

“Climate change and the rights of children”

TUESDAY 24 AUGUST 2021 4:00-5:00PM AEST

THE WEBINAR

This is the eighth in a series of webinars to develop greater knowledge and understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The [July webinar](#) featured Anjali Sharma who won a court case asserting that the Minister for the Environment had a duty of care to protect children from the impacts of climate change. Responding to the Government’s report on the implementation of the Convention in Australia, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child emphasised “... *that the effects of climate change have an undeniable impact on children’s rights...*” It was also “*concerned about the State party’s insufficient progress on climate goals and targets committed to in the Paris Climate Agreement and its continuing investment in extractive industries, in particular coal*”. Australia’s reports to the CRC and at the Universal Periodic Review resulted in a number of recommendations to Australian governments relating to climate change. The Committee emphasized that

“... the effects of climate change have an undeniable impact on children’s rights, for example the rights to life, survival and development, non-discrimination, health, and an adequate standard of living.”

Dr Mikiko Otani, Chair of the CRC Committee, will talk about the forthcoming General Comment on children’s rights and climate change, and address Australia’s contention that General Comments are not legally binding on States parties and that treating the best interest of the child as a ‘determining principle’ is not supported by the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is “inconsistent with the reference to the best interests of the child in paragraph 13”.

Solomon Islands student Caleb Pollard, president of Pacific Island Students Facing Climate Change (PISFCC), will highlight the impacts of climate change on Pacific Island countries and young people. He will explain PISFCC advocacy for an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on climate and human rights for current and future generations.

SPEAKERS



Mikiko Otani is Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and an international human rights lawyer based in Tokyo. She is a Council Member of the International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute, a Commissioner of the International Commission of Jurists, and Japan’s country representative for the Family Law and Family Rights Section of LAWASIA.

Caleb Maehanua Pollard is President of the Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change, a youth-led regional organization that advocates for rights-based solutions, and educates and activates youth to take action against climate injustices. He is a final year student at the University of the South Pacific, and works to promote quality education to young people to become better stewards and decision-makers of their community, environment, and their resources.



MODERATED BY

Noam Peleg, Senior Lecturer UNSW, Review Editor, The International Journal of Children's Rights
Faith Gordon, Senior Lecturer ANU, Director of the International Youth Justice Network

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