



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

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SECURITY COUNCIL - OPEN DEBATE

SECURITY COUNCIL HIGH-LEVEL VIRTUAL OPEN DEBATE ON “CLIMATE AND SECURITY”

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTABLE TO H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

Thank you for bringing the preeminent systemic security issue of our time to this Council’s attention. Liechtenstein appreciates the UK’s long-standing commitment to addressing the links between climate and security, going back to April 2007 when you were the first to raise the topic in this body.¹ This discussion also builds on recent Council open debates, notably those held by Niger last September and Tunisia last month. Addressing the climate and security nexus is a prerequisite for the Council to fulfill its mandate. Accordingly, the Council should draw from the entire UN system to create a policy that tackles climate security risks, including through preventive action.

Mr. President,

The concept note for this debate very effectively raises the complexities of the relationship between climate and security, including the role of climate impacts as a threat multiplier, and the deleterious effect of conflict on the ability of States to adapt to climate change. Liechtenstein also appreciates the intention expressed in your concept note to address climate preventively. It is clear that climate impacts such as desertification and dwindling water resources are leading to

¹ S/2007/186

violent conflict, as are secondary impacts, including increased involuntary migration, poverty, the loss of livelihoods and social tensions between farmers and herders.

However, the Council's engagement on climate and security would be significantly strengthened by moving beyond a 'hard security' paradigm framed in terms of causes of and solutions to armed conflict, toward one framed in terms of 'human security'. Seen through the lens of human security, it is just as valid to understand climate change itself as a cause of insecurity requiring a Council response. An understanding of climate insecurity as worthy of the Council's attention before those affected resort to, or are affected by, armed violence or conflict would indeed strengthen the UK's emphasis on conflict prevention and upstream action. The 2009 report of the Secretary General on "Climate change and its possible security implications", which addresses the "interdependence between human vulnerability and national security",² may be a useful starting point in this regard.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein continues to support the important innovation of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security. Building on this momentum, the Council should tap into the wide range of expertise across the UN system, such as the DPPA-UNDP-UNEP Climate Security Mechanism. In addition, it should pursue a resolution on Climate and Security as a standalone topic, one that establishes a reporting mechanism that makes use of this considerable expertise. More systematic references to the impact of climate insecurity on situations on the Council's agenda, particularly those outside of the African continent, are necessary and long overdue.

But most importantly, Council members must urgently limit their own emissions. The five years since the Paris Agreement have been the hottest on record, and it is increasingly possible that the world will reach 1.5C degrees of warming in the next five years at least temporarily, a threshold deemed the point of no return during the Paris negotiations. The members of this Council bear particular responsibility, given that a small number of its members combined are

² A/64/350

responsible for more than half of the world's CO2 emissions. It is not sufficient for the Council to address the nexus between climate change and security when the emissions of its members are themselves determinative of the scale of the security threat. More ambitious targets and stronger implementation within the UNFCCC framework is vital to this effort, including through Nationally Determined Contributions. On this note, Liechtenstein welcomes the United States' decision to reenter into the Paris Agreement, and hopes that it will mark a new chapter both in the Council's engagement on climate change and in our collective multilateral response. Such engagement is badly needed. The present and future security of billions of people depends on Council members' willingness to avert climate disaster today.

I thank you.