

COPY OF THE E-MAIL RECEIVED BY THE NGOS FROM THE OHCHR

I am writing to you on behalf of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to invite you to contribute to and participate in a joint OHCHR-UNEP Seminar on Human Rights and the Environment. The Seminar will take place in Geneva on Wednesday 16 January 2002 in room XXI at the Palais des Nations.

This initiative, undertaken pursuant to a specific request from Commission on Human Rights (CHR), seeks to bring together experts in the human rights and in the environment communities to review the implementation of Agenda 21 with regard to the promotion and protection of human rights. The initiative is being guided by a group of 25 experts from the human rights, environment and related fields. The experts will present to the Seminar a draft set of key recommendations which will form the basis for discussion. The results of the Seminar will in turn be reported to the CHR and to the New York PrepComm for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

The initiative will focus on the significant progress in bringing together human rights and environmental issues achieved since the Rio summit, both at the international and national levels. This includes the adoption of new multilateral texts (such as the Aarhus Convention), new provisions in national constitutions, domestic and regional case-law, and trends in review and decision-making mechanisms in international agencies. The focus is thus to highlight concrete examples of progress in integrating human rights and

environmental issues and to draw from these examples clear directions for future work. The agenda for the Seminar is set out below.

We would appreciate any written submission on these issues that your organisation would be able to make before the Seminar. By reason of the short amount of time in which the Seminar's report needs to be finalised, I would ask that your submissions follow a common format:

- a focus on succinct recommendations for future action in this field at the international level;
- a maximum of ten pages;
- numbered paragraphs;
- delivered in electronic format and preferably emailed to jheenan.hchr@unog.ch.

In this way we will be able to distribute and integrate your submissions easily.

For security reasons, it is important that you confirm your availability to attend the Seminar to Mr James Heenan, OHCHR-Palais des Nations, 8-14 Av. de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, tel: (41 22) 917 9179, fax: (41 22) 917 90 10, email: jheenan.hchr@unog.ch. Unfortunately neither agency is in a position to cover the travel or accommodation expenses of participants.

On behalf of Mrs Robinson and Mr Töpfer, I hope you are able to accept this invitation to be involved in this important initiative of our agencies.

Sincerely

Stefanie Grant

Chief, RRDB

