a complaint against the company with the local authorities. The lawsuit was dismissed due to the withdrawal by the company after the group removed the banners referring to “toxic waste”. These legal cases exemplify the longstanding opposition of human rights defenders in the EEC against companies causing environmental damage, as well as the retaliatory measures these companies take against communities defending their livelihoods and the environment.

In 2024, the Ministry of Industry created the task force ‘Team Sudsoi’ to investigate irregular waste operations, yet it was heavily dependent on evidence submitted by local human rights defenders and could not hold companies responsible for pollution nor remediate the environmental damage caused by companies in the EEC. Since the Constitutional Court removed the Prime Minister and his cabinet in August 2025, human rights defenders working with the task force have expressed their concerns over the disruption of the investigations and lack of protection for human rights defenders from reprisals by the companies they are monitoring.

Concerning Mr. Jorn Naowa-opas:

On 9 May 2024, police officers from Phanom Sarakham District contacted Mr. Jorn, requesting a meeting between him and a former high-ranking officer. Anticipating potential risks, Mr. Jorn arrived with fellow human rights defenders. They were taken to a waste recycling facility in Chachoengsao. There, the factory owner and the former officer attempted to coerce Mr. Jorn, offering compensation for stopping his human rights work. Mr. Jorn declined and left.

Since June 2025, Mr. Jorn and his network have been monitoring the illegal disposal of toxic waste by KSD Recycle Co. Ltd. and Fusion Development Co. Ltd. and submitting their evidence to the Sudsoi Team task force.

On 20 July 2025, Mr. Jorn received information that contract killers travelled to Chonburi Province to target activists opposing waste facilities in Chonburi and Chachoengsao.

In August 2025, a police officer from Phanom Sarakham District reportedly called Mr. Jorn, asking him about his whereabouts and warning him that he would be attacked soon. The same officer later invited him to inspect wastewater issues, an offer Mr. Jorn declined due to fears for his safety.

Concerning Mr. Sumet Rianpongnam

Mr. Sumet and members of the Khon Rak Krok Sombun Group live in areas severely affected by water and air pollution. These areas lie within the Kabin Buri District and the Sri Maha Phot District.

In 2024, while monitoring toxic waste facilities suspected of environmental violations in Prachinburi Province, Mr. Sumet reported that his movement was being monitored. On 3 September 2024, a man claiming to be a government official attempted to enter his property. Mr. Sumet photographed the individual and swiftly alerted fellow defenders, in order to protect his personal safety.

Since this incident and throughout 2025, the harassment and surveillance of Mr. Sumet have reportedly intensified, and he has received alerts from other human rights defenders that waste management companies had allegedly pooled resources to hire a contract killer.

The severity of the threats is evident from the assassination of Mr. Jorn's brother, Mr. Prajob Naowa-opas, in 2013. Mr. Prajob Naowa-opas was monitoring a facility of Fusion Development Co. Ltd., and he received threats shortly before being killed. Further, the suspected perpetrator of hiring the contract killers was a board member of Fusion Development Co. Ltd. and a government official at the Ministry of Industry. According to reports, the alleged perpetrator was found innocent and resumed his post at the Ministry of Industry, despite evidence of communication between the suspect and the contract killers.

Without prejudging the information received, we express our serious concern over the threats against human rights defenders Mr. Jorn and Mr. Sumet. The threats, surveillance, and other human rights violations against Mr. Jorn and Mr. Sumet appear to be a direct reprisal for monitoring, reporting, and opposing harmful corporate practices in the EEC.

The previous assassination of a human rights defender who was working on environmental protection, corruption, and corporate abuse in the EEC, and the failure of the State to hold the alleged perpetrators accountable, highlight the concerning

security situation of Mr. Jorn and Mr. Sumet. In her report to the Human Rights Council in 2020 ([A/75/165](#)), the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders highlighted the link between the killing of human rights defenders and death threats, noting that "[n]ot all death threats to human rights defenders are followed by a murder, and not all such murders are preceded by death threats. However, many killings are preceded by a threat."

We also express our concern over the weakening of environmental and human rights safeguards through bypassing environmental regulations when approving industrial projects, particularly those involving toxic waste. We are alarmed that companies such as Waste 2 Energy Co. Ltd., KSD Recycle Co. Ltd., and Fusion Development Co. Ltd. reportedly profit at the expense of damaging the environment, the livelihoods of local communities, and the security of human rights defenders opposing illegal activities.

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please indicate whether your company has taken measures to investigate any involvement your company, its managers or individuals associated with it may have regarding the reported threats and harassment against Mr. Jorn Naowa-opas and Mr. Sumet Rianpongnam and other human rights defenders documenting violations in the Eastern Economic Corridor. If no investigation has been undertaken, please explain why.
3. Please indicate what measures your company has taken to ensure its full respect for the rights of individuals and human rights defenders to freedom of expression, including exposing abuse and voice concerns about your company's activities, without fear of threats or acts of intimidation and harassment of any sort.
4. Please provide information on the human rights due diligence policies and processes established by your company to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their human rights impacts, including environmental human rights and the rights of human rights defenders, in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
5. Please provide information on policies your company has taken or is considering taking to ensure the protection of human rights defenders.

6. Please provide information regarding the measures that your company has taken, or is considering taking, to ensure that the individuals affected by its activities have access to effective non-State-based non judicial remedies in line with the UNGPs. As part of this response, please indicate the steps that your company has taken, or is considering taking, to provide effective operational-level grievance mechanisms, or cooperate with legitimate remedial processes in line with the UNGPs, to address human rights impacts that it may have caused, contributed to, or be linked with.

This communication and any response received will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) within 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person(s) responsible for the alleged violations.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information upon which the press release will be based is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the above-mentioned allegations. The press release will indicate that we have been in contact with you to clarify the issue/s in question.

Please be informed that a letter on this subject matter has also been sent to the Government of Thailand, as well as the director of Fusion Development Co. Ltd.

Please accept, Mr. Laophanphol and Mr. Saengpoem, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Mary Lawlor
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders

Pichamon Yeophantong
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

Astrid Puentes Riaño
Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

Irene Khan
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Marcos A. Orellana
Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes

Annex

Reference to international human rights law

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, we would like to draw your attention to the applicable international human rights norms and standards, as well as authoritative guidance on their interpretation. With regard to the allegations stated above, we refer you to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), acceded to by Thailand on 29 October 1996.

We would like to remind you of article 6, which states that everyone has “the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.” Further, article 9 protects the right to liberty and security of a person. The right to freedom of opinion and expression is enshrined in article 19 of the ICCPR and includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. It includes not only the exchange of information that is favourable, but also that which may criticize, shock, or offend. Any restriction on the right to freedom of expression must be provided by law; be necessary and proportionate and pursue one of the legitimate aims for restriction, which are the respect of the rights or reputations of others and the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

Human rights defenders

We would like to refer you to the fundamental principles set forth in the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, also known as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Human Rights Defenders. Article 5 guarantees the right to meet or assemble peacefully for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights. Article 6 affirms that everyone has the right to know, seek, obtain, receive and hold information, including having access to information as to how rights and freedoms are given effect. Article 8 provides for everyone’s right to participate in the conduct of public affairs, including the right to submit to governmental bodies criticism and proposals drawing attention to aspects of their work that might hinder or impede the promotion, protection and realization of human rights. Article 9 recalls the right to an effective remedy. Finally, article 12 reaffirms the right to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights.

Right to liberty and security of person

Further, the right to liberty and security of a person is protected under the UDHR (article 3), the ICCPR (article 9) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants (article 6). General comment No. 35 on the right to liberty and security of person clarifies that security of person concerns “freedom from injury to the body and the mind, or bodily and mental integrity”.

Right to freedom of expression

Article 19 of the ICCPR guarantees the right to freedom of opinion and the right to freedom of expression, which includes the right “to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media”. This right applies online as well as offline and includes not only the exchange of information that is favorable, but also that which may criticize, shock, or offend.

Recognizing how journalists and persons who engage in the gathering and analysis of information on the human rights situation and who publish human rights-related reports, including judges and lawyers, are frequently subjected to threats, intimidation and attacks because of their activities, the Committee stresses that “all such attacks should be vigorously investigated in a timely fashion, and the perpetrators prosecuted, and the victims, or, in the case of killings, their representatives, be in receipt of appropriate forms of redress” (para. 23).

Any restriction on the right to freedom of expression must be compatible with the requirements set out in article 19(3) ICCPR. Under these requirements, restrictions must (i) be provided by law; (ii) pursue one of the legitimate aims for restriction, which are the respect of the rights or reputations of others and the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*), or of public health or morals; and (iii) be necessary and proportionate for those objectives.

The right to access information of citizens is an essential component of the right to freedom of expression. As provided for in article 19 ICCPR, the right to freedom of opinion and expression encompasses the right to seek and receive information of all kinds. The Human Rights Committee in its general comment No. 34 affirmed that freedom of expression, including therefore the right to access information, “is a necessary condition for the achievement of the principles of transparency and accountability which, in turn, are essential for the promotion and protection of human rights” (CCPR/C/GC/34, para. 3)

The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression has repeatedly stressed the importance of access to information and transparency as fundamental pillars for peace, democracy and development, as well as the fundamental role this right plays in the enjoyment of other rights (A/68/362, paras. 18, 19, 20 and 89; E/CN.4/1998/40, para. 12; E/CN.4/1995/32, para. 135).

UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

We would like to highlight the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which were unanimously endorsed in 2011 by the Human Rights Council in its resolution (A/HRC/RES/17/31) after years of consultation with governments, civil society, human rights defenders and the business community. The guiding principles have been established as the authoritative global standard for all businesses to prevent and address business-related adverse human rights impacts. These guiding principles are based on the recognition of:

- a) The role of business enterprises as specialized bodies or corporations performing specialized functions, which must comply with all applicable laws and respect human rights.
- b) The need for rights and obligations to be matched by appropriate and effective remedies when they are violated".

The guiding principles also make clear that companies have an independent responsibility to respect human rights. Principles 11-24 and 29-31 provide guidance to companies on how to meet their responsibility to respect human rights and to provide remedies where they have caused or contributed to adverse impacts. The guiding principles have identified two main components of the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, which require "business enterprises to:

- a) Prevent their own activities from causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts and address those impacts when they occur.
- b) Seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts directly related to operations, products or services provided through their business relationships, even where they have not contributed to those impacts". (guiding principle 13)

The commentary to guiding principle 13 notes that companies can be affected by adverse human rights impacts, either through their own activities or as a result of their business relationships with other parties (...) The 'activities' of business enterprises are understood to include both actions and omissions; and their 'business relationships' include relationships with business partners, entities in their value chain and any other non-State or State entities directly linked to their business operations, products or services.

To meet their responsibility to respect human rights, companies should have in place policies and procedures appropriate to their size and circumstances:

- a) A political commitment to uphold their responsibility to respect human rights.
- b) A human rights due diligence process to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their human rights impact.
- c) Processes to redress any adverse human rights impacts they have caused or contributed to (guiding principle 15).

According to guiding principles 16-21, human rights due diligence involves:

- a) Identifying and assessing actual or potential adverse human rights impacts that the enterprise has caused or contributed to through its activities, or that are directly related to the operations, products or services provided by its business relationships.

- b) Integrate the results of impact assessments into relevant business functions and processes and take appropriate action in accordance with their involvement in the impact.
- c) Monitor the effectiveness of the measures and processes adopted to address these adverse human rights impacts in order to know whether they are working.
- d) Communicate how adverse effects are addressed and demonstrate to stakeholders - particularly those affected - that appropriate policies and processes are in place to implement respect for human rights in practice.

Where an enterprise causes or is likely to cause an adverse human rights impact, it should take the necessary steps to end or prevent that impact. “The establishment of operational-level grievance mechanisms for those potentially affected by corporate activities can be an effective means of redress provided they meet certain requirements listed in principle 31 (guiding principle 22).

Furthermore, business enterprises should remedy any actual adverse impact that they cause or to which they contribute. Remedies can take a variety of forms and may include apologies, restitution, rehabilitation, financial or non-financial compensation and punitive sanctions (whether criminal or administrative, such as fines), as well as the prevention of harm through, for example, injunctions or guarantees of non-repetition. Procedures for the provision of remedy should be impartial, protected from corruption and free from political and other attempts to influence the outcome (commentary to guiding principle 25).

In addition, the guiding principle 18 and 26 underline the essential role of civil society and human rights defenders in helping to identify potential adverse human rights impacts related to business. The Commentary to principle 26 underlines how States, in order to ensure access to remedies, must ensure that the legitimate activities of human rights defenders are not obstructed. In its 2021 guidance on ensuring respect for human rights defenders (A/HRC/47/39/Add.2), the Working Group on Business and Human Rights highlighted the urgent need to address the adverse impacts of business activities on human rights defenders. It explains, for States and companies, the normative and practical implications of the guiding principles in relation to protecting and respecting the vital work of human rights defenders.

Right to an adequate standard of living and right to land

The right to an adequate standard of living guaranteed under the UDHR (article 25) and the ICESCR (article 11) encompasses, among others, the right to adequate food and housing. General Comment No. 4 on the right to adequate housing states that the right to housing “should be seen as the right to live somewhere in security, peace, and dignity”. Therefore, for instance, “housing should not be built on polluted sites nor in immediate proximity to pollution sources that threaten the right to health of the inhabitants”. General comment No. 12 on the right to adequate food states that food must be free from adverse substances and requires means to prevent contamination of foodstuffs, for instance, through poor environmental hygiene. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants protects the right to adequate food which includes the right to

produce food (article 15), the right to an adequate standard of living (article 16), and the right to adequate housing (article 24).

Although land is not mentioned in the ICESCR, it plays an essential role in the realization of a range of human rights under the Covenant such as the right to adequate food, the right to adequate housing, the right to water, the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to take part in cultural life, and the right to self-determination. General comment No. 26 on land and economic, social, and cultural rights stresses that “the sustainable use of land is essential to ensure the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment and to promote the right to development, among other rights”. Communities must be “properly informed about and allowed to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes that may affect their enjoyment of rights under the Covenant in land-related contexts, without retaliation”.

Reliance of rural communities on the land is crucial. Article 17 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants protects the right to land, both individually and collectively, which includes the right to have access to, sustainably use, and manage land and the water bodies and forests to achieve an adequate standard of living as well as to have a place to live in security. Peasants have “the rights to be protected against arbitrary and unlawful displacement from their land or place of habitual residence, or from other natural resources used in their activities and necessary for the enjoyment of adequate living conditions”.

Right to health

The right to health is protected under the UDHR (article 25.1) and the ICESCR (article 12) and it includes the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of both physical and mental health. General comment No. 14 on the right to health interprets the right “as an inclusive right extending not only to timely and appropriate health care but also to the underlying determinants of health, such as access to safe and potable water and adequate sanitation, an adequate supply of safe food, nutrition and housing, healthy occupational and environmental conditions (...)”. “A further important aspect is the participation of the population in all health-related decision-making at the community, national and international levels.” The right to health also comprises the prevention and reduction of the population’s exposure to harmful substances, such as harmful chemicals or other detrimental environmental conditions that directly or indirectly affect human health. Moreover, under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants, article 23 protects the right to health.

We also wish to refer to Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 of 8 October 2021 and General Assembly resolution 76/300 of 29 July 2022, which recognize the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right.

Right to water

We also recall the explicit recognition of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation by the UN General Assembly (resolution 64/292) and the Human Rights Council (resolution 15/9), which derives from the right to an adequate standard of living, protected under, inter alia, article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 11 of ICESCR.

General comment No. 15 on the right to water stresses that the right to water “clearly falls within the category of guarantees essential for securing an adequate standard of living” enshrined in article 11 of the ICESCR, acceded by Thailand on 5 September 1999, and that it is also “inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of health” guaranteed under article 12. A sufficient and continuous water supply must be available for personal and domestic use, and “water is necessary to produce food (right to adequate food) and ensure environmental hygiene (right to health).”

Moreover, water required for personal or domestic use must be safe, i.e., free from micro-organisms, chemical substances, and radiological hazards that constitute a threat to a person’s health. Water facilities and services must be accessible to everyone, both physically and economically, and must be free from discrimination. Such accessibility includes the right to seek, receive, and impart information on water issues. Further, “access to traditional water sources in rural areas should be protected from unlawful encroachment and pollution”.

In addition, considering the importance of water for rural communities, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants protects the right to safe and clean drinking water under article 21. Peasants have the right to water for personal and domestic use and farming. They also have the right to equitable access to water and water management systems and to be free from the contamination of water supplies.

Right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment

We also wish to refer to Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 of 8 October 2021 and General Assembly resolution 76/300 of 29 July 2022, which recognizes the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right.

We highlight the Special Rapporteur on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment’s report A/79/270, where she provides an overview of the procedural and substantive elements of this right, reminding that the full implementation of it is also an obligation for businesses.