The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Joins U.S. and Iran in Voting Against UN Climate Change Resolution

May 21, 2026



The UN General Assembly. **UN Photo**

Russia on Wednesday voted with other major energy exporters and greenhouse gas emitters against a UN General Assembly resolution that requires governments to take stronger action on climate change.

The vote was 141-8 with 28 abstentions. Russia, Iran, the United States, Belarus, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Yemen and Liberia voted against the non-binding resolution.

The vote backs a July 2025 International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion stating that it is "unlawful" for countries to neglect their climate commitments and that they may be required to pay "full reparation to injured states."

The biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions routinely oppose any mechanism that could force them to pay reparations to victims of climate disruption.

Russia is one of the top global emitters, with its share in both historic and current emissions

at around 5%.

Related article: 2025 Was Russia's Second-Warmest Year on Record

Deputy U.S. Representative to the UN Tammy Bruce condemned the resolution's "inappropriate political demands relating to fossil fuels and on other climate topics." Russia's mission has not publicly commented on the vote.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres praised the resolution in a statement on Wednesday, commending the leadership of island leaders and "the young people whose moral clarity helped bring the world to this moment."

"This is a powerful affirmation of international law, climate justice, science, and the responsibility of states to protect people from the escalating climate crisis," Guterres said.

The Pacific island nation of Vanuatu led both the ICJ case and Wednesday's UN General Assembly resolution. The U.S. reportedly urged governments to pressure Vanuatu to withdraw the initiative.

The resolution's adopted text was altered significantly after negotiations among states, with climate change taking a back seat to national security or industrial interests in many countries.

The resolution welcomed the ICJ opinion "as an authoritative contribution to the clarification of existing international law" and called on states to "comply with their respective obligations" to protect the climate.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/05/21/russia-joins-us-and-iran-in-voting-against-un-climate-change-resolution-a92812