



CENTRE FOR
CHILD LAW



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Global Organisations Provide Evidence to European Court of Human Rights: 1.5°C Climate Target Too Weak on Human Rights

Oxfam, Our Children's Trust, and the Centre for Child Law, University of Pretoria among groups submitting Third Party Interventions providing expertise on critical climate science for three historic court cases

Today, several leading global climate and human rights organisations, including Oxfam, Our Children's Trust, and the Centre for Child Law, based at the University of Pretoria, [submitted](#) Third Party Interventions to the European Court of Human Rights in the Grand Chamber's first-ever climate-related cases: *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland*, *Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and Others*, and *Carême v. France*.

The co-intervenors submitted key scientific evidence that underscores the intertwined relationship between climate change and the violation of human rights, including:

- The current level of planetary heating, ~1.1°C–1.3°C, is unsafe for individuals and communities across the globe, violating their human rights to life and to a private and family life;
- The temperature targets set forth in the 2015 Paris Agreement aiming to limit global heating to 1.5°C–2.0°C above pre-industrial temperatures are wholly unprotective of human rights and are inadequate to measure if the world is successfully mitigating the climate crisis;
- The appropriate and accurate scientific standard for climate mitigation must be stabilizing the Earth Energy Imbalance (EEI) by limiting the concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million (ppm); and
- Pathways to reduce atmospheric CO₂ to 350 ppm as soon as possible are currently available, feasible, and beneficial to implement.

“The importance of this Court’s findings and remedies in the trio of climate cases before it cannot be overstated,” said Karabo Ozah, Centre for Child Law Director. “While the Court’s decisions are always consequential for the parties involved, its determinations in these climate cases will be profoundly consequential for all of humanity, especially children.”

“It is critical that the Court rely on the expertise of climate scientists rather than on political compromises such as the temperature targets specified in the Paris Agreement as it considers the human rights impact of the climate crisis for the first time,” said Kelly Matheson, Deputy Director of Global Climate Litigation at Our Children’s Trust. “The scientific evidence submitted through our interventions today will provide the Court with a solid evidential basis to find that a climate system capable of protecting human life, health, and well-being is fundamental to uphold the universal rights to life, privacy, family, and home promised by the European Convention on Human Rights.”

“Even though current global warming is already resulting in massive violations of human rights, governments continue to delay action based on a premise that we can allow global temperature to rise further,” said Evelien van Roemburg, Head of Oxfam’s European Union office. “The Court should decide that states must immediately take every feasible step to reduce warming now, rather than accept plans premised on an imaginary carbon budget.”

Today’s [interventions](#) were filed in relation to the following cases before the Court:

- ***Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland***: An organization of senior women filed an application to the Court against Switzerland for its role in causing the climate crisis, thereby leading to more frequent and severe heatwaves that threaten their human rights to life, home and privacy. Visit [this link](#) for more information.
- ***Carême v. France***: The mayor of Grande-Synthe, France appealed a decision made by the French Council of State that he did not have an individual interest in a climate case filed on behalf of himself and the city of Grande-Synthe. According to the mayor, the French government’s failure to address climate change threatens his human rights as a homeowner in a coastal region of France that is highly likely to experience flooding by 2040 due to climate change. Visit [this link](#) for more information.
- ***Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and Others***: Six young Portuguese citizens filed an application to the Court against 33 Member States of the Council of Europe for violating their human rights to life, privacy, family, and home by failing to take adequate action to address climate change. They are asking the Court to issue an order demanding that the 33 States take more ambitious action in line with the gravity and urgency of the climate crisis. Visit [this link](#) for more information.

The Court’s highest chamber—its Grand Chamber—will hold hearings for all the above cases on 29 March 2023 in Strasbourg, France.

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The Centre for Child Law (Centre) is a children's rights strategic impact litigation organisation that is registered as a law clinic with the Legal Practice Council, based at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. The Centre contributes to establishing and protecting children's rights through strategic impact litigation, participation in legislative and policy reform, advocacy, research, capacity building of relevant stakeholders and contributing to the body of knowledge on child law. www.centreforchildlaw.co.za

Our Children's Trust is the world's only nonprofit public interest law firm that exclusively provides strategic, campaign-based legal services to youth from diverse backgrounds to secure their legal rights to a safe climate. We work to protect the Earth's climate system for present and future generations by representing young people in global legal efforts to secure their binding and enforceable legal rights to a healthy atmosphere and safe climate, based on the best available science. Our Children's Trust represents and supports young people in global and U.S. federal and state climate litigation including *Held v. State of Montana*, which will be the first constitutional climate trial in U.S. history when it begins in June 2023, and the landmark case *Juliana v. United States*, where the youth plaintiffs are currently awaiting a decision that could put them back on the path to trial. www.ourchildrenstrust.org

Oxfam is a global organization that fights inequality to end poverty and injustice. We offer lifesaving support in times of crisis and advocate for economic justice, gender equality, and climate action. We demand equal rights and equal treatment so that everyone can thrive, not just survive. Oxfam has been fighting for decades to protect the human rights and livelihoods of people most affected by the climate crisis, provide support when climate disasters strike, advocate that governments proactively protect their populations from climate change, and ensure that the people and corporations who harm the planet are held accountable. www.oxfam.org