

UNFCCC COP25 – GCCA+ Climate Security Event

Climate and Security - Emerging trends and adaptation strategies

European Pavilion, Brussels Room

Madrid, Wednesday 11 December 2019

Co-Hosts: European Union External Action, The Institute for Environmental Security

Name(s) of Notetakers: Jane Wilkinson

Facilitation: Mr Matt Luna, Institute for Environmental Security

Agenda:

1. **Mr Stefano Signore**, Head of Unit Sustainable Energy, Climate Change DEVCO
2. **“Climate and Security: An integral part of the EU's external relations”**
Ms. Signe Vikaer Leth Olsen, Policy Officer, EU Climate Diplomacy
2. **“Climate change, Peace-building and Sustaining Peace”**
Dr. Florian Krampe, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
3. **“Climate Change and Security in South Asia: Cooperation for Peace”**
Lieutenant General Tariq Waseem Ghazi (Ret), Former Defence Secretary, Government of Pakistan / Member, Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change (GMACCC)
4. **“SIDS: Climate-Security Risks and Opportunities”**
Lieutenant Commander Oliver-Leighton Barrett, U.S. Navy (Ret), Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Climate and Security

1. Summary of **KEY ISSUES** presented and discussed:

- a) Mr Luna opened by noting that adaptation and mitigation conversations and negotiations are starting to resonate with existing discussions around climate security, observing that finally at Katowice COP 24, the two conversations were beginning to converge, and he hoped for further development of the issues at COP 25 Madrid. He invited Mr Signore representing DEVCO, to make some opening remarks.
- b) Mr Signore noted that conflict often coexists with existing fragility and vulnerability, highlighting a €5 m contribution to support FLEXUS – climate security in a fragile context. He highlighted several of the programs already support by the GCCA+ are pertinent, including the Climate Security Dialogue that took place in the Pacific region in mid-2019. Mr Signore noted that climate security is essential to sustainable development, elaborating five recommendations:
 - Elevate the Climate Security nexus to a high political level (including at the COP)
 - Improving reporting and early warning of climate events
 - Recognize preventions and state building are inexorably linked
 - Promote the role of women in society

- Climate action needs to be a source of resilience on the ground.
- c) Mr Luna noted that these recommendations were made by the Institute for Environmental Security and welcomed their citation in this context. He introduced Ms Olsen who observed climate change is a threat multiplier. She highlighted agriculture and food security in Africa, 20% increase in rain in South East Asia, and a 76 cm sea-level rise each posed threats to already vulnerable populations. Getting food onto the table is an essential element of reducing climate security threats. She noted the EU and its Member States have been part of promoting the establishment of a climate security mechanism in the UN System. Climate change is already a factor in the EU Conflict Early Warning System that assesses risk of armed conflict and responds with early action by the EU. In the longer term as climate impacts accelerate, land disappearances, the geopolitics of fisheries and the competition over raw materials will all need to be taken into consideration when foreseeing and preventing conflict.
- d) Dr Krampe considered the impact of climate change on peace building mandates. He noted that in Somalia for example, every single example of peace building was affected by climate change – from urban populations, to land conflict, to water scarcity and gender. He asserted that increasingly in vulnerable and fragile conflicts, climate action, especially in relation to adaptation, overlapped completely with peace building activities.
- e) Lieutenant General Ghazi (Ret) noted that when asked about the threats posed by climate change, in fact 71% of the global population considers climate change to be a security threat – higher even than an environmental one. He focused on the South Asia region which is home to 21% of the world's population, highlighting factors that mean climate change threatens to intensify existing security threats including militarisation of glaciers, disputed borders, water insecurity, unprecedented migration, and food insecurity. He highlighted that climate planning has to contain an element of military cooperation across the region, and that despite increased disasters including climate related disasters, there are fewer human losses, meaning that if cooperation is done well, it is possible to contain escalating threats.
- f) Lieutenant Commander Barrett (Ret) noted that in 2016, the National Intelligence Council of the United States recognized climate change as a national security threat. He enumerated multiple examples of where identified threats were exacerbated by climate change including reduced economic opportunities including in fisheries and tourism sectors, increased illicit activity to overcome frustrated livelihoods, including increased risks of drug and human trafficking, where climate-contracted state financial resources could make it difficult to combat increased criminal activity.

2. MAIN TAKE-OUTS/FINDINGS identified in the discussion (including those related to progress, challenges and opportunities):

Mr Luna concluded by making these final observations and recommendations:

- a) War has a big carbon footprint, so climate adaptation planning should include peace building and cooperation measures wherever possible



- b) Military and humanitarian organisations will increasingly need forward looking strategies to deal with these impacts.
- c) Adaptation should increasingly be explicitly linked to conflict prevention and supporting stability of fragile states.
- d) Climate security mechanisms should be mainstreamed, and early warning systems need to be regularly updated to account for the impacts of a changing climate
- e) Climate change impacts should be included in national and regional planning for military units
- f) Building high level political buy-in to the climate security nexus is essential.