

**Human rights and the impact of environmental challenges. Ensuring the right to education in the context of climate change**

**Drepturile omului si efectele provocarilor de mediu.  
Asigurarea dreptului la educație  
în contextul schimbărilor climatice**

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**Abstract**

*In the context of climate change and the ongoing efforts to prevent its consequences for present and future generations, as well as to mitigate the risk of global temperatures rising by 1.5°C or more by 2030, this paper examines the impact of climate change on human rights, with a particular focus on the right to education. Human rights form the foundation and the essential mechanisms that societies must uphold and guarantee for all. The right to education is fundamental in a society that seeks to empower its citizens to exercise their freedoms effectively, engage actively. This paper also explores the realities of Romanian society concerning the environmental challenges that affect access to education drawing on data from the UNICEF 2024 Report. According to the report, 242 million students worldwide have faced disruptions in their education due to extreme weather events such as typhoons, floods, and heatwaves. In Romania, nearly 700,000 children have experienced school interruptions caused by extreme weather conditions, underscoring the broader impact of the climate crisis on global education, leading to school closures and even the destruction of educational institutions, particularly in vulnerable communities. In this context, the threats posed by climate change to human rights must be examined within the framework of a new era, one in which climate change represents one of the most significant challenges facing society today.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development; 2030 Agenda; Education; Climate Change; Climate Justice [K38]

**1. An Introduction to Human Rights in the Context of Environmental Issues**

This paper explores the dimension of human rights within the context of climate change, examining how fundamental individual rights are affected or

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threatened by environmental crises. It starts from the premise that human rights are not a modern invention, but the result of a long historical evolution rooted in ancient traditions, religions, and philosophies, from Babylon and Egypt to China and ancient Greece. The study further traces the development of these rights up to their formal recognition in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, a document that emphasizes the indivisible and interdependent nature of human freedom and dignity.

It is worth noting that this paper also aims to investigate the direct relationship between human rights and the climate crisis, particularly through the lens of climate justice theory. This perspective emphasizes the deep inequalities in how climate change impacts different social and geographic groups, as well as the differentiated responsibilities of the actors involved. Within this framework, the right to a healthy environment will be discussed as an integral part of fundamental human rights, with implications for other essential rights such as the right to life, health, food, housing, and freedom of movement.

The paper will also examine the impact of climate change on access to education, a right internationally guaranteed by documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It will explore how climate-related disasters contribute to significant disruptions in education systems, particularly affecting children in the most vulnerable regions. For instance, UNICEF's 2024 report highlights that over 242 million students in 85 countries have been affected by such disruptions, exacerbating global educational inequalities.

Finally, the paper will analyze the international legal framework protecting the right to education and how it should be adapted to meet new climate challenges. The focus will be on the need for clear, accessible, and enforceable regulations to ensure that no child is deprived of education due to environmental changes.

## 2. The Human Rights Dimension of Climate Change

Human rights are not a recent creation, but rather the result of a complex historical process that has unfolded over millennia and is closely linked to human behavior and the relationships between individuals, authority, and divinity. Although their official and global recognition was consolidated after World War II, the origins of these rights can be traced back to ancient times, in traditions, religions, and the earliest forms of social organization.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout history, humanity has traveled a long and often painful path in the struggle for the recognition and affirmation of fundamental human rights.

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<sup>1</sup> Irina Moroianu Zlătescu, *Drepturile omului: un sistem în evoluție*, Ed. a 2-a, rev., Ed. I.R.D.O., Bucharest, 2008, p. 9.

Moreover, this evolutionary process has been constantly supported by the desire to uphold essential principles such as liberty, justice, and human dignity, which have, over time, been refined and organized into coherent systems of thought, thus becoming the foundation of modern law.<sup>2</sup> Looking back at the beginnings of the evolution of this subject, the idea of respect for humanity was present in various cultures. One example in this regard is Babylon, where Hammurabi's Code regulated social relations based on equity, while the edict of Cyrus the Great marked an early moment of recognizing religious freedom.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, in Ancient Egypt, respect for life and the prohibition of violence were promoted, while in China, thinkers such as Confucius, Mencius, and Lao-Tzu emphasized harmony, love for others, and moral perfection. At the same time, Buddhist thought highlighted the equality of all beings and the rejection of any form of discrimination.<sup>4</sup> Last but not least, in Ancient Greece, thinkers such as Protagoras, Plato, and Aristotle contributed to the development of reflection on the human condition and the organization of society. Protagoras asserted the centrality of man in relation to the world, Plato envisioned a state led by wise individuals for the common good, while Aristotle laid the foundations of the idea of the active citizen in a rational society.<sup>5</sup>

Quickly moving along the line of the evolution of human rights, closer to our present day, we must also mention that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN on December 10, 1948, as a common ideal for all nations, affirming that human dignity is the foundation of liberty, justice, and peace. Moreover, the document emphasizes the importance of education and national and international measures for the recognition and implementation of fundamental rights.<sup>6</sup> In this regard, it is worth mentioning that René Cassin, one of the authors of the declaration, compared the document to a temple supported by four columns: personal rights (life, freedom, security); social and family rights; political rights; and economic, social, and cultural rights. Above these stands the idea of the individual's responsibility to society. The fundamental rights and freedoms of man are essential for the existence of a democratic society. Without them, we cannot truly speak of democracy.<sup>7</sup> The Declaration states that rights come with duties, and freedoms must be respected in harmony with the common good. Annually, on December 10th, the UN Secretary-General delivers an important message, and in 2024, UN Secretary-General António Guterres reaffirmed that

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<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ki-Zerbo, J., *Histoire de l'Afrique noire*, Paris, 1978, p. 75 *apud*. Irina Moroianu Zlătescu, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Irina Moroianu Zlătescu, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Irina Moroianu Zlătescu, *Drepturile Omului*, Anul XX, Nr. 4, Ed. I.R.D.O., Bucharest, 2010, pp. 5-6.

<sup>7</sup> Titus Corlăţean, *Protecţia europeană şi internaţională a Drepturilor Omului*, Ed. a 2-a, rev., Bucarest, Ed. Universul Juridic, 2015, p. 7

human rights are interdependent and indivisible, and their defense must be constant and firm.<sup>8</sup>

In the context of environmental challenges, it is essential to understand the connection between human rights and the environment, particularly as these rights include references to the right to a healthy environment and other related rights, as well as key concepts used today to define various phenomena or processes. In this regard, it is crucial to address the theory of climate justice in this paper, with the aim of understanding the connection between climate change and human rights. This theory examines the unequal impact of climate change on different groups and nations, emphasizing the responsibilities of each party involved; ultimately, making this issue a true challenge that goes beyond the limits of environmental problems.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, another concept that should be mentioned is that of "human rights in climate change," which asserts that all people have the right to a healthy environment and protection from the harmful effects of climate change. Climate change threatens several fundamental rights, including: the right to life and security, due to extreme phenomena such as floods that are becoming more frequent and dangerous; the right to food, which can be affected by drought; the right to health, due to climate change-related diseases such as pollution; the right to housing, as climate migration can pose a major challenge for indigenous populations; and even the freedom of movement, which may be restricted by forced displacement caused by natural disasters or environmental degradation.<sup>10</sup>

Another concept that is indispensable today is "sustainable development," which was first mentioned in the Brundtland Commission's report, *Our Common Future*, published in 1987 by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. It defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".<sup>11</sup> This approach is based on the recognition that Earth's resources are limited and that they must be used in a responsible and sustainable way to ensure they are available for future generations. This approach has become so well understood after lengthy discussions and events, such as the discussions on the challenges and opportunities of environmental protection and sustainable

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations, *Human Rights Day - UN Secretary-General's Message (10 December 2024)*, <https://thailand.un.org/en/285511-human-rights-day-un-secretary-generals-message-10-december-2024>, accessed 2nd of March, 2025.

<sup>9</sup> Florina Brasoveanu, *Considerations on the Right to a Healthy Living Environment*, in Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series 16, no. 1 (2016), pp. 53-57 *apud*. Florica Brasoveanu, *Impactul Schimbărilor Climatice Asupra Drepturilor Omului*, Vol. 11 No. 1 (2023): Journal For Freedom of Conscience, p. 114.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 114-116.

<sup>11</sup> Brundtland, G., *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*, United Nations General Assembly document A/42/427, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>, 1987, accessed 3rd of March 2025, p. 41.

development at the Stockholm Conference in 1972. Moreover, the 2030 Agenda represents a global plan adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to end poverty, protect the planet, and promote prosperity for all. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals address a range of issues, including poverty, health, education, gender equality, climate change, and sustainable cities.<sup>12</sup> The SDGs are directly linked to sustainable development, as they provide a framework for addressing the challenges facing humanity and the planet.

Regarding the measurement of progress in the field of human rights, the official guide published by OHCHR, "Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation," provides practical methodologies for developing and using indicators to measure and implement human rights. To better understand what these indicators represent, the guide explains that they are based on international human rights norms and standards, reflect essential principles such as equality, non-discrimination, participation, and access to justice; indicators can be quantitative (e.g., percentages, rates) or qualitative (e.g., narratives, perceptions); and they are used for monitoring, implementing, and evaluating progress in the field of human rights.<sup>13</sup> In the context of environmental challenges, among these types of indicators, we also identify environmental indicators, such as: Illustrative indicators for the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25), which focus on the natural and occupational environmental components: the proportion of the target population that has benefited from expanded access to an improved drinking water source; the proportion of the target population that has benefited from expanded access to improved sanitation services; carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions per capita; the number of cases regarding the deterioration of water sources that have been brought before the courts; the proportion of the population or households living or working in or near hazardous areas.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. Climate Change and Educational Interruptions

In 1998, in a paper analyzing the environmental challenges of the time, the concept of "climate change," or global warming, was defined as the result of the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Since these gases trap more heat, they destabilize weather systems, cause rising sea levels, and threaten both the balance of ecosystems and human health.<sup>15</sup> However, this paper is interesting

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<sup>12</sup> Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, *Agenda 2030 pentru dezvoltare durabilă*, <https://www.mae.ro/node/35919>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2025.

<sup>13</sup> OHCHR, *Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation*, New York and Geneva, 2012, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 90.

<sup>15</sup> Last J., Trouton K., Pengelly D., *Taking Our Breath Away: The Health Effects of Air Pollution and Climate Change*, Vancouver, BC: David Suzuki Foundation, 1998, p. 1.

because the reports from 1998 still seem, unfortunately, so relevant today, specifically regarding the effects of climate change. From the 1995 heatwave, which caused the deaths of several hundred people in Chicago and thousands in Uttar Pradesh (India) and regions of central China, to the floods in Manitoba, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Germany in 1997, as well as the ice storm in eastern Ontario and western Quebec in 1998, and many others; all of these were linked to concerns about the future of such events. For example, the increase in average temperatures could expand the geographic range and increase the number of disease-carrying insects such as mosquitoes responsible for malaria, dengue, or various forms of viral encephalitis. Other animals that carry dangerous diseases, such as rodents and bats, may also expand their territories and become more numerous. There are also concerns about climate change and rising sea levels, which will make certain regions uninhabitable, generating a significant increase in climate migrants, or as the book refers to them, "climate refugees."<sup>16</sup>

The educational process is by no means overlooked or neglected by the effects of climate change. Just like adults, children and their opportunities to study are affected by weather conditions that can lead to temporary, or in the worst case, permanent interruptions of the educational process. In this regard, the 2021 report "The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis" analyzes the global climate risks for children, and among these is the educational capacity to respond effectively to these challenges. The report highlights issues such as exposure to abnormal temperatures and humidity, which can cause various heat-related conditions, leading to school absences. For example, in Southeast Asia, children's exposure to temperatures above the normal average has been associated with fewer years spent in school.<sup>17</sup> The report also mentions that girls are often more severely affected than boys in the context of climate crises, as they are required to travel longer distances to bring water home. Globally, they are responsible for collecting 80% of the water used in households; therefore, during times of crisis, they are often the first to be withdrawn from school to assist their families.<sup>18</sup>

In 2024, UNICEF released another concerning report, this time focused on school interruptions due to climate change, including reports of situations where schools are closed, destroyed, or converted into shelters due to climate disasters. The report highlights that over 242 million students in 85 countries were affected by climate-related school disruptions in 2024. The most affected areas are South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific, as well as Africa and Latin America.<sup>19</sup> Other important

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 8-13.

<sup>17</sup> UNICEF, *The Climate Crisis Is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index*, New York: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), August 2021, p. 27.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 36.

<sup>19</sup> UNICEF, *Learning Interrupted: Global Snapshot of Climate-Related School Disruptions in 2024*, New York: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), January 2025, pp. 2-4.

findings in the report include: one in seven students worldwide has been affected by climate change; 85 countries have experienced school disruptions related to climate, with 23 of them suffering multiple waves of interruptions; 20 countries reported nationwide school closures due to heatwaves, cyclones, storms, or floods; heatwaves were the leading cause of educational disruptions in 2024, affecting over 171 million students; April was the most severe month, with over 118 million students affected in countries such as Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand; in September, when schools reopen in many parts of the world, 18 countries were forced to suspend classes, and Typhoon Yagi impacted 16 million children in East Asia and the Pacific.<sup>20</sup> In Romania, in 2024, approximately 700,000 students faced interruptions in their studies due to climate-related disasters. This was further complicated by the need to create an educational framework adapted to crises, ensuring that students had the opportunity to continue their education, regardless of the circumstances (such as adapting the educational process to the pandemic).<sup>21</sup> Therefore, all of this highlights how environmental challenges are directly linked to educational inequalities, limiting opportunities for millions of students.

These challenges caused by the effects of climate change directly contribute to fueling a child rights crisis, as the right to education is directly threatened, and without the necessary measures, millions of children will be left behind. It is important to emphasize that education cannot be ignored in the fight against climate change; it must be understood as part of the solution.

#### **4. Legal Frameworks and Policies Protecting the Right to Education**

Regarding the existence of a legal framework, it is crucial that these frameworks clearly protect the right to education, as they ensure the recognition of education as a fundamental right and not as a privilege. Without such legal protection, access to education could be unequal, and vulnerable groups could be excluded or discriminated against. These regulations also provide a protection framework against less favorable situations and ensure that education is not only accessible but also of high quality, establishing standards for curriculum content and teacher training. Therefore, in the context of environmental challenges that prevent the right to education from being guaranteed, as in the examples provided above, it is evident that we are talking about a lack of accessibility and quality, as well as insecurity regarding one's future in the community to which one belongs.

First and foremost, we must mention how the right to education is guaranteed. At the international level, among the instruments that guarantee this right is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes in Article 26 that

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

education is a fundamental right, and moreover, it is equal and accessible to all.<sup>22</sup> It is true that this is not a legally binding treaty, but it carries immense moral and political force and, most importantly, influences the practices and legislation of states, even though it does not legally compel them directly. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 16, 1966, mentions in Article 13 that the right to education must be accessible, available, acceptable, and adaptable for all.<sup>23</sup> However, although we are talking about an international document, it is legally binding for the states that have ratified it. There are also other international instruments in this situation, and among them, I would like to mention the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, which guarantees the right and role of education for children in Articles 28 and 29. Interestingly, Article 29 also states that the role of the right to education, among other things, "should help them live in peace and protect the environment." This should, in fact, be the reverse.<sup>24</sup> It should be noted that Romania was among the first states to ratify the UN Convention, in the year immediately following its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly, through Law No. 18 of September 28, 1990. This led to significant changes regarding the importance and securing of a place on the political agenda for the topic of children's rights, the right to education, and many others.<sup>25</sup> As previously described, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a global commitment adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, and Goal 4 (SDG4) aims to ensure quality, equitable, and inclusive education for all by 2030.

In addition to the international framework, the right to education is supported and reinforced through regional and national instruments. At the regional level, several human rights protection systems include clear regulations regarding access to education. For example, in Europe, the European Convention on Human Rights, through Protocol No. 1, Article 2,<sup>26</sup> recognizes the right to education and allows individuals to address the European Court of Human Rights if this right is violated. Furthermore, the European Social Charter imposes obligations on member states regarding ensuring access to education and vocational training.<sup>27</sup> In Africa, the

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<sup>22</sup> United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Paris: United Nations General Assembly, 1948, art. 26.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, adopted December 16, 1966, entered into force January 3, 1976, art. 13.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, adopted November 20, 1989, entered into force September 2, 1990, United Nations Treaty Series, art. 28 and 29.

<sup>25</sup> Salvati Copiii Romania, *Convenția cu privire la Drepturile Copilului*, Bucharest, 2019, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Council of Europe, entered into force on 3 September 1953.

<sup>27</sup> The European Social Charter, Council of Europe, entered into force in 1998.

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights reaffirms the commitment of states to education,<sup>28</sup> Similarly, in the Americas, the Protocol of San Salvador, Article 13 of the Inter-American system, enshrines education as a right accessible to all, as well as the freedom of parents to choose the type of education provided to their children, in accordance with regulations.<sup>29</sup> These regional instruments have different legal force, depending on the enforcement mechanisms of each system. In Europe, for example, the decisions of the European Court are binding on the member states, whereas in other regions, the mechanisms may be more consultative.

On the other hand, at the national level, the right to education is generally enshrined in the constitutions of states and detailed through specific education laws. Most countries provide by law for the free and compulsory nature of primary education, as well as equitable access to higher levels. These regulations provide citizens with concrete legal tools to defend their rights, including the possibility of appealing to national courts when education is inaccessible or of poor quality.

Therefore, while the right to education is well established in numerous international, regional, and national instruments, the climate crisis raises essential questions regarding the capacity of current regulations to effectively protect it in the face of these new risks. The situations presented earlier in the UNICEF report highlight the urgent need for national regulations and public policies to include specific climate adaptation measures: such as disaster-resilient educational infrastructure, emergency plans for continuity of learning, and integrated climate education in the curriculum.

## 5. Solutions and Strategies

In order for the right to education to be guaranteed in the fight against climate change, this paper discusses several solutions or strategies recommended in the literature, case studies, reports, and other official documents.

First and foremost, investments in climate-resilient schools are proposed, emphasizing the construction of infrastructures that can withstand floods, heatwaves, and other climate-related threats. For example, in Mozambique, frequent and powerful cyclones such as Chido and Freddy have severely impacted education, destroying thousands of classrooms and preventing tens of thousands of students from returning to school, partly due to the fact that approximately 40% of schools in the country are built with weak materials. As a result, UNICEF intervenes by providing temporary learning spaces and support for repairs, working with partners to develop more durable school infrastructures, often incurring high costs.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter) adopted in 1981.

<sup>29</sup> American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, entered into force in 1999.

<sup>30</sup> UNICEF, *op. cit.*, January 2025, pp. 6-7.

Secondly, it is necessary to consider available alternatives and the adaptability of the educational process to present challenges. One solution in this regard could be expanding access to distance learning for students affected by school closures. For example, at the end of 2024, severe air pollution led to the suspension of all in-person classes in Delhi (India),<sup>31</sup> as well as in Lahore (Pakistan) for primary schools, in order to avoid putting children's health at risk. Prior to this decision, students in Lahore had already been prohibited from exercising outdoors until January, and the school schedule was adjusted to minimize health risks.<sup>32</sup> This event disproportionately affected students from economically disadvantaged categories (EWS) due to limited access to adequate technology that could support continued education from home, such as phones, computers, and internet connections. Additionally, many faced challenges due to difficult home working environments, with several family members living in small spaces, as well as the lack of support and educational assistance at home.<sup>33</sup>

On the other hand, a long-term approach is also necessary, one that raises awareness about the consequences of inaction. This approach should integrate climate change education into the school curriculum, making it open to teaching about sustainability and resilience, in order to prepare future generations for the challenges ahead. A good practice example mentioned in the UNICEF report is UNICEF's support for integrating climate change into India's national curriculum. As a result, safety programs have been implemented in 12 states, and by 2024, over 121,000 teachers were trained. A national training module on climate change was set to be launched in 2025, although there is no information yet regarding its current status.<sup>34</sup>

Lastly, in order to facilitate the strengthening of resilient schools, the inclusion of environmental education in the educational process, and even the acceptance of suitable alternatives for all categories of students, it is essential to adopt policies that protect education from climate risks. These solutions require close collaboration between key actors: decision-makers, educators, and civil society, to ensure the protection of every child's right to education, regardless of environmental conditions. A good practice example in this regard comes from South Sudan, one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, which has adapted its Education Sector Plan for 2023–2027 to include climate adaptation measures and emergency plans at both national and local levels, depending on local hazards

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<sup>31</sup> Aleks Phillips, *Delhi shuts all primary schools as hazardous smog worsens*, BBC News, 14 November 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3wqz8xn8jgo>, accessed 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

<sup>32</sup> Ruth Comerford, *Schools close in Lahore as pollution hits record level*, BBC News, 3 November 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5ymg64ynm7o>, accessed 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

<sup>33</sup> Ayushi Gupta, *Disruption of classes due to air pollution majorly impacts EWS students*, Education Times, 25 November 2024, <https://www.educationtimes.com/article/newsroom/99737037/disruption-of-classes-due-to-air-pollution-majorly-impactsewsstudents>, accessed 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

<sup>34</sup> UNICEF, *op. cit.*, January 2025, p. 6.

(flooding, droughts, etc.).<sup>35</sup> In this context, the Ministry of Education collaborates with the Ministries of Environment, Forestry, and Humanitarian Affairs to align relevant policies and information with the aim of preventing educational disruptions before disasters strike.<sup>36</sup>

## 6. Conclusions

The article aimed to highlight the historical journey of humanity in affirming fundamental rights, a process marked by suffering but consistently supported by the aspiration for freedom, justice, and dignity. It was noted that, from ancient times, the idea of respect for human beings was present in many cultures: the Code of Hammurabi in Babylon, the edict of Cyrus the Great, the values promoted in ancient Egypt, and classical Chinese philosophy (through Confucius, Mencius, Lao-Tzu), as well as the philosophical contributions of Ancient Greece (Protagoras, Plato, Aristotle) that shaped the conceptual foundations of human rights.

In the second part, the article focused on the impact of climate change on the educational process. It presented the evolution of the perception of this impact starting in the 1990s, highlighting concrete cases such as heatwaves, floods, and climate-induced migration that have affected school infrastructure and access to education.

The report “The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis” (2021) was analyzed to emphasize how climate change affects children, particularly girls, in terms of access to education. The paper also discussed the 2024 UNICEF report, which presented alarming data on over 242 million students affected by climate-induced school disruptions in 85 countries, including Romania. The paper emphasized that these disruptions affect children's right to education and amplify already existing inequalities, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups. It was shown that education should not only be seen as a collateral victim of the climate crisis but as a crucial pillar in combating it.

Finally, the article examined the international legal framework protecting the right to education in the context of climate challenges. Instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child were discussed. The article stressed the crucial role of these documents in ensuring equitable and quality access to education, even in the face of climate crises.

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<sup>35</sup> UNESCO, *Climate-resilient educational planning*, <https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/projects/climate-resilient-educational-planning>, accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025.

<sup>36</sup> Ministry of General Education and Instruction, *General Education Sector Plan 2023-2027*, 2023, p. 68.

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