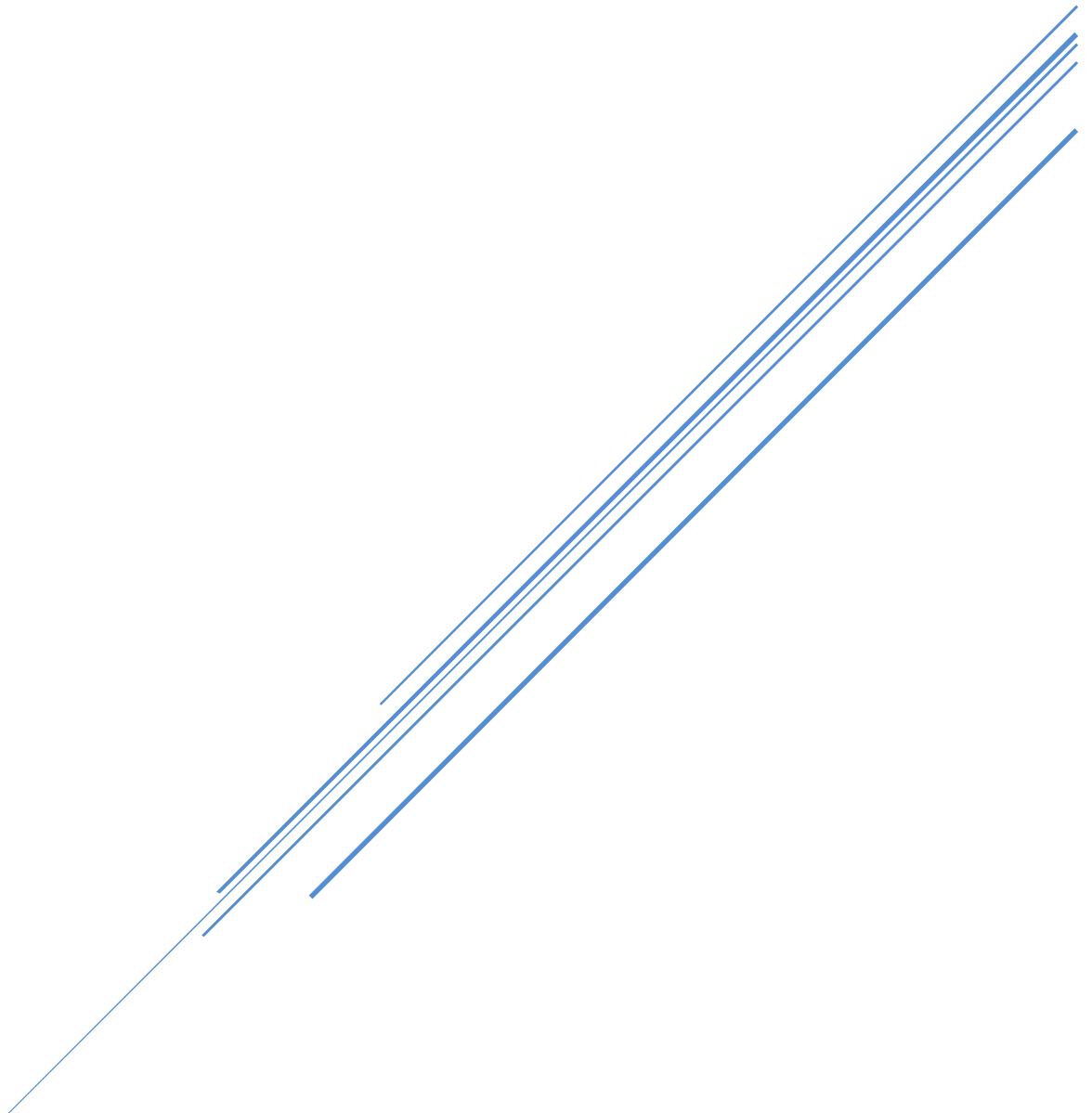


# UNSC BACKGROUND GUIDE

**South, Central & West India Inter-School Model United Nations 4.0**



**Agenda: Climate, Peace and Security**

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## Letter from The Executive Board

Dear Delegates

We hope that this simulation turns out to be an experience worth cherishing for all participants while accommodating a praiseworthy debate!

Throughout this conference, we will have meaningful debates and discussions about the agenda “Climate, Peace and Security.” The agenda we've selected necessitates careful analysis and creative answers. We invite each of you to bring your unique perspectives, experiences, and talents to the table as we collaborate to solve these complicated challenges.

Please be aware that the background guide, as its name implies, is just meant to provide you with an overview of the agenda and cannot be relied upon as reliable information. It was prepared with the intention of serving as a guide for you to navigate through the abundance of material that you may encounter in your preparation for the conference. However, beyond this guide is where you should conduct your true research, and we expect to see some compelling arguments and discussions.

Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that, in a competitive environment, we aren't particularly interested in hearing what statistics or legislation you have read while researching. Rather, we urge that you analyze these facts and give your country's stance on the significance of these laws. At all levels of the committee, unless stagnation develops, delegates must guide it. The MUN agenda is a wonderful experience and is not as challenging as

it may sound. You all need to put up a lot of work and passion so that we may all have a positive experience.

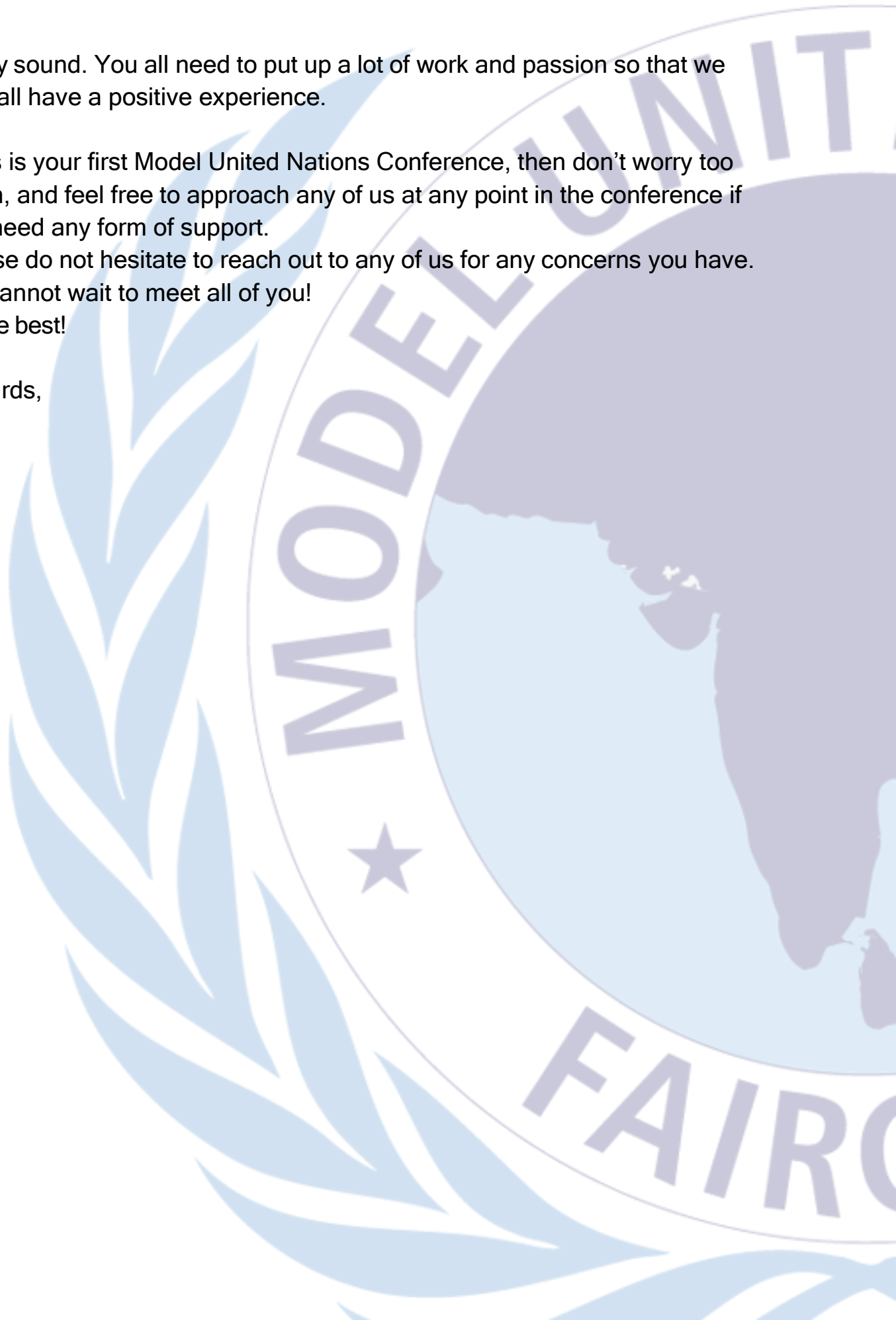
If this is your first Model United Nations Conference, then don't worry too much, and feel free to approach any of us at any point in the conference if you need any form of support.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us for any concerns you have.

We cannot wait to meet all of you!

All the best!

Regards,



## Evidence or Proof Acceptable in the Committee

Evidence or proof from the following sources shall be accepted as credible in the committee:

### 1. **News Sources:**

#### a. Reuters –

Any Reuters article that mentions the factor is in contradiction of the fact stated by a delegate in the council. <http://www.reuters.com/>

#### b. State-operated News Agencies –

These reports can be used in support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any Country as such, but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are, • RIA Novosti (Russia) <http://en.rian.ru/> • IRNA (Iran) <http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.htm> • BBC (United Kingdom) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/> • Xinhua News Agency and CCTV (P.R. China) <http://cctvnews.cntv.cn/>

### 2. **Government Reports:**

These reports can be used in a similar way to the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country.

#### a. Government Websites

For Example: • The State Department of the United States of America (<http://www.state.gov/index.htm>) or • The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation ( <http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/index.htm>)

#### b. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations

For Example: • India (<http://www.mea.gov.in/>), • People's Republic of China (<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/>), • France

(<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/>), • Russian Federation  
([http://www.mid.ru/brp\\_4.nsf/main\\_eng](http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/main_eng) )

c. Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports

<http://www.un.org/en/members/> (Click on any country to get the website of the Office of its Permanent Representative) d. Multilateral Organisations

For Example: • NATO (<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/index.htm>), • ASEAN (<http://www.aseansec.org/>), • OPEC ([http://www.opec.org/opec\\_web/en/](http://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/)), etc

3. **UN Reports:**

All UN Reports are considered credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of this committee.

a. UN Bodies:

For Example: • UNSC (<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>), • GA (<http://www.un.org/en/ga/>), • HRC (<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/HRCIndex.aspx>), etc.

b. UN Affiliated bodies:

For Example: • International Atomic Energy Agency (<http://www.iaea.org/>), • World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org/>), • International Monetary Fund (<https://www.imf.org/en/home>), • International Committee of the Red Cross (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/index.jsp>), etc.

c. Treaty-Based Bodies:

For Example: • Antarctic Treaty System (<http://www.ats.aq/e/ats.htm>), • International Criminal Court (<http://www.icccpi.int/Menus/ICC>). Subsidiary Organs of the UN: • Peacebuilding Commission (<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/repertoire/peacebuilding-commission>) • International Law Commission: (<http://legal.un.org/ilc/>) • The Commission on the Status of Women (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>)

NOTE: Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc., be accepted or taken as valid proof.



## Committee Overview

### ***About UNSC***

UNSC is one of the six governing and coordinating bodies within the United Nations system. It is responsible for ensuring peace between nations, providing diplomatic resolutions to global conflicts, and dealing with terrorist threats. It operates with 15 members, 5 permanent and the rest non-permanent, with each having one vote and the permanent members having veto power. It can impose sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain global stability if necessary.

### ***UNSC's Agenda***

UNSC operates in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing situation. The boundaries of security are ambiguous and extend to other sectors that affect security opportunities and outcomes. The UNSC acts as a common ground, a cohesion for the superpowers of the world to come together and make amends to ensure stability in the economy and security across the world. It is primarily responsible for the following:

1. **Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution:** The UNSC actively engages in peacekeeping efforts worldwide. It assesses threats to international peace, recommends peaceful solutions, and authorizes peacekeeping missions when necessary.
2. **Sanctions and Enforcement Measures:** When diplomacy fails, the UNSC can impose economic sanctions, arms embargoes, or travel restrictions on countries or individuals involved in conflicts. It also has the authority to authorize military action to restore peace.
3. **Admission of New Members:** The UNSC recommends new UN member states to the General Assembly for approval.
4. **Approving Changes to the UN Charter:** Any amendments to the UN Charter require the UNSC's approval.

5. **Emergency Sessions and Crisis Management:** The Council convenes emergency sessions to address urgent matters, such as armed conflicts or threats to global security.
6. **Monitoring Arms Control and Disarmament:** The UNSC oversees arms control agreements and nuclear non-proliferation efforts.
7. **Addressing Humanitarian Crises:** It responds to humanitarian emergencies, ensuring aid delivery and protection of civilians in conflict zones.
8. **Counterterrorism and Combating Organized Crime:** The UNSC collaborates with member states to combat terrorism, piracy, and other transnational threats.
9. **Engaging with Regional Organizations:** The UNSC cooperates with regional bodies (e.g., African Union, European Union) to address regional conflicts.

### ***Committee Mandate***

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach an agreement by peaceful means. The Council may:

- set forth principles for such an agreement;
- undertake investigation and mediation, in some cases.
- dispatch a mission;
- appoint special envoys; or
- Request the Secretary-General to use his good offices to achieve a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

When a dispute leads to hostilities, the Council's primary concern is to bring them to an end as soon as possible. In that case, the Council may: Issue ceasefire directives that can help prevent an escalation of the conflict;

- Dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, separate opposing forces, and establish a calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought.



Beyond this, the Council may opt for enforcement measures, including:

- Economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, and travel bans;
- Severance of diplomatic relations;
- blockade;
- or even collective military action.

A chief concern is to focus action on those responsible for the policies or practices condemned by the international community, while minimizing the impact of the measures taken on other parts of the population and economy.



## About the Agenda

### ***Introduction***

As the world grapples with the escalating impacts of climate change, from rising sea levels to devastating natural disasters, it's becoming increasingly clear that the consequences of climate change extend far beyond the environment. Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it's a security issue, a humanitarian issue, and a global stability issue. To further explore this topic, we must discuss the critical link between climate change, peace, and security, how climate change can exacerbate existing conflicts, create new security threats, and challenge global stability.

### ***Influence of Climate Change on Security***

#### **Water Scarcity and Conflict**

Climate change is altering the global water landscape, leading to increasing water scarcity and competition for this precious resource. As temperatures rise, changing precipitation patterns and increased evaporation due to warmer temperatures can lead to droughts, reduced water availability, and poorer water quality. This can exacerbate tensions between communities, nations, or groups that rely on shared water resources, potentially leading to conflict. In the Nile Basin, for example, tensions between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia over water rights and the construction of dams have increased. With 1.8 billion people expected to live in areas of absolute water scarcity by 2025 and two-thirds of the world's population potentially suffering from water shortages, the potential for water-related conflicts will only continue to increase (UN Water).

#### **Food Insecurity and Social Unrest**

Climate change is having a profound impact on global food systems, leading to food insecurity and social unrest. Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather

events can lead to crop failures, lower yields, and altered growing seasons. This can lead to food shortages, price volatility, and social unrest, particularly in regions with limited economic resources or infrastructure. For example, the 2010-2011 food price crisis led to social unrest and protests in several countries, including Tunisia, where the "Arab Spring" protests began. Climate change could lead to a 2-6% decline in global food production by 2050, putting an additional 143 million people at risk of hunger (World Bank). Sustainable agricultural practices, climate-resilient crops, and social protection programmes are needed to combat food insecurity.

### *Displacement and Migration*

Climate change is already leading to increased displacement and migration, as rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and changing environmental conditions force people to leave their homes and livelihoods behind. Between 2008 and 2016, an estimated 22.5 million people were displaced annually due to sudden-onset disasters, with climate-related disasters being the primary driver (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre). Small-island developing states, such as the Maldives and Kiribati, are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise and saltwater intrusion, threatening the very existence of these nations. Climate-related migration can lead to social, economic, and security challenges, including strain on host communities, potential conflict over resources, and human rights concerns.

### *Climate Change and Conflict*

Climate change can exacerbate existing conflicts or create new ones by altering resource availability, damaging infrastructure, and disrupting social and economic systems. For instance, droughts can lead to competition for limited water resources, while changing precipitation patterns can alter the distribution of fertile land and natural resources. A study found that for every 1°C increase in temperature, the likelihood of conflict increases by 13.2% in sub-Saharan Africa (Burke et al., 2009). Climate-related stressors can also contribute to social instability, particularly in regions with weak governance, poverty, or pre-existing tensions. Understanding the complex

relationships between climate change and conflict is crucial for developing effective strategies to mitigate these risks.

### *National Security and Defense*

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a threat to national security, as it can damage military infrastructure, disrupt supply chains, and alter the operational environment. Rising sea levels, increased storm intensity, and changing weather patterns can compromise military bases and installations, while thawing permafrost can open up new shipping lanes and resource extraction opportunities. The US Department of Defense has identified climate change as a "threat multiplier" that can exacerbate existing security challenges and create new ones. Climate change can also impact the stability of regions and countries, potentially leading to increased humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping operations, or other security responses.

### *Human Security and Well-being*

Climate change has significant implications for human security, including health, livelihoods, and access to basic services. Warmer temperatures can increase the spread of disease vectors like mosquitoes and ticks, while extreme weather events can lead to injuries, displacement, and loss of life. Climate change can also impact food security, water availability, and sanitation, exacerbating existing health challenges. Climate change is projected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year between 2030 and 2050, mainly due to malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and heat stress (WHO). Addressing the human security implications of climate change will require a comprehensive approach that prioritizes vulnerable populations and supports climate-resilient development.



## Key Terms

1. *Threat Multiplier*- A term used to describe how climate change intensifies existing threats to peace and security by worsening resource scarcity, displacement, and instability.
2. *Climate–Security Nexus*- The interlinkages between climate change and security challenges, including how environmental changes affect conflict dynamics, state capacity, and peace processes.
3. *Environmental Degradation*- The deterioration of the natural environment (e.g., soil erosion, desertification, deforestation) that can undermine livelihoods and fuel conflict over resources.
4. *Resource-Based Conflict*- Conflicts that arise due to competition over scarce natural resources such as water, land, and food, often worsened by climate impacts.
5. *Climate-Induced Displacement*- The forced movement of people due to climate-related disasters like droughts, floods, and sea-level rise.
6. *Small Island Developing States (SIDS)*- Low-lying countries especially vulnerable to sea-level rise, facing existential threats due to climate change.
7. *Conflict Sensitivity*- An approach that ensures climate adaptation or development efforts do not unintentionally exacerbate local tensions or violence.



## Current Situation

The UN Security Council has increasingly recognized climate change as a “threat multiplier” for conflict. Its first dedicated debate was in April 2007, resulting in a Presidential Statement warning that climate change could “aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security” and that “loss of territory” in low-lying island states could have security implications. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told that session that climate change “not only exacerbates threats to international peace and security; it is a threat” in its own right. In 2011, the Council issued a formal Presidential Statement reiterating that climate impacts on stability (in regions like the Sahel, Central Africa, and the Horn) should be included in conflict analyses.

## Positions of Major Member States

1. **United States:** The US has been a strong proponent of the climate-security agenda. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield argued after the 2021 veto that Russia had “stopped the Council from taking a small, necessary and practical step”. She emphasized that UN climate agreements (Paris, UNFCCC) can be complemented by Security Council action, especially integrating climate concerns into peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates. In 2021, she also highlighted that climate change is “not only to our climate, it’s also a collective security issue” and noted US military assessments labeling it a “threat multiplier”. The Biden administration has joined the UN Group of Friends on Climate and Security (launched in 2018), which now counts 56 countries.
2. **United Kingdom:** The UK likewise recognizes climate impacts on security, especially in Africa. In a June 2024 Council meeting on Central Africa, the UK’s UN envoy stressed that “climate change

impacts on peace and stability across Central Africa” and urged regional coordination to address it. The UK supported the 2021 climate-security draft resolution. It is a co-leader (with Germany) of the Friends of Climate Security in Europe and often emphasizes climate-resilient development as part of peacebuilding.

3. **France:** France views climate change as a strategic security issue. In September 2024, France joined 10 other Council members in a joint statement underscoring that climate is a risk multiplier for conflict. French officials have noted that climate extremes are already increasing competition over resources and driving displacement in fragile areas. France frequently champions institutional partnerships with the African Union on climate, peace, and security, and backs initiatives (through the World Bank and UN) for climate resilience in conflict zones.
4. **China:** China has been more cautious about “securitizing” climate issues. In 2021, China’s UNSC representative (who abstained on the draft resolution) acknowledged that climate can impact peace, but argued the nexus is complex and the UNFCCC/Paris framework should remain central. He warned that a Security Council mandate should not become an excuse for developed countries to dodge their emissions responsibilities, and reiterated the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”. In short, China insists the Council should address climate impacts only on a case-by-case basis and avoid global climate politics.
5. **Russia:** Russia firmly opposes broadening the Council’s agenda to climate issues. Its UN ambassador made clear that linking climate and security was controversial: he noted that many states (and even at COP26) were divided, and that only his veto had stopped what he called a “step back” for climate action. Russia argued the Council’s focus must remain on immediate security threats, not environmental policy, and implied it would block any future climate resolutions.

6. **Other key states:** India (not a permanent member) echoed Russia's stance in 2021, calling the Council an inappropriate forum for climate. Brazil's current government has likewise said climate belongs in development forums (G77, UNFCCC) and has been reluctant to engage climate issues in the Council. By contrast, many current non-permanent members and regional powers (e.g. Niger, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, etc.) have actively raised climate-security links. Germany, Ireland, and Japan have also spoken out for more Council attention, as part of informal "Friends of Climate and Security" groupings.

## Case Studies

1. **Lake Chad Basin (Central Africa):** Once one of Africa's largest lakes, Lake Chad has shrunk by over 90% in recent decades. This decline has intensified struggles over water and farmland across Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Niger. Boko Haram's decade-long insurgency has been a major driver of instability, but climate and environmental factors have also played a role. A report by Refugees International notes a "dangerous link between climate change and conflict" in the region. Around 3 million people are displaced, and 11 million need aid in the Lake Chad Basin. In 2021, climate-driven scarcity helped spark communal violence in Cameroon, forcing 60,000 villagers to flee into Chad. (The UN Security Council's 2017 Resolution 2349 on Lake Chad explicitly "recognized the adverse effects of climate change...including through water scarcity" on regional stability.)
2. **The Sahel (West/Central Africa):** The Sahel (from Senegal to Sudan) is highly vulnerable to climate extremes. Successive years of drought and land degradation have worsened food insecurity. Farmers and herders increasingly clash over shrinking water and pasture. One Security Council briefing described Sahelian

communities under “cumulative pressures of conflict, climate change and environmental degradation” walking a “tightrope of survival”. UNHCR warns that “decades of armed conflict and displacement” could result if rising temperatures and resource scarcity are not addressed. For example, Mali and Burkina Faso have seen a surge in deadly farmer-herder violence; UN and regional officials note that climate stress is a key factor in these intensifying conflicts.

3. ***Small Island Developing States (SIDS)***: Low-lying island nations face existential security risks from climate change. Rising sea levels, more intense cyclones, and storm surges threaten freshwater supplies, infrastructure, and even entire coastlines. In a 2023 debate, Japan’s delegation warned that sea-level rise “threatens the very existence of small island developing States”. The IPCC likewise notes that vulnerability in these islands will “rapidly rise” under sea-level rise, leading to worsening displacement and loss of ecosystem services. Although armed conflict is rare, climate impacts can create humanitarian emergencies, undermine government capacity, and raise legal questions (e.g., preserving maritime borders if coastlines recede). Island leaders have repeatedly called climate change “the greatest existential threat” to their security and way of life.



## Important Questions to Consider

1. How can international cooperation be improved to prevent climate-induced conflicts?
2. How can early warning systems be improved for climate-related disasters that may trigger conflict?
3. How can peacekeeping operations be adapted to include climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction?
4. How can we address the growing threat of climate change to global peace and security, and what role should international cooperation, policy decisions, and individual actions play in mitigating its impact?
5. How can climate diplomacy be integrated with post-conflict peacebuilding strategies?

## Resources for Further Study

<https://www.unep.org/publications-data>

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15318.doc.htm>

[https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/climate\\_security\\_tr\\_web\\_final\\_april10.pdf](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/climate_security_tr_web_final_april10.pdf)