

BERLIN CLIMATE AND SECURITY CONFERENCE

Conference summary

4 June 2019 | Federal Foreign Office | Berlin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the links between the climate crisis and risks to global peace and prosperity become ever more evident, foreign policy actors are increasingly under pressure to step up their efforts to address climate-related risks. To increase the momentum for addressing climate-related drivers of conflict, the **German Federal Foreign Office** in partnership with **adelphi** and the **Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)** hosted the **Berlin Climate and Security Conference (BCSC)** at the German Federal Foreign Office on 4 June 2019.

The Conference brought together 250 leading figures from governments, international organisations, the private sector, civil society, and the scientific community to discuss the growing risks that climate change presents for peace and security. It highlighted that the climate crisis is not just an environmental and development issue, but poses a core risk to global peace and prosperity. It also stressed the need for quick and decisive action to prevent and minimise climate-related conflict and instability. Participants underlined the necessity of global cooperation and solidarity with the most affected countries. Moreover, they emphasized the need for ambitious mitigation policies, but also for building a preventative framework for action at the global level to help foreign policy actors address climate-related security risks.

Across a range of panel discussions that analysed challenges and entry points as regards the impacts of climate change on displacement, socio-economic conflicts and state fragility, a strong and clear consensus emerged among speakers in support of the three tenets of the “Berlin Call to Action” that was launched at the conference, namely for:

- 1) A better understanding of the conflict risks that climate change implies, to be underpinned by a Global Risk and Foresight Assessment, regional analyses, and early warning systems;
- 2) The need to strengthen capacity at the UN on the climate-security nexus, both at headquarters and in the field;
- 3) Ensuring political coherence in terms of streamlining climate, sustainable development, security and peacebuilding across projects and programmes.

Panellists agreed on the urgency of more and better information and for concrete approaches for how the international community can counter these security risks, and there was widespread acceptance that only evidence-based policy could produce sustainable solutions.

There was also strong agreement about the central role of the UN on climate change and security risks, with many speakers emphasizing the importance of the legitimacy offered by the UN for moving things forward. Many also noted that more action was required for mainstreaming climate-security risks into UN activities, and that passing resolutions to this end for all those regions and countries where these links were already visible – as already happened e.g. for Somalia, the Lake Chad Basin, and the Sahel – was an important way forward. At the same time, there was recognition that the UN Security Council cannot and should not be a substitute for the established instruments of climate policy, but needed to focus on the security implications of climate change.

In summary, the conference underscored the fact that an ambitious climate policy continues to be the best way to limit climate risks. All countries need to step up their efforts in the area of climate protection, also in the interests of global security and stability. However, as long as the international community's climate goals are insufficient to limit global warming to a safe level, there is also a clear and urgent need to address the foreign and security policy impacts of climate change. The three concrete steps that the Berlin Call to Action provides can help to consolidate efforts to this end and serve as a springboard for moving forward.

I. IMPROVING THE CLIMATE FOR PEACE

The catastrophic impacts of climate change are being felt around the world with increasing intensity and severity. A destabilised Earth system implies unacceptable risks for peace and security as these impacts can overburden existing capacity to cope with climate challenges, potentially spurring social upheaval, making peace and stability harder to achieve and sustain, and even contributing to new violent conflicts. Ambitious mitigation is critical for limiting future risks, and foreign policy needs to support such ambition to safeguard peace and stability.

In recognition of this, Germany has made climate and security a key issue for its two-year UN Security Council membership, with the aim of contributing to the global prevention and stabilisation agendas.

To help generate the necessary political momentum and develop concrete, scientifically substantiated recommendations for action, the German Federal Foreign Office, together with the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and adelphi, organised the BCSC. The conference took place in Berlin on 4 June 2019. It brought together some 250 participants, including numerous foreign ministers and many high-ranking officials from around the world as well as numerous experts from international organisations, academia and civil society.



The Berlin Climate and Security Conference. | © Jan Rottler/adelphi

In so doing, the BCSC served to:

- Profile the **foreign policy relevance** of climate policy and the necessity of forming a preventative framework for action at the global level.
- Discuss the objectives and opportunities of **UNSC action** on climate and security.
- Identify concrete **preventative mechanisms** that can help foreign policy actors to address risks that threaten national and international stability, such as livelihood losses at huge scale, impending food shortages, and territorial losses due to sea-level rise or cross-border river tensions, thus avoiding crises and violent conflicts.
- Highlight the need for **quick and decisive action**.
- Provide a venue for strengthening the collective knowledge base and for developing sustainable policy solutions.

II. MAKING THE CASE FOR ACTION

The opening keynotes all highlighted the importance of preventative action to address the risks that climate change impacts could pose to international peace and security, and called on the international community to act more decisively in the face of these mounting threats.

Keynote addresses:

- **Heiko Maas**, German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
- **John Kerry**, Former US Secretary of State
- **Baron Divavesi Waqa**, President of Nauru
- **Johan Rockström**, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)
- **Ottmar Edenhofer**, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs **Heiko Maas** opened the BCSC by making a strong case for the need to activate “*forward-looking policies that not only respond when it is too late, but which actively seek responses. And I mean now.*”

Declaring ambitious climate policy “*the new imperative of our foreign policy*”, he emphasized that Germany had made the climate-security nexus a major focus of its two-year membership of the UNSC in 2019 and 2020. To this end, he outlined the three tenets of the Berlin Call for Action:

**“CLIMATE POLICY IS THE
NEW IMPERATIVE OF OUR
FOREIGN POLICY”**

- 1) A better understanding of the conflict risks that climate change implies, to be underpinned by a Global Risk and Foresight Assessment, regional analyses, and early warning systems;
- 2) The need to strengthen capacity at the UN on the climate-security nexus, both at headquarters and in the field;
- 3) Ensuring political coherence in terms of streamlining climate, sustainable development, security and peacebuilding across projects and programmes.

Pointing out concrete activities through which the German Foreign Office was supporting each element, he called on conference participants to support the Berlin Call for Action and invited the audience to a foreign ministers’ meeting to be held in the context of the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019 to discuss how to further flesh out this agenda.



Heiko Maas giving his keynote address at the BCSC.
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Improving the Climate for Peace – The Berlin Call for Action

Building upon the efforts of Sweden and other UN Member States to enable stronger UN action, the conference launched the “Berlin Call for Action”, which sets out three priority areas for tackling the risks posed by climate change to peace and security:

1. **Risk informed planning or decision-making**, both in terms of prioritising support to vulnerable and fragile regions in making progress on SDG implementation and in terms of equipping the UN system, multilateral institutions, states and other relevant actors to deal with the looming challenges of food insecurity, displacement and disasters. This should include a Global Risk and Foresight Assessment that evaluates the entire cascade of foreign policy risks emanating from potentially catastrophic climate change and other macro-stresses on the environment, as well as response opportunities and entry points. The resulting insights should inform policy-making across security policy, trade, investments, development cooperation and beyond.
2. **Enhanced capacity for action**, with a commitment to sustaining and strengthening the newly created Climate Security Mechanism of the UN and to building early warning, risk analysis and management capacity across countries and regional organizations. Those states and regions most affected by climate-fragility risks should receive particular support. Moreover, greater investment into adaptation and enhanced conflict sensitivity in fragile contexts is needed.
3. **Improving operational responses** by linking climate-change-related security risks to the entire gamut of peacebuilding, including early warning, mediation and peace support operations. Because the UNSC has a pre-eminent role with respect to safeguarding international peace and security, it has a key role to play in acknowledging and addressing the climate-change-related security risks that increasingly undermine the global prevention and stabilization agendas.

Former US Secretary of State **John Kerry** presented a stark picture of the world today, where “*not one country is getting the job done on climate change*” and “*everything is moving faster – except government*”. He reminded the audience that China, the US and the EU alone accounted for more than 50 percent of global

**“IT’S TIME TO LIFT
UP AND RECONNECT
WITH THE VALUES
OF THE PARIS
AGREEMENT.”**

emissions, and that 20 countries (the world’s top emitters) could actually solve the problem. The world needed “*a global coalition of parties to fight climate change*”, a

global coalition that also proved that addressing climate change could create the jobs of the future. With a focus on tangible solutions, he emphasised the role that the energy

market – already a multi-trillion-dollar market – could play in transitioning to alternative energy while contributing to economic growth at the same time.



John Kerry giving his opening speech at the BCSC.
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Baron Divavesi Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru.
© Jan Rottler/adelphi

President of the Republic of Nauru **Baron Divavesi Waqa** reminded the audience that climate change represented an “*existential threat*” for small island developing countries like Nauru, which faced sea level rise, droughts and record-breaking cyclones. He observed that, although nearly every country today recognised the implications of climate change for international peace and stability, greenhouse gas emissions were still rising. President Waqa emphasised that “*there will be no return to a ‘normal’ climate in our lifetimes*” and that “*past experience is a poor guide to dealing with future impacts.*”

**“CLIMATE CHANGE
IS AN EXISTENTIAL
THREAT”**

Recalling the impact of the 2007-08 food crisis on Nauru, when prices rose to four times the global average, he noted that “*some of the greatest threats posed by climate change may not be the actual biophysical impacts, but rather the deficiencies in our response to them.*”

He therefore called for UN support to the most affected countries, highlighting five areas in particular:

- 1) Integrated country and regional risk assessments;
- 2) Preventive diplomacy in situations where climate change may destabilize the situation;
- 3) Facilitation of cross-border and regional cooperation to address shared climate change vulnerabilities;
- 4) Monitoring of potential climate-security tipping points;
- 5) Targeted support in post-conflict situations where climate change creates significant vulnerabilities.

In this context, President Waqa renewed the call by Pacific leaders for the appointment of a Special Representative on Climate Security. In conclusion, he urged the UN to work towards the fundamental reforms that were necessary for a more environmentally sustainable and more socially just world – a task that had now become a “*planetary imperative*”.

The directors of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), **Johan Rockström and Ottmar Edenhofer**, highlighted the likely catastrophic risks the world would be facing at four degrees Celsius of warming, if emissions continued unabated. Even at warming levels of around two degrees, entire ecosystems were at risk of disappearing, and there was a risk not only of more extreme events, but also of activating planetary tipping points. Yet increasingly severe climate impacts are already visible today.



PIK Directors Johan Rockström and Ottmar Edenhofer at the BCSC.
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They highlighted that these bio-physical impacts had socio-economic and political implications and threatened stability and

democracy. In particular, they outlined three ways in which climate change could impact security dynamics: social unrest amplified by volatility in food prices; displacement of millions of people by extreme weather events; and instability, inequality and poverty exacerbated by climate change.

**“WE NEED A
TRANSFORMATION
PATHWAY FOR CLIMATE
STABILISATION”**

To prevent climate risks from negatively impacting on stability and security, the two scientists urged the international community to rapidly reduce emissions. A transformational pathway for climate stabilisation would require measures such as decarbonising the power system and electrifying the transport sector – enabled by carbon pricing – while at the same ensuring universal access to basic infrastructure, such as water and sanitation. They also raised the challenge of transforming agriculture and land-use from a source to a sink of emissions. In concluding, they made the case for an early warning system to deal with societal risks in order to be able to manage those impacts that could not be avoided anymore.

III. IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS

Panel discussion: “Political responses to the threats climate change poses for international peace”

Facilitator: **Maja Göpel**, Secretary General, German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU)

Panellists:

- **Baron Divavesi Waqa**, President of Nauru
- **Heiko Maas**, German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
- **Didier Reynders**, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of Belgium
- **Shirley Botchwey**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana
- **John Kerry**, Former US Secretary of State
- **Johan Rockström**, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

This panel looked at overarching political responses, as well as climate change’s impacts on displacement, socio-economic conflicts and state fragility. The discussion emphasized the need for closer international cooperation and greater focus on preventative action to increase resilience to current and future climate change impacts.

Panellists emphasized that multilateralism was the only viable approach for effective action on climate change, and that climate change would contribute to more instability and conflict. In that context, they stressed the critical role the UNSC had to play in addressing the linkages between climate and security and in fostering solutions that were appropriate to specific contexts and cases. The panellists also highlighted global initiatives such as ‘Mission Innovation’ and funding mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund as fundamental to setting the stage for breakthrough market and technological solutions towards a low carbon economy.

**“STRENGTHEN
MULTILATERALISM AND
PREVENTATIVE ACTION”**

Secondly, panellists stressed the importance of preventative action backed by solid evidence and data. They observed that science was already entering the political debate, engaging and adding momentum to climate action. However, more needed to be done, especially in strengthening the information base on the climate-security nexus at UN level. Moreover, they called for UNSC work to be reoriented towards taking stronger action on preventing crises and conflicts, rather than being primarily reactive.



Panel discussion on political responses to the threats climate change poses for international peace. | © Jan Rottler/adelphi

Finally, panellists stressed the need to include those worst affected by climate change in the debate on the climate-security nexus. They encouraged world leaders to develop a shared and ambitious vision by including women, children and other marginalised groups in the conversation, pointing to the critical role youth had to play in informing political action as they would be the ones most strongly affected by rapid and irreversible climatic changes.

Panel discussion: “Climate change and displacement”

Facilitator: **Maja Göpel**, Secretary General, German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU)

Keynote: **Abdulla Shahid**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives

Respondents:

- **Carmelo Abela**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta
- **Maria Ángekes Miaga Bibang**, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Equatorial Guinea
- **Md. Shahriar Alam**, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh
- **Laura Tuck**, World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development

This roundtable revolved around the risks that climate change poses in terms of displacement and migratory pressures, and what the international community could and should do to prevent and prepare for increased displacement due to the impacts of climate change.

The discussion began with a stark reminder that, for some states, climate-induced displacement and migration represent an existential threat. In the Maldives, for example, sea level rise of 2 metres could submerge the entire country; many people had already lost property and had to rebuild their lives somewhere else due to the climate crisis. Bangladesh has been estimated to be home to 6 million climate migrants – a figure that could rise to 15 million by 2050. Yet panellists also pointed to the difficulties of determining how much migration was “climate-induced”, with global estimates of the number of climate migrants by 2050 ranging from 25 million and 1 billion people. Panellists also pointed to the gap in international law as the Geneva Refugee Convention does not cover displacement linked to environmental and climate change.

**“ADDRESS CLIMATE-INDUCED
DISPLACEMENT THROUGH
COOPERATION AT MULTIPLE**

In terms of solutions, panellists emphasised the importance of investing in climate change adaptation. The World Bank, for example, had committed to spending US\$50 billion on resilient infrastructure and sustainable livelihoods. Panellists also highlighted the need for putting in place early warning systems to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, although this would hardly help some highly vulnerable countries such as the Maldives.

The discussion also emphasized the need to plan and prepare for migration, and that prevention was far cheaper than responding. Whereas people needed help to adapt before migration, it was also necessary to ensure mobility in climate-vulnerable regions so that people could move to safer places, i.e. support during migration.

But support was also necessary after migration, e.g. to relieve pressures on basic infrastructure and services such as water, sanitation and electricity for both the displaced and host communities.

The roundtable concluded by noting that, as climate change and migration were so clearly interconnected, it was important that they were dealt with together. Foreign policy actors had a key role to play in building and supporting bilateral, regional and international frameworks that would help countries



Maria Ángekes Miaga Bibang, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Equatorial Guinea speaking during the panel discussion on climate change and displacement. | © Jan Rottler/adelphi

“THE DEBATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION SHOULD BE MUCH MORE INCLUSIVE”

strengthen early warning systems, disaster management and adaptation solutions, and enable cooperation to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration in response to climate fragility risks. They stressed that the UN should be at the forefront of these efforts and that the debate on climate change and migration should be much more inclusive and bring in all those affected, particularly the youth. Finally, they highlighted the need for international solidarity and commitment to the 2030, Paris

and Sendai agendas, with one participant stressing he would “refuse to give up hope on humanity”.

Panel discussion: “Climate change and socio-economic conflicts”

Facilitator: **Alexander Carius**, Managing Director of adelphi

Keynote: **Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana

Respondents:

- **Faustina K. Rehuher-Marugg**, Minister of State of Palau
- **Mark Field**, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, UK
- **Amer Ahmed**, CEO of Allianz Re
- **Elliott Harris**, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist

This roundtable focused on the socio-economic risks that climate change could pose to peace and stability, and considered the effects on livelihoods, the trade-offs and synergies between food, water and energy security within and between countries, and how to reduce and manage such risks.

In her keynote speech, Minister Botchwey emphasized that climate change was slowly eroding the way in which economic systems and societal structures functioned, driving them towards fragility. Other panellists noted that climate change was also exacerbating the losses caused by catastrophic events, citing the 2011 floods in Thailand were cited as an example that had had a significant impact on global electronics supply chains.

More broadly, panellists emphasised that the damages and losses suffered due to climate change undermined prospects for growth, livelihoods and the achievement of the SDGs, with those most affected also the least able to cope with climate-fragility risks.

Panellists proposed different approaches to address climate-related socio-economic challenges, pointing for example to how the Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security (3S) was working to address the underlying causes of instability and prevent the emerging threats linked to the depletion and mismanagement of natural resources in Africa.

There was also general agreement among panellists that the UN could and should do more.



Amer Ahmed, CEO of Allianz Re, speaking on the socio-economic risks related to climate change. | © Jan Rottler/adelphi

“LONG-TERM THINKING AND PLANNING TO ADDRESS CLIMATE-RELATED SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES”

Some panellists questioned the capacity of the UNSC to address the real needs of vulnerable countries, arguing that a reform of the UNSC would be needed so that more voices – particularly from Africa and the Pacific – could be heard.

Panellists proposed several areas for action including reducing the costs of disasters; securing resilient ecosystems and sustainable value chains; and integrating climate resilience into all investment decisions. Governments would need to start thinking and planning long-term in order to achieve these objectives. These efforts should be complemented with foresight exercises and similar initiatives to analyse and respond to complex interconnected phenomena. More collaboration with civil society organisations and, critically, the private sector, could also help to design and implement targeted and context-specific solutions to climate-related challenges that focused on job creation, technological innovation, and better systems and institutions for natural resource management. They also suggested that the insurance industry could play a key role by introducing more predictive approaches and new financial instruments to manage climate risks.



Panel discussion on climate change impacts and state fragility. | © Jan Rottler/adelphi

Panel discussion: “Climate change impacts and state fragility”

Facilitator: **Wolfgang Ischinger**, Chairman of the Munich Security Conference

Keynote: **Margot Wallström**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

Respondents:

- **Joseph Séka Séka**, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development of Côte d'Ivoire
- **Idrees Zaman**, Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs of Afghanistan
- **Ute Klamert**, Assistant Executive Director, World Food Programme
- **Miroslav Jenča** UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs

This roundtable focussed on those situations in which climate impacts encounter pre-existing fragility in the form of conflict or persistent inequality, marginalisation, and perceptions of unresponsive governance. It outlined several climate- and conflict-sensitive tools and approaches for interventions in these fragile contexts.

Panellists described the interactions between climate change and other factors such as population growth, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss as creating a “dangerous cocktail” that could lead to tensions and conflict. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, massive floods and droughts, coastal erosion and landslides had contributed to reducing available farm and forestland, forcing people to migrate in search of alternative livelihoods. In turn, migration movements had heightened conflicts between farmers and herders and provided breeding ground for recruitment by terrorist groups. In Afghanistan, droughts had led farmers to shift production to less water-intensive crops such as opium, thereby fuelling narco-trafficking and creating significant revenues for insurgency movements. Other complicated conflict settings such as Sudan, Burundi, Iraq, Syria and Yemen also showed how the vicious circle of conflict and climate change trapped people into situations of extreme vulnerability and fragility.

Panellists emphasized that humanitarian crises in the Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa had drawn the UNSC's attention to the threats that climate change can pose to regional security. There was an urgent need for the UNSC to recognise that the security implications of climate change were part of its mandate, so that it could provide an institutional home to manage climate risks and provide better climate and conflict-sensitive tools for intervention.

Panellists noted that both short- and long-term measures were needed to address the link between climate change, security and development in fragile contexts. Foreign policy actors and institutions at all levels needed to collaborate to invest in a combination of measures such as forecast-based finance, shock response, social protection and climate risk insurance aimed at building and strengthening people's resilience to climate change impacts as a way to prevent conflict. Examples included improved investment conditions for generating growth and new employment opportunities, especially for the youth, as critical for avoiding tensions and stabilising Côte d'Ivoire. Others cited the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia as an institution that could provide a robust response mechanism to climate-fragility risks.

One intervention highlighted that shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy could make the world more peaceful, as many conflicts had been linked to fossil fuel extraction. However, serious efforts would also be required to ensure that renewable energy did not fall into the same conflict resource trap, including creating mechanisms for making the extractive industry more accountable, responsible and sensitive to the needs and concerns of local communities.

CLIMATE- AND CONFLICT-SENSITIVE TOOLS AND APPROACHES FOR INTERVENTIONS IN FRAGILE STATES

Concluding panel discussion: “Moving together towards transformational action for lasting peace”

Facilitator: **Claire Doole**, MC and moderator

Discussants:

- **Margot Wallström**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden
- **Filippo Grandi**, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- **Ottmar Edenhofer**, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)
- **Chitra Nagarajan**, Expert on the conflict in the Lake Chad Basin

Closing remarks: **Miguel Berger**, Director-General for Economic Affairs and Sustainable Development at the German Federal Foreign Office

The concluding discussion reflected on the added value that foreign policy can bring to tackling climate-related security risks, and what a preventative approach could look like, with panellists outlining next steps to further this agenda.

“NEEDED: A PREVENTATIVE APPROACH TO ADDRESS CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS”

The discussion emphasized how gender, age, status, ethnicity, and other social and economic factors could influence how people were affected by climate change. Therefore, in order to design and implement more effective solutions, people in all their diversity needed to be included in the debate. “If you bring women in, there will be more options on the table; and more ideas will give a better chance to do what we have to do”,

one panellist noted. Panellists agreed that societies that are inclusive, democratic and respect human rights would be more resilient in dealing with the consequences of climate change.

Revisiting the complex linkages between climate change and displacement, panellists noted the



Concluding panel discussion of the BCSCI © Jan Rottler/adelphi

importance of clarifying the definitions and legal framework around climate-induced migration and displacement as a first step towards ensuring that adequate solutions could be found and implemented. They emphasized that long-term stabilisation and development responses were needed in fragile contexts – not as a follow-up but as a complement to humanitarian interventions. They also expressed hope that, although at present it remained a divisive topic, forced migration would eventually require and trigger international cooperation. “The security implications of this issue could encourage countries to cooperate”, one panellist said.

“MORE ACTION IS REQUIRED FOR MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE-SECURITY RISKS INTO UN ACTIVITIES”

The panel also reflected on why and how facts and values needed to be discussed together. Epistemic values such as consistency and coherence were integral to discussions on climate-security risks. Achieving emissions reduction targets would not be possible without a broad understanding of fairness and justice. Public discourse needed to realize that the atmosphere and oceans were essential global public goods, even if that seemed a daunting task in the current political climate.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Across the richness and variety that characterized discussions in all panels, there was strong and clear consensus across speakers in support of the three tenets of the Berlin Call to Action. Panellists agreed on the urgency of more and better information and for concrete approaches for how the international community could counter these security risks – for instance via regional risk analyses or early-warning systems. There was widespread acceptance that only evidence-based policy could produce sustainable solutions.

“AN AMBITIOUS CLIMATE POLICY CONTINUES TO BE THE BEST WAY TO LIMIT CLIMATE RISKS”

There was also strong agreement about the central role of the UN on climate change and security risks, as well as an acceptance that its capacity needed strengthening. Emphasising the importance of the legitimacy offered by the UN for moving things forward, it was noted that more action was required for mainstreaming climate-security risks into UN activities. Passing resolutions for all those regions and countries where these links were already visible – as already happened e.g. for Somalia, the Lake Chad Basin, and the Sahel – was an important way forward to that end.

At the same time, there was recognition that the UN Security Council cannot and should not be a substitute for the established instruments of climate policy, but needed to focus on the security implications of climate change. The closing remarks also highlighted that climate-security would be discussed again soon, in the context of the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019.

The conference underscored that, in the interests of global security and stability, all countries needed to step up their efforts in the area of climate protection. However, as long as the international community’s climate goals are insufficient to limit global warming to a safe level, there is also a clear and urgent need to address the foreign and security policy impacts of climate change. To this end, the Berlin Call to Action provides three concrete steps to consolidate efforts and move forward.



Ministers and experts who attended the BCSC. | © Jan Rottler/adelphi