



**Message from Mr Ibrahim Thiaw, UNCCD Executive Secretary,  
on Desertification and Drought Day, 17 June 2022**

17 June marks Desertification and Drought Day.

This year's global observance is generously hosted by Spain; under the slogan: "Rising up from drought together".

Each country, every citizen, community or corporation should reflect on its meaning and move to action!

As we speak, millions of people across the globe are affected by natural hazards.

Droughts appear to be amongst the most disruptive of all.

Droughts impair our food production and distribution systems.

Hydro-power plants fail to generate the energy needed for our daily life and for our industry.

Shortage of rains wreaks havoc on pastoralist communities.

Water insecurity sparks forced migration and amplifies conflicts.

Droughts has multiple names: forest fires; food crisis; displacement, human insecurity and ecosystem distress.

For most countries, years of drought correspond to years of economic downturn... Sometimes, to years of unrest and instability.

In the Horn of Africa for example, millions face food shortages because of drought. Animals, even the most resilient ones like camels, are dying in large numbers.

At least 26 million people are struggling for food following four consecutive poor rainfall seasons in the Horn of Africa.

Elsewhere, communities from Chile to the United States, from Mexico to Morocco, from China to Spain are also in the grips of severe drought.

Droughts themselves are not new. What's new is that they strike more often and hit harder every time.



**United Nations**  
Convention to Combat  
Desertification

United for land

Three-quarters of humanity will be living in drought-prone areas by 2050.

Drought is not just the absence of rain. It is often a result of human action—or rather inaction—to take care of our land and our climate.

Think about what life would look like in an imaginary **Droughtland**: a land defeated by drought, where trees are only a fruit of imagination, and fresh food and drinking water is a luxury.

Droughtland is not a science-fiction scenario, it might be closer to reality than many people realize.

But the good news is, real solutions exist to ensure that no countries become Droughtland.

Hardly any country is immune to drought, but countries can better prepare to avoid the worst impacts—and especially human suffering.

Countries should have access to robust and effective early warning and monitoring systems.

Countries, especially in drought-prone areas, should plan for solid drought preparedness and act now!

Communities, especially the most vulnerable ones, should have access to adequate insurance schemes to protect their lives and livelihoods.

Dear friends,

By restoring land back to health, we can protect our climate and water resources, boost drought resilience and sustain life on this planet.

This Desertification and Drought Day, let's rise up from drought together.

I thank you.