



The United Nations Security Council and the Climate Security Challenge: Between Mandated Response and Implementation Obstacles

Dr. Samia Zaoui

Lecturer (B), Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, Badji Mokhtar-Annaba University, Algeria.

E-mail: samia.zaoui@univ-annaba.dz

Abstract:

This academic paper aims to shed light on the role of the United Nations Security Council, considered the most important body within the United Nations, which has been entrusted with the task of maintaining international peace and security, in addressing the challenge of climate security. The Council's activity has seen significant development since (2007) to the present, particularly through the integration of the negative impacts of climate change and their effect on maintaining international peace and security into its agenda, and the issuance of several resolutions concerning specific countries and regions that link climate change to stability in those areas. Despite opposition from some countries, especially permanent members of the Council such as Russia and China, the Council has succeeded—albeit slowly at first—in actively developing the integration of climate security into its agenda, despite the political and legal obstacles it faces.

Keywords: Security Council, Climate change, Climate security, Threats, Peace and security.

Received: 09 February 2025

Accepted: 17 April 2025 **Published:** 15 May 2025

Introduction:

Climate change is considered by many experts to be one of the greatest threats to peace and security in the 21st century. As global temperatures rise, extended droughts, rising sea levels, and increasingly frequent and severe storms are destroying livelihoods, damaging vital infrastructure, and forcing people to flee their homes. When these effects coincide with other economic, social, demographic, or political pressures, they may pose serious obstacles to building comprehensive and sustainable peace. The impacts of climate change on international peace and security have become one of the most prominent issues gaining increasing attention in global political and academic discussions. Climate change, with its direct and indirect threats, is now seen as a risk multiplier, especially in fragile contexts and conflict-affected areas. United Nations and World Bank reports indicate that more than (70%) of the countries most affected by climate change are classified as fragile or post-conflict states.

Objectives of the Study:

Through this research:

- We aim to analyze the concept of climate security as a non-traditional challenge to national, international, and human security, highlighting the threats it poses.
- We primarily examine the role of the United Nations Security Council in addressing this non-traditional threat, and how its non-permanent members, in particular, succeeded in introducing climate security into the Council's formal and informal discussions—overcoming the vetoes and weak arguments of permanent members who reject the Council's engagement with the issue, claiming it falls outside its mandate related to maintaining international peace and security and should rather be treated as a sustainable development issue.

- We intend to identify possible solutions to the political and legal obstacles facing the United Nations Security Council in addressing climate security threats.

Significance of the Study:

Accordingly, the significance of this research lies in the fact that:

- Climate security has become a pressing issue for the international community due to its threats to international security in its broadest sense.
- It is incumbent upon the Security Council to respond to this threat by moving beyond a narrow interpretation of threats to international peace and security.

Research Problem:

The problem addressed in this study is as follows: How has the Security Council's role evolved in securitizing climate change and integrating it into its agenda, and what are the obstacles it faces?

Part One: The Conceptual Framework of Climate Security and Its Inclusion in the Agenda of the United Nations Security Council

The concept of climate security has emerged as a new approach in international relations and international law, recognizing that climate change can exacerbate conflicts, destabilize regions, and disrupt livelihoods, particularly in fragile areas. This increasing interlinkage between climate and security has led to the inclusion of climate security in international discussions, including the agenda of the United Nations Security Council. This agenda includes both formal and informal discussions, held continuously since 2007—the year the Council first included climate change and security in its discussions—and has since integrated the concept into its resolutions concerning the maintenance of international peace and security.

Section One: The Concept of Climate Security

The concept of climate security developed in parallel with the evolution of contemporary security theory, shifting from its traditional military meaning toward broader dimensions that include the environment and climate. The narrow understanding of security focuses on its military dimension and the centrality of state security. One of the most prominent theoretical schools that advocated for this expanded view of security is the Copenhagen School, which emphasized the need to address new types of threats. This school identified five main sectors of security: political, economic, military, societal, and environmental.¹

Accordingly, the concept of climate security belongs to the Copenhagen School, as it stems from the broader category of environmental security—a domain classified by the school's scholars and thinkers. It was first referenced in the Brundtland Report as part of environmental security in 1987.²

A. Definition of Climate Security

First, from a terminological perspective, “climate security” is a compound term linking security with climate change. Security, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, is defined merely as protection from external danger due to a foreign force.³

Climate change, on the other hand, is defined in Article 1 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.⁴ The term “climate security” did not appear explicitly in political or academic discourse

¹ Mohamed Badri Eid, *Climate Security... Context and Gulf Strategies*, Strategic Report, Issue 36, Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Center, December 2022, p. 15.

² The Brundtland Report linked environmental threats to security threats. For further details, refer to the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (*Brundtland Report*) and International Economic Cooperation, 42nd session – August 4, 1987, A/42/427.

³ Nick Buxton, *A Primer on Climate Security: The Danger of Militarising Climate Crisis*, Transnational Institute, Amsterdam, October 2001, p. 1.

until 2004. That year marked a turning point for the concept, when David King, the UK government's chief scientific advisor, declared that climate change posed a greater threat than international terrorism—a moment seen as critical in redefining security priorities.⁵ The term gained political traction in Europe after it was adopted by UK Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett in 2006.⁶

B. Various Definitions of Climate Security

1. **UNDP Definition:** The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines climate security as referring to the various effects of the climate crisis on peace and stability, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected areas. It contributes to increased food and water insecurity and threatens livelihoods, leading to interconnected consequences such as heightened competition over natural resources, social unrest, and increased displacement. These factors exacerbate tensions and conflicts and undermine security and stability in the affected states or regions.⁷
2. **UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund Definition:** Climate security refers to the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts caused by global warming, through improved management of migration routes, resolution of land ownership disputes, reduction of competition over access to natural resources and extractive industries, and the promotion of agreements on climate adaptation strategies, resilience, and livelihoods at the local level.⁸
3. **Definition by the Transnational Institute:** Climate security is a political framework that analyzes the impact of climate change on security. It anticipates that extreme weather events and climate instability—resulting from greenhouse gas emissions—will disrupt economic, social, and environmental systems, thereby undermining security.⁹

Based on the above definitions, climate security can be defined as the set of direct and indirect threats and risks that affect broad notions of security. It also encompasses preventive measures and solutions to address climate change, such as adaptation and mitigation strategies. Climate security is thus employed to safeguard individuals and communities that depend on it.¹⁰

C. The Impact of Climate Change Threats on Security in Its Broad Sense

Climate change acts as a threat multiplier, intensifying existing conflicts and tensions due to the scarcity of natural resources and food insecurity. These conditions lead to increased displacement, forced migration, and reduced capacity of fragile states to respond—consequently escalating societal vulnerability and exacerbating conflicts that threaten human, national, and even international security.¹¹

1. Impact on Human Security Climate change directly affects global humanitarian conditions, increasing the number of environmental refugees and migrants due to natural disasters such as floods and droughts.

⁴ It is the set of effects resulting from irrational and climate-depleting human activities, which are the main cause of climate change. These changes are not transient events but occur over specific and recurring timeframes, with serious consequences on ecosystems, societies, economies, and human health and well-being.

⁵ David A. King, *Climate Change Science: Adapt, Mitigate, or Ignore*, Policy Forum Environment, <https://uh.edu/ethicsinscience/Media/ClimateChangePolicy.pdf>

⁶ “Beckett to Warn UN on Climate Change,” The Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2006/sep/22/greenpolitics.uk?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁷ “What Is Climate Security?” <https://mptf.undp.org/news/what-climate-security-and-why-it-important>

⁸ The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, *Climate Security and Peacebuilding*, July 2020.

⁹ Dorota Michalak, Paulina Szyja, “Determinants of Climate Security – An Attempt at Indicator Analysis,” *Economics and Environment*, 1(84), 2023, p. 13.

¹⁰ Maria Julia Trombetta, “Environmental Security and Climate Change: Analysing the Discourse,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 4, December 2008, p. 595.

¹¹ Georg Frerks, Rinze Geertsma, Jeroen Klomp, Tom Middendorp, *Climate Security and the Military: Concepts, Strategies and Partnerships*, 2024.

UN reports indicate that climate change may displace nearly 200 million people by 2050 as habitable and arable land disappears, according to the UNHCR.¹²

2. Impact on National Security The observed and projected impacts of climate change may undermine the long-term legitimacy of states by impairing their ability to provide services and opportunities. Climate phenomena like floods, droughts, rising temperatures and sea levels, poverty, and food insecurity weaken human security and the fulfillment of basic human rights. These impacts may deteriorate economic and political conditions and infrastructure, threatening national security.¹³

3. Impact on International Security Climate change indirectly undermines global security and stability. The collapse of human and national security in fragile states experiencing protracted armed conflict—partially due to climate change—has escalated these crises into cross-border security threats. Such fragile states may become hubs for organized transnational crime or safe havens for terrorist groups. Furthermore, the collapse of economic systems in these countries can lead to global financial instability due to debt defaults and decreased international investment.¹⁴

Section Two: The Development of Climate Security in the UN Security Council's Agenda and Resolutions

The Security Council's role has significantly evolved in addressing climate change and its security implications through its deliberations and resolutions on the maintenance of international peace and security.

A. Inclusion of Climate Security in UN Security Council Deliberations

1. Open Debates and Discussions Between 2007 and 2024, the UN Security Council held 17 meetings on climate change, peace, and security, referencing climate shocks and pressures in over 100 resolutions, including peacekeeping mandates and special missions.¹⁵

The first session was held under the UK presidency and titled "Energy, Security, and Climate Change." It highlighted:

- Rising sea levels and their threat to low-lying island nations;
- Scarcity of natural resources like water and food and its effect on political stability;
- Increased risk of conflict over dwindling resources.¹⁶

No presidential statement or formal resolution followed this session due to differing views among member states. However, it marked the beginning of climate change's inclusion on the Council's agenda, with subsequent meetings continuing the dialogue.

Subsequent formal open discussions were held on July 20, 2011; July 11, 2018; January 25, 2019; and July 24, 2020, alongside several informal "Arria-formula" meetings exploring the controversial links between climate change and international security. Despite broader participation, consensus on a formal outcome—let alone a binding resolution—remained elusive.¹⁷

¹² "Why Should Jordan Adopt the Draft Resolution on Climate, Peace and Security at the United Nations?" <https://nukhbehpost.com/37740>

¹³ Joy Jacqueline Pereira, Sara Aziz Abdul Ghani Aziz et al., "Climate Change and Its Implications to National Security," *American Journal of Environmental Sciences*, 7(2), 2011, p. 152.

¹⁴ Thomas H. Karas, *Global Climate Change and International Security*, SANDIA REPORT, California, November 2003, pp. 21–24.

¹⁵ "Tracking the Security Council's Practice on Climate, Peace and Security," <https://www.un.org/climatesecuritymechanism/en/cpsdashboard>

¹⁶ UN Security Council. (2007). *Security Council Holds First-Ever Debate on Impact of Climate Change on Peace and Security, Hearing Over 50 Speakers*, [Meeting record: S/PV.5663], United Nations, <https://undocs.org/en/S/PV.5663>

¹⁷ Lucile Maertens, "Climatizing the UN Security Council," *International Politics* (2021), 58, pp. 641–642.

A formal session was held via videoconference on February 24, 2021, exploring the Council's role in managing climate-related security risks through peacebuilding and resilience strategies. In October 2022, the Council held its first formal session on "Climate and Security in Africa" under Gabon's presidency. This session critically examined the complex links between climate change and security in Africa and assessed the resources available to African states to address these challenges.¹⁸

Further meetings were held on June 13, 2023, and February 13, 2024, addressing climate change and food insecurity's impact on international peace and security. These sessions called for the integration of climate, peace, and security issues into the Council's work. The discussions highlighted the importance of:

- Enhancing analysis and understanding of climate-security risks;
- Building UN capacity to deliver accurate information and support member states;
- Promoting coordination with regional and sub-regional organizations and UN field teams;
- Producing actionable outcomes focusing on field analysis and UN system cooperation;
- Involving independent experts for insights and recommendations on addressing climate security.¹⁹

B. Integration of Climate Security in Security Council Resolutions

While the Security Council has not yet adopted a standalone resolution declaring climate change an explicit threat to international peace and security, it has increasingly incorporated climate security language into its country-specific resolutions. These include contexts like Somalia, Sudan, West Africa, the Sahel, and the Lake Chad Basin.

On March 31, 2017, the Council adopted Resolution 2349 on peace and security in Africa, focusing on the Lake Chad Basin. This marked a historic precedent as the first explicit recognition of climate change's destabilizing impact in a Security Council resolution.²⁰

Resolution 2567 (March 12, 2021) on South Sudan acknowledged climate change's negative effects on humanitarian conditions and stability.²¹ Similarly, Resolution 2592 (2021) on Somalia noted that climate change phenomena such as droughts, water scarcity, and floods were key drivers of humanitarian crises and recognized their destabilizing effects.²²

The Council has also emphasized the need for risk assessments and management strategies related to the destabilizing impacts of climate change and environmental factors, urging concerned states to adopt appropriate strategies.²³

In its peacekeeping mandates, the Council has incorporated climate security. For example, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) was the first UN field mission with a dedicated climate security capacity to assess related risks and report findings to the Council.²⁴

The Peacebuilding Commission can also provide written advice to the Council in its open discussions on climate-related risks and their implications for peace and security.²⁵

Part Two: Legal and Political Obstacles Facing the Security Council in Integrating Climate Security into Its Resolutions

¹⁸ IBID, p. 641.

¹⁹ Letter dated 3 October 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Gabon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, Security Council, 4 October 2022, S/2022/737

²⁰ IBID.

²¹ *Maintenance of International Peace and Security and Conflicts*, Security Council, 9547th meeting, <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k18/k184wrle66>

²² "Climate and Security," <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2020-07/climate-and-security>

²³ Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017), S/RES/2349(2017).

²⁴ Security Council Resolution 2567 (2021), S/RES/2567.

²⁵ Security Council Resolution 2592 (2021), S/RES/2592.

Despite the evolving and growing role of the United Nations Security Council and its increasing interest in climate change and international security—through its progressive incorporation of climate change threats into its agenda—this does not negate the presence of legal obstacles and political challenges confronting the Security Council in this domain.

Section One: The Extent of the Security Council's Jurisdiction to Intervene in Climate Security Issues

As both a political and legal challenge, the inclusion of climate change threats and their negative impacts on international peace and security faces political disputes, especially among the permanent members regarding whether climate security should be incorporated into the Council's meetings. These disagreements are supported by arguments from opposing states that claim climate security does not fall within the Security Council's mandate under the UN Charter.

A. Disagreements Among States Over the Security Council's Jurisdiction to Address Climate Security

One of the key challenges the Security Council faces in addressing climate change is political disagreement among its members, who often struggle even to hold formal open discussions. This is evidenced by the reliance on informal meetings.²⁶ Since 2007, member states have differed on whether the Security Council should be authorized to consider climate change as a matter related to international peace and security. Some countries supported this mandate, while others opposed it. These positions reflect a deep divide over the Council's jurisdiction and its role in addressing non-traditional security threats such as climate change. Each camp had its own justifications:

First: Countries Supporting the Council's Mandate Over Climate Issues

Several countries, since the Council's first climate-related meeting in 2007, have called for granting the Security Council authority to address climate change and link it to international security. They advocated for a resolution that would recognize climate change as a threat to international peace and security, enabling the Council, under its mandate from the Charter, to address such threats in accordance with Article 39 of the UN Charter.²⁷

These countries argue that the Council's effectiveness in resolving conflicts may be compromised if it ignores the environmental dimensions of conflict. They contend that addressing the impacts of climate change is essential to maintaining peace and security, and that the Council must formally recognize climate change as falling within its remit.²⁸

For example, the United Kingdom, United States, and France hold similar positions on climate security, framing climate change as both a traditional and non-traditional security threat, including human security. They argue that the socio-economic impacts of climate change pose security risks that could exacerbate violence and conflict. As such, they often describe climate change as a crisis requiring urgent action by the Security Council.²⁹

Similarly, Pacific island nations are strong advocates for permanently including climate change and environmental security on the Council's agenda, as these states face existential threats from rising sea levels, impacting their peoples' right to self-determination.

These pro-intervention states have been a driving force in pushing for climate security to be regularly included in the Security Council's meetings—most recently, the 2024 official session.

²⁶ Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017), S/RES/2349(2017).

²⁷ Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, *Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on Peace and Security*, <https://dppa.un.org/en/addressing-impact-of-climate-change-peace-and-security>

²⁸ "Climate and Security," <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2020-07/climate-and-security>

²⁹ Lucile Maertens, "Climatizing the UN Security Council," *International Politics* (2021), 58, p. 642.

Second: Countries Opposed to the Council's Mandate Over Climate Issues

Opposition to the Council's involvement in climate change and international security matters has persisted among both Council and non-Council states. From the first official Council meeting in 2007, several countries rejected the inclusion of climate change and energy issues under the Council's purview, arguing that doing so would infringe upon the mandates of other principal UN organs and violate the UN Charter.³⁰

These states believe the best way to address climate change is through the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" and argue that the Security Council is not the appropriate body to deal with climate issues.³¹

Among the most prominent opposing states within the Council are China and Russia, both permanent members. While they acknowledged in a 2011 Council statement the link between climate and security, they questioned the extent of climate change's impact on security and whether such impacts fall under the Council's jurisdiction.³²

China, for example, denies a direct link between climate change and security, asserting instead a connection between development risks and security. It frames climate change as a sustainable development issue, which it views as the main solution to conflicts and root causes.³³

Russia argues that including climate change in the Council's mandate could politicize the issue and give Western states additional influence over global affairs. It insists that climate change should be addressed through specialized UN bodies like the UNFCCC, not the Security Council.³⁴

The United States, on the other hand, has had an inconsistent stance depending on the administration in power. During the 2007 and 2011 Council meetings, it supported the Council's mandate on climate issues. However, under the Trump administration (2017–2021), the U.S. withdrew from the Paris Agreement and opposed recognizing climate change as a security issue within the Council. It resisted efforts to include climate security language in Council outcomes on Iraq, Haiti, and other issues.³⁵

Upon President Biden's assumption of office in 2021, the U.S. rejoined the Paris Agreement and strongly supported framing climate change as a security threat. It backed the 2021 Council draft resolution integrating climate change into the Security Council's mandate. But with President Trump's return to power on January 20, 2025, he signed an executive order withdrawing the U.S. again from the Paris Agreement and other climate commitments, prioritizing an "America First" approach in environmental treaties.³⁶

African countries also opposed the Council's involvement in climate and security matters during its first 2007 meeting, framing these issues as development-related rather than security-related.³⁷

As a result of these disagreements, the 2021 draft resolution (sponsored by Ireland and Nigeria) to integrate climate and security into the Council's mandate failed due to Russia's veto. India voted against

³⁰ United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.

³¹ United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.

³² Cesare M. Scartozzi, "Climate Change in the UN Security Council: An Analysis of Discourses and Organizational Trends," *International Studies Perspectives*, 23(3):290–312, June 2022, p. 301.

³³ United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.

³⁴ United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.

³⁵ Cesare M. Scartozzi, "Climate Change in the UN Security Council: An Analysis of Discourses and Organizational Trends," *International Studies Perspectives*, June 2022, p. 303.

³⁶ United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.

³⁷ "Press Statement on the Draft UN Security Council Resolution on Climate and Security," https://russiaun.ru/en/news/statement_131221

the draft, and China abstained. However, the draft had broad support, with 113 UN member states co-sponsoring it, emphasizing that climate change is a security issue requiring Council action.³⁸

B. The Legal Foundation Problem of the Security Council's Intervention in Climate Security

The question of whether the Security Council has jurisdiction to intervene in climate security—i.e., whether climate change issues linked to peace and security fall under its legal mandate—is a central legal issue. This raises questions about the legitimacy of such intervention under the UN Charter and the extent of the powers granted to the Council by its provisions. It also invites debate on whether the concept of “international peace and security” can be interpreted broadly to justify Council action on climate change.

This debate can be summarized in the following points:³⁹

- Article 24, paragraph 1 of the Charter could serve as a legal basis for granting the Council authority to discuss climate security risks, as it allows the Council discretion in determining its jurisdiction. However, the lack of a clear definition of “peace and security” creates ambiguity about what issues fall within its scope.
- Article 39 of the Charter may also provide a legal foundation for Security Council action on climate change, as it grants the Council discretionary power to determine whether a situation constitutes a threat to peace and security.
- The Council could adopt a broad interpretation of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security to include climate change.
- The Council's climate change efforts are often framed as part of its conflict prevention and mitigation mandate, under Article 34 of the Charter. The terms “situation” and “dispute” are broad enough to encompass a range of phenomena, including climate change.
- Some opposing states argue that such Council involvement infringes on the authority of other specialized UN bodies. However, this argument is countered by the fact that the Charter envisages inter-agency cooperation, rather than rigid separation of responsibilities.
- Opponents also claim climate change is a development issue outside the Council's scope. This is rebutted by pointing out that both the Security Council and General Assembly have repeatedly acknowledged the interlinkages between security, development, peace, and human rights.

Section Two: The Security Council's Use of Informal Mechanisms and Meetings to Address Climate Security and Circumvent Obstacles

Given the intensifying impact of climate change on international peace and security—and the Council's failure to pass a resolution explicitly recognizing this threat—some non-permanent member states have explored alternative approaches to keep climate security on the Council's agenda. These include informal meetings, the establishment of informal expert groups, and collaboration with the UN's Climate Security Mechanism.

A. Security Council Cooperation with the UN Climate Security Mechanism

Established in 2018, the Climate Security Mechanism is a joint initiative between the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the UN Environment Programme, and the Department of Peace Operations. Its aim is to systematically and coherently enable the UN and its partners to understand and analyze the links between climate change, peace, and security.⁴⁰

³⁸ “Climate and Security,” <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2020-07/climate-and-security>

³⁹ “Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements,” https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/putting-america-first-in-international-environmental-agreements/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁴⁰ United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.

This mechanism is managed by a specialized team that leads global initiatives involving advocacy, co-produced knowledge, and policy development. It also coordinates efforts in climate-vulnerable areas by deploying experts and offering specialized training programs.⁴¹

Its work is part of broader consultations within the UN system, linking field data and projects to Council deliberations. The mechanism supports UN peacekeeping missions and helps the Security Council analyze climate risks and promote peacebuilding.⁴²

B. The Use of Informal Meetings and Expert Groups to Discuss Climate Security Risks

First: Informal "Arria-Formula" Meetings

In addition to its formal meetings, Council members hold Arria-formula meetings, which help keep climate change on the Council's agenda and ensure ongoing dialogue. For instance, Spain and Malaysia emphasized this in their concept note for the Arria-formula meeting on January 30, 2015, which focused on climate change as a threat multiplier to global security.⁴³

These informal meetings have become increasingly important⁴⁴ because:

- The Council often lacks real-time information and reporting, especially in conflict zones.
- External actors, such as non-Council states and NGOs, cannot always participate in formal meetings.
- Arria meetings serve as a workaround when members cannot agree to hold formal sessions or when issues have not been formally added to the agenda or recognized as threats to peace and security.⁴⁵

Arria meetings are initiated by one or more Council members and are held outside the Council chamber. They are more flexible than formal meetings.

Climate security has been the subject of ten Arria-formula meetings as of 2024.⁴⁶

Second: Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security for Council Members

Proposed by Germany during the Council's virtual open debate on July 24, 2020, this group was supported by 13 countries including France and the UK. In a joint statement and a letter dated September 27, 2020 to the UN Secretary-General, they argued that the Council would benefit from a more systematic and consistent focus on climate security risks, helping integrate climate and security into the Council's daily work.⁴⁷

China and Russia emphasized that the group is not an official Council subsidiary body, noting its informal status and lack of unanimous support. The group members themselves did not claim formal Council affiliation. Its name was thus changed to the Informal Expert Group of Security Council Members on Climate and Security to clarify its unofficial nature.⁴⁸

⁴¹ "Due to a Russian Veto, the Security Council Fails to Adopt a Resolution on Climate and Security," <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2021/12/1089682>

⁴² *The UN Security Council and Climate Change, Security Council Report Research*, June 2021, No. 2, 21 June 2021.

⁴³ Colin Keating, *Ensuring Global Security After COVID-19: Can the UN System Do Better When Confronted by the Next Global Emergency?*, AGDA INSIGHT RESEARCH & ANALYSIS, August 2021.

⁴⁴ "Climate Security Mechanism," <https://www.unep.org/topics/disasters-and-conflicts/environment-security/climate-security-mechanism-csm>

⁴⁵ "Climate Security Mechanism: Bridging Climate Action, Peace and Security," <https://www.un.org/climateaction/mechanism/en/about/climate-security-mechanism>

⁴⁶ Emergey Brusset, *Evaluation of the Climate Security Mechanism*, https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-11/evaluation_of_csm_phase_ii_final_report_2022.pdf

⁴⁷ Lucile Maertens, "Climatizing the UN Security Council," *International Politics* (2021), 58, p. 648.

⁴⁸ This innovative form of informal meeting was proposed by the Ambassador of Venezuela to the Security Council in 1992.

Third: Group of Friends on Climate and Security

Founded on August 1, 2018, by Germany and Nauru, this group has grown to include over 70 member states. It is a coalition focused on the negative security impacts of climate change, aiming to raise public awareness, enrich policy debates, and enhance UN system responses ⁴⁹ to climate-related security challenges.

The group regularly addresses the Security Council through joint statements, ⁵⁰ meets annually, and holds expert-level as well as high-level meetings among permanent members.

Conclusion:

Climate security represents one of the most pressing contemporary challenges, directly intersecting with the core mandate of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in maintaining international peace and security. Despite the Council's evolving role in responding to the repercussions of climate change and linking them to threats to international peace and security, significant obstacles persist. These include political disagreements—especially among its members—regarding the Council's jurisdiction to discuss and include the issue of climate security on its agenda and in its relevant resolutions. Furthermore, the UNSC must overcome a narrow interpretation of what constitutes threats to peace and security. Non-traditional threats, such as climate change, have become inevitable, necessitating the Council's intervention. Addressing this challenge requires a qualitative shift in the Council's understanding of its role. Such a shift aligns with the broader demand for its reform, particularly in breaking away from the dominance of the five permanent members and adopting a clear and explicit resolution to respond to climate change and its adverse impacts on global peace and security—thereby fostering a unified political will among its members.

References :

1. Mohamed Badri Eid, *Climate Security... Gulf Context and Strategies*, Strategic Report, Issue 36, Center for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, December 2022, p. 15.
2. The Brundtland Report linked environmental risks to security threats. See: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Report) and International Economic Cooperation, 42nd Session – August 4, 1987, A/42/427.
3. Nick Buxton, *A Primer on Climate Security: The Danger of Militarising Climate Crisis*, Transnational Institute, Amsterdam, October 2001, p. 1.
4. Defined as a set of impacts resulting from irrational human activities that deplete the climate, which are the main cause of climate change. These changes are not transient events, but occur over specific and recurring periods with serious repercussions on ecosystems, social and economic systems, and human health and well-being.
5. David A. King, *Climate Change Science: Adapt, Mitigate, or Ignore*, Policy Forum Environment, <https://uh.edu/ethicsinscience/Media/ClimateChangePolicy.pdf>.
6. *Beckett to Warn UN on Climate Change*, The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2006/sep/22/greenpolitics.uk>.
7. *What Is Climate Security?*, UNDP, <https://mptf.undp.org/news/what-climate-security-and-why-it-important>.

⁴⁹ UN Security Council Working Methods – Arria-Formula Meetings, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/arria-formula-meetings.php>

⁵⁰ “Climate Security Mechanism at the United Nations and Group of Friends on Climate and Security Announce New Pledges and Partnerships at COP29,” <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/page/climate-security-mechanism-united-nations-and-group-friends-climate-and-security>

8. *The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund: Climate Security and Peacebuilding*, July 2020.
9. Dorota Michalak and Paulina Szyja, *Determinants of Climate Security – An Attempt at Indicator Analysis, Economics and Environment*, 1(84), 2023, p. 13.
10. Maria Julia Trombetta, *Environmental Security and Climate Change: Analysing the Discourse, Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 4, December 2008, p. 595.
11. Georg Frerks, Rinze Geertsma, Jeroen Klomp, Tom Middendorp, *Climate Security and the Military: Concepts, Strategies and Partnerships*, 2024.
12. *Why Should Jordan Adopt the Draft Resolution on Climate, Peace and Security at the United Nations?*, <https://nukhbehpost.com/37740>.
13. Joy Jacqueline Pereira, Sara Aziz Abdul Ghani Aziz, et al., *Climate Change and Its Implications to National Security, American Journal of Environmental Sciences*, 7(2), 2011, p. 152.
14. Thomas H. Karas, *Global Climate Change and International Security, SANDIA Report*, California, November 2003, pp. 21–24.
15. *Tracking the Security Council's Practice on Climate, Peace and Security*, <https://www.un.org/climatesecuritymechanism/en/cpsdashboard>.
16. UN Security Council. (2007). *Security Council Holds First-Ever Debate on Impact of Climate Change on Peace, Security, Hearing Over 50 Speakers*. [Meeting record: S/PV.5663], United Nations, <https://undocs.org/en/S/PV.5663>.
17. Lucile Maertens, *Climatizing the UN Security Council, International Politics*, 2021, 58, pp. 641–642.
18. Ibid., p. 641.
19. *Letter dated 3 October 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Gabon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, Security Council*, 4 October 2022, S/2022/737.
20. Ibid.
21. *Maintenance of International Peace and Security and Conflicts*, UN Security Council, 9547th Meeting, <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k18/k184wrle66>.
22. *Climate and Security*, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2020-07/climate-and-security>.
23. UN Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017), S/RES/2349 (2017).
24. UN Security Council Resolution 2567 (2021), S/RES/2567.
25. UN Security Council Resolution 2592 (2021), S/RES/2592.
26. UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, *Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on Peace and Security*, <https://dppa.un.org/en/addressing-impact-of-climate-change-peace-and-security>.
27. Lucile Maertens, *Climatizing the UN Security Council, International Politics*, 2021, 58, p. 642.
28. United Nations Security Council [UNSC], 2007.
29. Cesare M. Scartozzi, *Climate Change in the UN Security Council: An Analysis of Discourses and Organizational Trends, International Studies Perspectives*, 23(3), June 2022, pp. 290–312, esp. p. 301.
30. Ibid., p. 303.
31. *Press Statement on the Draft UN Security Council Resolution on Climate and Security*, https://russiaun.ru/en/news/statement_131221.

32. *Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/putting-america-first-in-international-environmental-agreements>.
33. *Due to a Russian Veto, the Security Council Fails to Adopt a Resolution on Climate and Security*, <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2021/12/1089682>.
34. *The UN Security Council and Climate Change*, Security Council Report Research, No. 2, 21 June 2021.
35. Colin Keating, *Ensuring Global Security after COVID-19: Can the UN System Do Better When Confronted by the Next Global Emergency*, AGDA Insight Research & Analysis, August 2021.
36. *Climate Security Mechanism*, UNEP, <https://www.unep.org/topics/disasters-and-conflicts/environment-security/climate-security-mechanism-csm>.
37. *Climate Security Mechanism: Bridging Climate Action, Peace and Security*, <https://www.un.org/climatesecuritymechanism/en/about/climate-security-mechanism>.
38. Emergey Brusset, *Evaluation of the Climate Security Mechanism*, https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/202211/evaluation_of_csm_phase_ii_final_report_2022.pdf.
39. Lucile Maertens, *Climatizing the UN Security Council*, *International Politics*, 2021, 58, p. 648.
40. This innovative form of informal meeting was proposed by the Ambassador of Venezuela to the Security Council in 1992. See: *UN Security Council Working Methods – Arria Formula Meetings*, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-security-council-working-methods/arria-formula-meetings.php>.
41. *Tracking the Security Council's Practice on Climate, Peace and Security*, <https://www.un.org/climatesecuritymechanism/en/cpsdashboard>.
42. *The UN Security Council and Climate Change*, Security Council Report Research, No. 2, 21 June 2021, p. 10.
43. *Climate Security Mechanism at the United Nations and Group of Friends on Climate and Security Announce New Pledges and Partnerships at COP29*, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/page/climate-security-mechanism-united-nations-and-group-friends-climate-and-security>.