

Improving the Climate for Peace

BERLIN CALL FOR ACTION

The catastrophic impacts of climate change are being felt around the world with increasing intensity and severity. **A destabilized Earth system implies unconscionable risks for peace and security** as these impacts can overburden existing capacity to cope with the 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 in order to safeguard peace and stability. Given the urgency and the scale of the security challenges that are emerging and will worsen as climate change impacts intensify, the Berlin Climate and Security Conference is a clarion call to every foreign policy institution to step up efforts to address one of the greatest global security and foreign policy challenges of the 21st century.

The response required to address these risks must become a central foreign policy priority. Building upon the efforts of Sweden and other UN Member States to enable stronger UN action, the Berlin Call for Action sets out three concrete areas to tackle the risks posed by climate change to peace and security:

1. **Risk-informed planning:** Maintaining peace and stability requires risk-informed decision making. To ensure that foreign policy is prepared for the challenges presented by climate security risks, we recognise the need for plans on how to respond to these risks, both in terms of prioritizing support to vulnerable and fragile regions in making progress on SDG implementation, as well as in terms of equipping the United Nations system, other multilateral institutions, states and other relevant actors to deal with the looming changes regarding food security, displacement, and increased risk of disasters. The recent report by major central banks that stressed the need to integrate monitoring of climate-related financial risks into day-to-day supervisory work, financial stability monitoring and board risk management provides an example to that end. Improved risk analysis is essential. 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, would be one way to advance this objective. The resulting insights should inform policy-making across security policy, trade, investments, development cooperation and beyond.

- 2. Enhanced capacity for action:** We need to set ambitious agendas across the whole UN System as well as at the international, regional and national levels. International and regional organizations including financial institutions need to ensure they have the requisite capacity to use climate security risk assessments to support their work. Yet national governments also need to overcome their own internal sectoral barriers by ensuring that climate and conflict sensitivity are part and parcel of all aspects of their foreign policy, not dispensable add-ons. We encourage investment in new human, technical, and financial capacities, as well as piloting and upscaling programmes that integrate climate action and peacebuilding. Specifically, we are committed to sustaining and strengthening the newly created Climate and Security Mechanism of the UN and to building up early warning, risk analysis and management capacity in the field. We call for support of those states and regions most affected by climate-fragility risks, emphasizing the need for both greater investment into adaptation and enhanced conflict sensitivity in fragile contexts.
- 3. Improving operational responses:** Attenuating climate change-related security risks needs to inform the entire gamut of peacebuilding: early warning, mediation and peace support operations. To enable the UN system to better recognize, assess and act on climate-security interlinkages, we call on the UN Security Council to acknowledge the threat that climate-related risks pose to international peace and security. Because the UNSC has a pre-eminent role with respect to safeguarding international peace and security, it cannot ignore the climate change-related security risks that increasingly undermine the global prevention and stabilization agendas.

Addressing the risks posed by climate change to peace and security is a great opportunity for, and a fundamental part of the Sustaining Peace agenda. We must not let this opportunity pass.