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Written by Amina Alayout

ACHRS welcomes the Mediterranean Pavilion at COP31 and calls for human rights to be placed at the heart of climate action in Jordan

On the occasion of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31), to be held in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026, the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) welcomes the decision of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) to coordinate a Mediterranean Pavilion.

According to the Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change, the Mediterranean is a climate hotspot warming about 20% faster than the global average.¹ Jordan, as part of this wider region, faces growing climate and environmental pressures.

ACHRS works to defend social and economic rights in Jordan. These rights can only be realized if the most basic human rights are first protected, and climate change now threatens them directly.

The right to life is at risk when floods sweep people away and heatwaves raise mortality. The rights to water, food, health and adequate housing are at risk when resources shrink and infrastructure fails. These impacts do not fall equally. Women, persons with disabilities, children and youth, older people, refugees and low-income households are the most exposed and the least able to adapt.

Jordan is party to several international climate agreements, including the Paris Agreement, and adopted the National Climate Change Policy (2022–2050). ACHRS calls for these commitments to be implemented through a human rights-based approach.

According to UNICEF, Jordan is one of the most water-stressed countries in the world, and the situation is likely to worsen without significant intervention. Only around 100 cubic metres of renewable water are available per person each year, far below the 500 m³ threshold of "absolute water scarcity".² The same report notes that renewable supply covers only about two-thirds of demand, and water stress has risen from 80% to 100% over the last two decades. On the current trajectory, stress levels could rise by 1–1.5% a year until 2100, leaving more than 90% of low-income households critically water-vulnerable.³

¹ MedECC (2020). *Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – First Mediterranean Assessment Report*. Union for the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu, UNEP/MAP. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4768833>

² UNICEF Jordan. *The Costs of the Water Crisis in Jordan* (Water Stress in Jordan report). <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/costs-water-crisis-jordan>

³ *Id.*

Primary agriculture is a modest share of the economy, but the wider agriculture and food sector accounts for an estimated 20–25% of GDP.⁴ A World Bank study estimates that climate-driven cuts in water supply and crop yields could reduce Jordan's GDP by up to 6.8%.⁵ Farmers are already struggling with declining yields and unpredictable rainfall.

Heatwaves are becoming more frequent in Jordan. A 2024 study found that exposure to heat increases mortality risk in Jordan, and that this risk is higher in districts with little green space and high urbanisation.⁶ Older people, young children and outdoor workers are the most exposed, and heat also drives up water demand.

Jordan is among the top three recipients of refugees in the MENA Region. Population growth and migration to cities add demand for water and strain housing, health care, education and sanitation services.

ACHRS calls on the Government of Jordan to:

1. **Expand renewable energy.** Scale up solar and wind power, and ensure that low-income households and rural communities share in its benefits.
2. **Invest in sustainable transport.** Develop reliable public transport and safe infrastructure for walking and cycling, to cut emissions and ease severe traffic congestion in Jordanian cities.
3. **Support farmers.** Provide technical and financial support to struggling farmers, including water-efficient irrigation, drought-resistant crops and access to adaptation finance.
4. **Conserve and protect natural resources.** Protect water resources, reduce losses and waste, and pursue greening initiatives, especially in dense urban districts most exposed to heat.
5. **Build early warning systems.** Set up early warning systems in highly vulnerable communities. These systems predict hazards, spread timely warnings and allow people to act before disaster strikes, reducing loss of life and property.
6. **Adopt a human rights-based approach.** Implement the National Climate Change Policy through a human rights-based approach that takes into account the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups

ACHRS believes that COP31 and the Mediterranean Pavilion are an opportunity to make the voice of Jordan and its most vulnerable communities heard. ACHRS calls on all participants to seize this moment together, and to recognize that climate action is not only an environmental duty but a condition for protecting the right to life and the dignity of every person.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Luque-García, L., Bataineh, S., Al-Bakri, J., Abdulla, F.A., Al-Delaimy, W.K. (2024). The heat-mortality association in Jordan: Effect modification by greenness, population density and urbanization level. *Science of The Total Environment*, 952, 176010. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2024.176010>