



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

**8864**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 23 September 2021, 8 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

*President:* Taoiseach Martin . . . . . (Ireland)

*Members:*

China . . . . .	Mr. Zhang Jun
Estonia . . . . .	President Kaljulaid
France . . . . .	Mr. Le Drian
India . . . . .	Ms. Sandhu
Kenya . . . . .	Ms. Omamo
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Casaubón
Niger . . . . .	Mr. Massoudou
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Søreide
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. King
Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Jerandi
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Lord Ahmad
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Blinken
Viet Nam . . . . .	President Phuc

## Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Climate and security

Letter dated 9 September 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2021/782)

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of Security Council members dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, this official record of the Security Council will be supplemented by a compilation of annexes (S/2021/815) containing the statements submitted by interested non-members of the Council.



*The meeting was called to order at 8.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Maintenance of international peace and security**

#### **Climate and security**

#### **Letter dated 9 September 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2021/782)**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Ilwad Elman, Chief Operating Officer of the Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2021/782, which contains the text of a letter dated 9 September 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General and the distinguished Presidents, Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers and other high-level representatives. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

**The Secretary-General:** I thank the Irish presidency for organizing this timely open debate.

Last month, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a deeply alarming report. It shows that climate disruption caused by human activities is widespread and intensifying. The report is indeed a "code red" for humankind.

Much bolder climate action is needed ahead of the twenty-sixth Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 26), with Group of Twenty nations in the lead, to maintain international peace and security. Our window of opportunity to prevent the worst climate impacts is rapidly closing. No region is immune.

Wildfires, flooding, drought and other extreme weather events are affecting every continent.

The effects of climate change are particularly profound when they overlap with fragility and past or current conflicts. It is clear that climate change and environmental mismanagement are risk multipliers. Where coping capacities are limited and there is high dependence on shrinking natural resources and ecosystem services such as water and fertile land, grievances and tensions can explode, complicating efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace.

In Somalia, more frequent and more intense droughts and floods are undermining food security, increasing competition over scarce resources and exacerbating existing community tensions, from which Al-Shabaab benefit.

In the Middle East and North Africa, which are among the world's most water-stressed and climate-vulnerable regions, a major decline in precipitation and the increase in extreme weather events are harming water and food security.

Last year more than 30 million people were displaced by climate-related disasters. Ninety per cent of refugees come from countries that are among the most vulnerable and least able to adapt to the effects of climate change. Many of those refugees are in turn hosted by countries that are also suffering the impacts of climate change, compounding the challenge for host communities and national budgets.

As the devastation caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic continues to cause immense suffering, it is undermining Governments' ability to respond to climate disasters and build resilience.

The threats are clear and present. But it is not too late to act to ensure that climate action contributes to international peace and security. Let me highlight three absolute priorities on climate action.

First, we need unambiguous commitment and credible actions by all countries to limit global warming to 1.5°C in order to avert the most catastrophic impacts of climate change. I urge all Member States to show more ambition in their nationally determined contributions by the holding of COP 26 and to translate their commitments into concrete and immediate action. Collectively, we need a 45 per cent cut in global emissions by 2030.

Secondly, to deal with the already dire impacts of climate disruption on the lives and livelihoods of people all over the world, we need a breakthrough on adaptation and resilience. It is essential that at least 50 per cent of climate financing globally be committed to building resilience and supporting adaptation. That need is urgent, as global climate impacts remind us daily. Annual adaptation costs in developing countries are estimated at \$70 billion and are expected to reach up to \$300 billion a year by 2030. Huge gaps remain in adaptation financing for developing countries. We simply cannot achieve our shared climate goals, or achieve hope for lasting peace and security, if resilience and adaptation continue to be the forgotten half of the climate equation. That neglect is seriously endangering our collective efforts on the crucial road to COP 26 in November. Developed countries must uphold their promise, before COP 26, to deliver \$100 billion in climate financing annually to the developing world. They must ensure that it reaches the most affected populations. The quality of that financing is also key. Grant financing is essential, as loans will add to already crushing debt burdens in the most climate-vulnerable countries.

Thirdly, climate adaptation and peacebuilding can — and should — reinforce one another. For example, in the Lake Chad region, dialogue platforms for cooperatively managing natural resources, supported by the Peacebuilding Fund, have promoted reforestation and improved access to sustain livelihoods. In West and Central Africa, cross-border projects have enabled dialogue and promoted more transparent management of scarce natural resources — a factor of peace. As climate change is impacting water resources worldwide, we must leverage water for peace, drawing lessons from the past. For example, in the Sava River basin, in Eastern Europe, transboundary water cooperation was the starting point of regional reconciliation and cooperation after the deadly war in the Balkans in the 1990s.

Across all those efforts, women are critical agents of change. The Security Council has long recognized and sought to strengthen women's role in sustaining peace. Women and girls face severe risks from both climate change and conflict. Their meaningful participation and leadership bring about more sustainable results that benefit more people.

*(spoke in French)*

The United Nations takes climate risks into account in its political analyses as well as in its conflict-prevention and peacebuilding initiatives. The Climate Security Mechanism helps missions on the ground, United Nations country teams and regional and subregional organizations analyse and address the risks that climate change has on security and to shape swift and integrated responses. That work encompasses countries and regions where the Security Council has acknowledged that climate and ecological change undermine stability.

The United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, in coordination for the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Environment Programme and the Framework Convention on Climate Change, has launched a new initiative on peace, climate change and environmental degradation. The initiative will help the Economic Community of West African States and other regional, governmental, national and local bodies to harmonize their efforts aimed and reducing the risks of climate change on security in the subregion.

Ninety-five per cent of the population in South Sudan lives on herding and agriculture, and they are therefore affected by unseasonable droughts and flooding. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan works with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and IOM to facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes between farmers and herders.

We are also aware of our responsibility to decrease the United Nations carbon footprint. Eighty per cent of Secretariat carbon emissions come from our six largest peacekeeping operations. Guided by the United Nations Environmental Strategy for Peace Operations, we are working on new approaches to shift energy supply to renewable energy producers, with the intention of supporting renewable energy capacity, including beyond the lifetime of our missions.

We are all part of the solution. Let us all work together to mitigate and adapt to climate disruption to build peaceful and resilient societies.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Elman.

**Ms. Elman:** I thank the Security Council for the opportunity to address it today at this open debate on the maintenance of international peace and security.

We are in a planetary emergency that will make the task of maintaining peace and security even harder in the coming decade and beyond. As climate change and other environmental crises gather pace, they are touching every aspect of life. World international peace and security is no exception.

The Security Council has held several thematic debates on climate and security, and many of the Council members assembled here today have displayed support for the Council's engagement on climate and security. That is welcome progress, although it is still too painfully slow for the vulnerable communities at the front lines of these issues, which are confronted with the realities of climate-related security risks every day and are fighting for survival.

For front-line activists at the cusp of climate and security, there is little support available to effectively assist them in furthering climate resilience on local and regional levels. The toolkits, recommendations and research that are being produced primarily target Governments, United Nations peacekeeping missions and, at times, large international non-governmental organizations, with very few investments being made into the technical capacity-building and knowledge management of grass-roots civil society organizations. The discourse around climate change and security still fails to adequately meet the needs of affected communities, or to represent the voices of those who are disproportionately affected by climate-related security risks.

I work in Somalia, where I serve as one of the directors of the Elman Peace Centre, a peacebuilding organization founded in Mogadishu in the early 1990s and established in response to the armed conflict. We work on preventing and countering violent extremism. We facilitate the disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration of youth and adults associated with different armed groups, including defectors from designated terrorist organizations. We contribute to security sector reform and advocate for more inclusive peace processes that support women and youth to participate meaningfully in the processes that ensure their well-being. And we founded the first rape crisis centre in Somalia, where we are working to end sexual violence in conflict, exploitation and abuse.

Those are just some of the areas of our institutional focus, but we are not scientists or academics. We are peacebuilding practitioners on the front lines of a 30-year conflict that remains volatile to this day. We began working on climate change issues because our lives and daily realities are at the nexus of climate change and security. We realized that our peacebuilding goals and our mediation efforts could not succeed or be sustained unless we addressed the broader environmental issues related to security — whether it be the locust- and draught-induced scarcity of resources that multiplies the threat of intraclan conflict, the decrease of tuna swarms that drives Somali fishing communities towards piracy, or the flooding that continues to drive regional displacement and vulnerable people to violent extremist groups.

The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are also changing what it takes to build peace for local peacebuilders. Because we are experiencing climate related shocks and stresses so often in our environments, our peacebuilding and security strategies now need to be more resilient to environmental change. Peacebuilding practitioners and civil society organizations must be empowered to respond to their changing environments. They need to be able to access technical and financial resources, as well as educational materials, that are fit for purpose. Risk-assessment information should be made available to them.

The Security Council and the wider United Nations system must be receptive to bottom-up solutions and community-led processes. In a space where so much to learn and unearth remains, policymakers must create the right conditions for durable, locally based solutions to emerge and succeed. I know first-hand how motivated peace activists are to partner with the Security Council to integrate climate-related security risks into local peacebuilding programming and strategies. However, the Council needs to ensure there is a genuine effort to co-create policy and peace processes with the people affected. Mandating and deploying more environmental security advisers can assist in forging such cooperation opportunities for learning and coordination.

Armed conflict, hunger, poverty, inequality, migration, violations of human rights and pandemics all affect one another in ways that make peacebuilding more complex. We need to stop putting them at a distance and stop thinking that they are this or that agency's business, not ours. I am proud to sit on the

panel of an initiative called the Environment of Peace, which is looking at how the different security challenges that I am describing in my briefing combine and interact. The Environment of Peace explores how environmental deterioration exacerbates insecurity and, on the positive side, how environmental sustainability can support peace.

The Environment of Peace will launch a report in May 2022, in the run-up to the fiftieth anniversary to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, also known as the Stockholm Conference. The report will not only reveal security challenges linked to environmental change; it will also look at the risks and opportunities for peace that arise from the transition to a greener and more sustainable future. It will also show how global cooperation and collective action can help address the enormous challenges that we are facing

The momentum that currently exists for the climate and security agenda is undeniable. Now is the time for policymakers to turn this ambitious agenda into coherent policies that guide the future of peacebuilding.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Elman for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Taoiseach of Ireland.

Let me begin by expressing my thanks to the Secretary-General for his leadership on climate change and his important briefing this morning. I also thank Ms. Ilwad Elman for her testimony today and her contribution to ensuring that the international community can understand better the insecurities that climate change is creating in vulnerable communities.

Climate change is the defining challenge of our generation. The recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change laid out in stark terms what is happening to our planet and what the future may hold should we fail to act. It is essential that we act now to prevent further warming by reaching net-zero emissions as quickly as possible, and we must redouble our efforts to ensure a successful outcome at the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow later this year.

A concerted multilateral response to climate change involving all the organs of the United Nations is urgently needed. That response must include the Security Council. The impact of climate change is global, and our collective security is at risk. We have

seen how climate change is already contributing to conflict in many parts of the world. Indeed, the Council has already acknowledged that by addressing the adverse effects of climate change in the mandates of many peacekeeping operations.

From the Sahel to Iraq, the Council has recognized that climate change is one of the factors driving conflict and fragility. Around Lake Chad, the combination of conflict and the impact of climate change have led to violence among communities. In the Horn of Africa, repeated droughts are undermining coping capacities among communities and disrupting livelihoods. Armed groups have been able to exploit those precarious conditions for recruitment purposes.

The need for action is clear; 80 per cent of United Nations peacekeepers are deployed in countries that are the most exposed to climate change. Our peacekeepers and civilian staff are already dealing with climate-related security risks in their activities. If they are to be effective and deliver on the mandates that the Council has given to them, we must also give them the necessary support and tools to operate in those challenging environments.

The instability that is being driven by the adverse effects of climate change is being felt across the globe — in Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, South Asia and many of the world's small island developing States. The link between climate and instability has been recognized by the African Union, the European Union and the Pacific Islands Forum. Sea-level rise, displacement and competition over resources are contributing to tensions. Today's briefings gave us a clear message. If the Security Council is to meet its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, it must have the information and tools to analyse and address climate-related security risks.

The Council's Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security has convened since 2020 to support the Council's work on climate and security. Ireland is proud to serve, together with the Niger, as co-Chair of the Group. The Group provides a platform for members of the Security Council to hear how we can integrate climate-related security risks into our conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict stabilization work. The Group provides data and evidence to inform future action by the Council. Ireland is also an active member of the wider Group

of Friends on Climate and Security, which now has a membership of almost 60 countries from around the world. That further illustrates the priority placed on the issue by the United Nations membership.

The mandate of the Council is to consider threats to international peace and security. We must move past theoretical debates and respond to the reality that climate change is exacerbating conflict globally. The Council can — and must — do more. It has the mandate, and it has the tools. The failure to use them is an abdication of our responsibility. I know that there are differing perspectives around this table, but I also believe the time has come for the Council to work together to identify how we can most appropriately integrate climate-related security risks into the work we do to prevent conflict and build peace.

We must better understand the interplay between climate change, and the country and regional situations on the Council's agenda. In order to help us do so, we should invite the Secretary-General to submit a periodic report to the Security Council on how climate change is threatening the maintenance of international peace and security. The appointment by the Secretary-General of a special representative for climate-related security risks could also build awareness and promote greater coherence. Such actions are just the beginning of what is necessary for the Council to begin to fulfil its obligations.

To take those proposals forward, Ireland will convene discussions on a thematic draft resolution on climate and security in the coming days. I ask today that all members of the Council engage constructively on that draft resolution.

People affected by climate change-driven conflict depend on the Council for leadership. The international community looks to us for guidance. By working together in a spirit of common purpose, I hope that we can reach a shared understanding of how the Security Council can meet that challenge. Now is the moment for the Council to act. I look forward to hearing from all members today.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the President of Viet Nam.

**President Phuc** (*spoke in Vietnamese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Today's meeting, presided over by you, Mr. President, is

particularly urgent and important in the context of climate security.

I thank the Secretary-General and the briefer for their insights and recommendations.

Climate change represents the greatest global challenge of our time and shapes the future of humankind. The devastating impacts of climate change remain evident on every continent. Sea-level rise threatens to submerge Pacific island States. Severe droughts persist in West Africa and the Horn of Africa. Flooding and natural disasters are predominant in South-East Asia. I must also mention the degradation of biodiversity in South America and the abnormal melting of Antarctic ice caps.

Climate change takes up valuable resources meant for socioeconomic development and exacerbates poverty, unemployment and social inequality. We are also witnessing how climate change ignites disputes over natural resources between populations. It displaces tens of millions from their homes in search of new livelihoods and triggers transborder security threats related to ecology, the environment, food and water resources.

Those consequences may well erupt into geopolitical tension and instability, thereby jeopardizing the peace, security, development and prosperity of States and nations. It is truly a "code red" — a war without gunfire, we might say — that causes economic damage and loss of life, no less dire than actual wars and conflicts.

Against that backdrop, I wish to share with the Council three points on which I believe we should act with urgency.

First, the Security Council must uphold its leading role in establishing mechanisms for assessing, forecasting and warning on climate security risks at an early stage and while they are still distant. That will help us be proactive in outlining effective response strategies and measures. Conflict prevention, peacekeeping missions, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction efforts under the auspices of the Security Council must include climate security in a proper manner. In that connection, I wish to propose that the United Nations establish a comprehensive database system on the multidimensional impacts of sea-level rise, in support of global response policy formulation.

Secondly, people's interests, especially those of vulnerable groups, need to take centre stage if we are

to harmoniously address the security, development and humanitarianism nexus. Viet Nam strongly supports the full implementation of resolutions 2532 (2020) and 2573 (2021) to achieve a global ceasefire as soon as possible and protect civilians and critical infrastructure in areas of armed conflict.

Thirdly, we need to continue to safeguard the sovereignty, key role and resilience of nations in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. We also need to step up international cooperation to supplement and coordinate resources to effectively realize the Sustainable Development Goals, outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other key international treaties.

We must resolve to cut greenhouse-gas emissions, on which developed countries should take the lead. Ample resources should also be set aside to provide developing countries with assistance in financing, technologies and know-how, so as to ensure that no country is left behind in the common fight against climate change.

Viet Nam is one of the countries hardest hit by climate change. Successive natural disasters have led to considerable loss of life and property. The Mekong Delta, the heart of Viet Nam's agricultural production, is witnessing a record number of droughts and incidents of saline intrusion, which jeopardize the livelihoods and everyday lives of more than 20 million people, as well as food security for the entire country and the region as a whole.

For that reason, to realize its aspirations and vision for national development and perform its duty to the international community, Viet Nam is determined and strongly committed to taking climate action and to developing a green, sustainable and low-carbon economy, as pledged at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Viet Nam supports all efforts by the Security Council, multilateral forums and other cooperation arrangements at the bilateral and regional levels to respond to climate-related challenges. We hope to continue to receive assistance — resources and policy advice — from international friends so as to better fulfil our commitments. I am convinced that, through international commitment and solidarity, all countries

will take bolder action towards a greener and more sustainable future.

**The President:** I now call on the President of Estonia.

**President Kaljulaid:** I thank the delegation of Ireland for convening today's meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his remarks and leadership.

I would like to make four points. We must maintain the same collective sense of urgency to stop climate change that we demonstrate to fight the pandemic. We must also collectively seek solutions to stop climate change as efficiently as we developed the vaccines by investing considerable resources and working with our capable private sector. We must do better at allocating resources to save our planet. We must also develop and maintain a scientific database approach to resolving the problem. Let me now elaborate on those points.

A little more than a month ago, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published its new report highlighting that human influence is warming the planet faster than we had previously thought. We must not lose sight of those who are most vulnerable to climate change. Many of them do not have the capacity to cope with climate-related security risks and will need considerable assistance and support from the international community. For that reason, Estonia has allocated almost €9 million for the period from 2011 to 2020, and we are keen to continue our support.

The Security Council has the scope and tools to address climate-related security risks effectively and systematically. Although the Council has increased its engagement on those risks over the past few years, much more can be done to fully integrate the knowledge of climate-related risks into all aspects of our work in order to mainstream them. Indeed, the whole United Nations system should be better informed about security risks induced by climate change.

In that context, a systematic approach is urgently needed. We need a Security Council resolution on climate and security — only in that way can we make a difference. It is of the utmost importance that the Secretary-General receive a mandate to collect data and coordinate policy to that end. Regular reporting that takes into account regional specifics would be a major step towards developing tangible prevention measures. Only a few United Nations peace operations reflect climate and security risks in their mandates. It is

important to continue integrating climate-related risks in their activities.

Of course, the direct and indirect security implications of climate change are not the only climate-related security risks. Our own climate policies can also pose risks. The green transition, as every other transition, involves a competitive element where some are obviously doing better than others. The knowledge, tools and resources necessary for that transition are not equally available to all of us. In order to avoid fuelling marginalization and the propagation of fundamentalist views, we need to ensure that such a transition is just and inclusive to collectively keep the global public with us. The impacts of climate change do not recognize national borders, and neither should our knowledge or best mitigation and adaptation practices. We must truly collaborate for the common good.

But collaboration can rely only on trust. In order to build that trust, we need transparency, good communication and data-sharing. Data is critical for developing multilateralism. Without reliable, timely and accessible data, we cannot be successful. To that end, Estonia has launched the Data for the Environment Alliance, which will support the United Nations Environment Programme in developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025. We hereby invite all countries to join that alliance.

The next two months will be of critical importance for climate action, as we are leading up to the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow. That will decide whether this decade will be remembered as the one where we started to save the planet, or the beginning of the end.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of the Niger.

**Mr. Massoudou (Niger)** (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate Ireland on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September, as well as to commend the way in which it has led the work of this organ of the United Nations.

Your country's commitment, Sir, to holding a debate on the issue of security risks related to climate change in the Council is proof of your conviction that the fragility associated with environmental degradation

is an exacerbating factor in conflicts and humanitarian crises. As co-Chair of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security alongside Ireland, the Niger shares that conviction and considers the placement of the issue on the Council's agenda to be timely in more ways than one.

I would also like to thank Mr. António Guterres and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their briefings, which reflect their firm commitment to addressing the impacts of climate change on peace and security.

As we move towards the end of the second consecutive year characterized by the coronavirus disease pandemic, we must not lose sight of the other pandemic we face — one that will be even more devastating in the long term and for which no vaccine is available. I am referring, of course, to climate change.

We are already seeing record heatwaves, droughts, severe fires and floods and melting glaciers. The conclusions of the 2021 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change depict a most alarming situation and constitute a call for action. While those risks are new to some, in the Niger and the Sahel region they are our reality. Those risks bring with them undeniable security and humanitarian consequences for our populations and undermine the development efforts our countries are undertaking in a context complicated even further by the pandemic.

As we speak, in the Sahel, the crucible of that climatic reality — where agriculture is the mainstay of the economies, accounting on average for more than a third of the gross domestic product, and where more than 80 per cent of the population depends on agricultural activities and natural resources for their livelihoods — climate change has intensified competition for land, fodder and water resources. That has led to the resurgence of community-level conflicts between herders and farmers, thereby hampering peacebuilding and development efforts in the region. Numerous recent studies have shown that climate change and conflict dynamics create a feedback loop in the region, whereby climate change impacts fuel additional pressures, while conflict undermines communities' abilities to cope.

Faced with that scourge, our States have undertaken various efforts, both at the continental level, with the African Union, and at the regional level, through the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, the Economic Community of

West African States and the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region. The latter has adopted a climate investment plan for the period 2018 to 2030, with a global cost of approximately \$440 billion, which is aimed at contributing to the global effort to mitigate greenhouse-gas emissions and increase the adaptation and resilience capacities of the Sahelian populations.

Those efforts, however laudable, will remain in vain and will not produce the leverage effect that is essential to scale up climate action if we do not all move forward together. The lack of consensus on this crucial issue should in no way be an obstacle for the Council when it comes to addressing it. Rather, the lack of consensus should serve as a unique opportunity to hear all the different views that can contribute to our debates and enable us to move forward on this important matter.

At this stage, allow me to make a few suggestions as to how the Council could address the issue.

We need to build a holistic, coordinated approach. In the context of United Nations and Security Council efforts, increased investment in efforts at prevention and anticipating effects in fragile States could limit the compounded humanitarian consequences of climate change and armed conflict. In that regard, we call for the strengthening of the Council's capacity to better understand the impact of climate change on security through a report of the Secretary-General that includes an in-depth analysis of current and future risks, as well as action-oriented recommendations.

We also call for the systematic consideration of climate-related risks in resolutions on country- and region-specific situations, which could increase the effectiveness of peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts. In that connection, we encourage the Security Council to rely as much as possible on the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as on the Informal Expert Group co-chaired by the Niger and Ireland.

Those frameworks, as well as the data provided to us by research centres, will allow us to gain perspective on national and regional processes, which are tools to better inform the Security Council on the implications of climate change on peace and security. In addition, we consider the appointment of a special envoy of the Secretary-General on climate and security to be most pertinent, insofar as it will give greater visibility and effectiveness to the consideration of this issue, which no one can ignore.

In conclusion, my delegation is in favour of adopting a Council draft resolution on the issue in order to properly acknowledge the security risks linked to climate change as a central element of our peace and security architecture.

**The President:** I now call on the Secretary of State of the United States of America.

**Mr. Blinken** (United States of America): I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his presence and his leadership on the climate issue. I also wish to thank you, Sir, for convening today's discussion and for putting the connection between climate and security on the Security Council's agenda. Moreover, I thank Ireland and the Niger for the important work being carried out by the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security. I also want to applaud Ms. Elman's very powerful testimony, which we were grateful to hear today.

From day one, President Biden has made addressing the climate crisis a top priority of our Administration, including by directing me and every one of our diplomats to ensure that it is a core element of United States foreign policy. We are taking into account how every bilateral and multilateral engagement we have and how every policy decision we make will impact our goal to put the world on a safer, more sustainable path. That is not only because of the devastating and, in some instances, irreversible implications of climate change for our majestic planet. It is also because of the cascading effects on virtually every aspect of our lives, from agricultural to infrastructure and from public health to food security. We have heard some of those effects described already.

Right here in New York City, where we are gathered today, earlier this month, a punishing storm caused by the remnants of Hurricane Ida killed dozens of people, including a 2-year-old boy, and inflicted tens of billions of dollars in damage. More than three inches of rain fell in Central Park in a single hour, breaking a record set only a few weeks earlier. If we look at any one of our countries, we will see record-breaking extreme weather events like this. The climate crisis is not coming; it is already here.

And clear patterns are emerging in its impacts. The consequences are falling disproportionately on vulnerable and low-income populations, and there are worsening conditions in human suffering in places already afflicted by conflict, high levels of violence

and instability. These mounting impacts, together with the synthesis report of the Framework Convention on Climate Change released last week and the comprehensive report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released last month, underscore the urgent need to dramatically cut our emissions and build our resilience for the inevitable changes to come.

One way to do that is by helping others to do their part. Back in April, President Biden announced that the United States would double our public international financing for developing countries most affected by the climate crisis. Earlier this week, here at the United Nations, he announced that we will work with the United States Congress to double that number again (see A/76/PV.3). We urge other Governments, particularly those that, like the United States, are the biggest emitters, to step up in making these investments.

The Security Council also has a vital role to play in three ways, which I would like to briefly suggest.

First, we have to stop debating whether the climate crisis is a subject that belongs in the Security Council and instead ask how the Council can leverage its unique powers to tackle the negative impacts of climate on peace and security. That is an argument that should have been settled a long time ago. If we look at almost any place where we see threats to international peace and security today, we find that climate change is making things less peaceful and less secure, making it even more difficult to respond. That is the story of Syria, Mali, Yemen, South Sudan, Ethiopia and many other places beset by strife. By agreeing that the issue belongs here in the Security Council, we will also send a clear message to the international community of the serious implications that climate change has for our collective security.

Secondly, United Nations field missions should consistently incorporate the effects of climate change into their planning and implementation, as was done in the mandates for, inter alia, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel. Doing that will advance mission activities, foster stability and build resilience.

Thirdly, the United Nations system should further integrate climate-related analysis into its conflict-mediation and conflict-prevention efforts, particularly in fragile States and areas of active conflict. The

decision of the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to include climate security in the strategic plan in 2020 for the first time and the creation of the climate security mechanism are very positive examples of just this. To any who doubt the merits of these steps, I just encourage them to ask some of the United Nations force commanders, the special envoys, the negotiators, the peacebuilders and others who are out there grappling with the impacts of climate in their everyday efforts. They are hungry for many more tools like these.

I focused today on the threats posed by the climate crisis. But let me just say, in closing it would be a mistake to view this only through that lens. We agree that to prevent cataclysmic consequences, all our nations must take immediate, bold actions to build resilience to adapt to the unavoidable impacts and move swiftly to a net-zero world. That is our shared charge for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is now only weeks away, and, if we are to keep within reach the goal of limiting global warming to 1°C, every nation will need to bring its highest possible ambitions to the table.

But these efforts and the investments they will require from all of us also present an unprecedented opportunity to expand access to affordable, clean energy, build green infrastructure and create well-paying jobs, all of which could spur long-term economic growth, reverse growing inequities within and between our nations, and improve the lives of people around the world.

Even as we are clear-eyed about the threat, let us not lose sight of this once-in-a-generation global opportunity. Let us be driven not only by the fear of all the damage the climate crisis can inflict and already has inflicted, but also by the imagination of all the ways our response can actually make people's lives better now and into the future.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France.

**Mr. Le Drian (France) (spoke in French):** Climate change is causing a chain of disruptions in the life of our societies and on the international scene. In recent years, droughts, floods, storms, tropical cyclones and extreme temperatures have directly caused nearly 2 million deaths, to say nothing of the human tragedies linked to the conflicts sometimes precipitated by these disasters.

Climate change is increasingly becoming a multiplier of crises and security risks. Entire regions are at risk of falling into instability and violence. Food insecurity, destruction of habitats, depletion of resources, forced migrations, exacerbation of tensions between communities — for example, between sedentary farmers and nomadic herders — are the consequences of climate change.

The fight for the climate, far from being only environmental, is therefore also a fight for peace and security. It is a geopolitical issue, which is why the Security Council is fulfilling its proper role when it looks at the new threats linked to climate change with a view to anticipating and trying to deal with them.

I would therefore like to thank Prime Minister Micheál Martin and Secretary-General António Guterres for having taken the initiative to hold today's debate. I would like to make France's contribution to the discussion by sharing three convictions with the Council. I believe these convictions are widely shared.

The first is that we must strive to foresee and deal with the consequences of climate tragedies, and in this respect we must first help our most vulnerable partners anticipate the risks linked to these disruptions, for example, by improving the mapping of people vulnerable to risks, in order to design emergency plans that include pre-established funding; by maintaining our efforts in the area of early warning through such initiatives as the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative, in order to improve prevention and information for populations and States on the risks of dangerous climatic events; and by strengthening our aid to the victims of climatic disasters with the emergency humanitarian aid they need. I am thinking in particular of the aftermath of Cyclone Winston in 2016, where there was real European — and French — engagement in the Indo-Pacific, reaching the most remote places of the Fiji archipelago to help the populations and thereby contributing to the stability of this region.

Secondly, we must prevent violent and terrorist groups from taking advantage of the confusion and distress generated by the effects of climate change in areas already fraught with tension and fragility. To achieve this, we cannot rely solely on the commitment of our armed forces and the Blue Helmets deployed in peacekeeping operations. As the Secretary-General has reminded us, they are already active in this way, showing great engagement and dedication, but we must also give

ourselves the means to strengthen the resilience of States and populations. Today, of the 20 countries most affected by conflicts in the world, 12 are also among the most vulnerable to climate change.

Where there are serious security threats, we need to build a virtuous cycle of development and climate action. An example of this is the Great Green Wall project in the Sahel, which is a flagship programme to combat climate change and desertification, which is helping to combat insecurity. The fact that there was real engagement shown at the recent One Planet Summit in Paris on this subject — in the form of pledges of \$18 billion — is a sign that we can act to combine development and action for the climate.

Thirdly, we must work to better take into account the security dimension of climate and environmental issues. In February, President Macron made some very concrete proposals to this end: that the Secretary-General prepare a biannual report for the Security Council on the consequences of climate change for international peace and security; that recommendations be made for targeted action in high-risk areas; and that a special envoy for climate security be appointed to lead the international community's action and engagement on this issue.

The threats of our century are not simply accumulating; the fact is that they are interlinked and are likely to exacerbate one another. Everyone understands that the cost of inaction would be immense. Therefore, in conclusion, I would like to express my hope that our discussions in the Security Council will also help to convince everyone of the need to commit to making the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change a success by making commitments to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions that are commensurate with the challenges facing our planet. Member States can count on France's full mobilization in that regard.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico.

**Mr. Casaubón** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ireland for convening this open debate on a central topic on the current international agenda. I am also grateful for the briefings by the Secretary-General and Ms. Ilwad Elman. I recognize the presence of Heads of State and Government, Foreign Ministers and other high-level officials.

Since last year, with the beginning of the coronavirus disease pandemic, it has become clear that threats to international peace and security are genuinely multidimensional. One that is increasingly relevant is climate change, which poses a threat to the survival of humankind. It is undeniable today that its effects can exacerbate, and are exacerbating, existing conflicts, as can be seen in regions such as the Sahel and the Horn of Africa and are having severe impacts on many countries.

The 2021 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was just issued on 9 August and has 234 authors and thousands of scientific references, is compelling: the scientific evidence shows unprecedented changes under way in the climate and global temperature and, unfortunately, some of those changes are already irreversible. Projections for the future show significant changes in heatwaves, intense precipitation, droughts and cyclones, among others, with serious consequences for human activity. The report concludes that the sustainability of natural resources and the well-being of our peoples are at risk. It also states, after a very careful assessment, that the commitment to invest and finance up to \$100 billion for projects that could have curbed the trend in the report is not being fulfilled. This is to say that no one can now reasonably question the fact that climate change is a threat to everyone's security. What the report says is that we are not doing much, and we are not achieving the goals we set for ourselves.

The Peacebuilding Commission itself has stated that 11 of the countries that it monitors where there are conflicts are located in areas that are particularly exposed to the effects of climate change, which further complicates efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

The only way we can address climate change is through multilateralism, with a comprehensive and coherent approach across the entire United Nations system. We agree with the notion reflected in the Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda" initiative on the need to be better prepared for those challenges, which implies considering the effects of climate change in any possible scenario — what is being called "short-term climate security". Hence the proposal for a report every five years on strategic vision and global risk is very welcome.

It is good that the Security Council is not ignoring the issue. How could we justify that? It is an issue

that has serious security implications, and the role of the Council is crucial if we are to strengthen the multilateral architecture. It is therefore important to rigorously analyse the main risks and the specific settings in which they exist. The challenge lies in the timely identification of situations and areas in which the effects of climate change may have multiplier effects that affect international peace and security and in acting in a timely manner, while maintaining a preventive diplomacy of common commitment.

More effective interaction between the Security Council and the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Environment Programme, and the integration of their respective views into the analyses of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, would substantially enrich the content of the five-yearly report and the strategic vision to be adopted.

The establishment of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security within the Security Council was a step in the right direction. We now need to translate its recommendations into action. Therefore, when the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions are adjusted, the impact of climate effects will be adequately taken into account and a timely and comprehensive response can be provided.

Another proposal that we could make would be to include a follow-up on the goals that we propose and how the financing that has been or will be made available at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) will be fulfilled, to make financing a central issue for the climate security of the planet and avoid there being just political statements made at the Conference.

I conclude by reaffirming Mexico's commitment to combat climate change together with all stakeholders to find global and multidimensional solutions to the issue. I reiterate that we must all work to make COP26 a success. We must expand our goals and respond to the report I just mentioned.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway.

**Ms. Søreide** (Norway): I would like to thank Ireland for placing climate and security on today's agenda. And I greatly appreciate the briefings by the Secretary-General and Ms. Ilwad Elman.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has issued a very clear warning. We can expect further widespread and unprecedented changes to our climate. The impacts of that can already be seen in many of the situations on the agenda of the Security Council.

More and more of our development aid is now channelled to climate financing and investment in renewable energy in developing countries, and we are tripling our support for adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The reason for that is that half of the 20 countries that are considered the most vulnerable to climate change are also affected by armed conflict.

Climate change, conflict, displacement and hunger exacerbate one other. Climate change is a threat multiplier. And that is the reason that climate and security are at the very core of the Security Council.

The impacts of climate change vary from region to region. In Afghanistan, long-standing conflict has weakened community resilience and traditional natural resource management — eroding the capacity of Afghan society to deal with climate-related security risks. In Iraq, water scarcity worsened by climate change deepens grievances and conflict. It escalates the risk of violent conflict and provides entry points for armed groups to exploit. In South Sudan, floods and droughts disrupt livelihoods and worsen food security, and livestock losses compound rivalries, which can trigger intercommunal conflicts, displacement and the growth of armed groups. Across the Sahel, climate change may increase the risk of clashes between herders and farmers over access to water and pastures.

The impact of climate change often hits women and girls the hardest. According to UNICEF, 1 billion children live in extremely high-risk countries. That is nearly half of all the children in the world. And women are on the front lines addressing resource scarcity and mobilizing for climate action and peacebuilding. We must support their efforts and leadership to enhance sustainability, stability and climate resilience in communities.

The Security Council has expressed its concern that the adverse effects of climate change may constitute a risk to international peace and security. What is needed now is a more systematic approach by the Council. As a concrete step forward, the Council should adopt a thematic resolution on climate and security in order to guide its work. The intention is not for the Council to take on the tasks of other United Nations organs.

It is a matter of conflict prevention. It is a matter of addressing climate risk and resilience as part of our common responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

We therefore urge the Secretary-General to include climate-related security risks in his reports to the Council and for climate risks to be included as a consideration in all relevant mandates of United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions. We have to strengthen coordination and ensure a coherent and whole-of-United Nations response. The Climate Security Mechanism and the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security will be important platforms in that regard.

Norway strongly believes that climate risks must also be addressed in mediation and preventive diplomacy. The shared experience of climate change can be an entry point for building trust and dialogue across communities, as we have seen in Somalia and South Sudan.

Yet, sustainable peace and development cannot be achieved without the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders. In order to succeed, strong local and regional partnerships is needed, as is the meaningful participation of civil society.

Moreover, the Security Council needs reliable, relevant, timely and actionable information on the climate risks for the specific situations on the Council's agenda. In that respect, Norway gives financial support to the independent research undertaken by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and Adelphi, in close cooperation with local expertise.

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time. The Security Council must show leadership and fulfil its responsibility as set forth in its mandate. Climate and security is one of four main priorities for Norway in the Council, and we stand ready to do our part.

**The President:** I now call on the Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya.

**Ms. Omamo (Kenya):** I congratulate you, Mr. President, on Ireland's stewardship of the Security Council this month and thank you for personally presiding over the Council's open debate on the subject at hand. I also thank the Secretary-General and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their insightful briefings.

Climate change is leading to profound effects globally with respect to extreme weather conditions, migration, resource competition, and on the livelihoods and economies of millions of people across the world. These are combining to increase the fragility of States, are propagating resource conflicts and are escalating existing violent confrontations. This is particularly the case in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and small island developing States.

As we prepare to undertake the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in a few short weeks, we should keep in mind that climate-change adaptation will need to deliver on conflict prevention and resolution. It will call for the commitments made to the regions that have not caused climate change but are experiencing its adverse effects to be implemented in a conflict-sensitive fashion.

Given its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the Council should also take a pragmatic approach to dealing with climate change, particularly in conflict situations. I will underscore six measures that Kenya considers pivotal in that regard:

First, the growing body of evidence on the climate-security nexus must be developed with experts, States and institutions in the Global South, where the challenge is most keenly felt. This research agenda must be inclusive to enable emerging policy recommendations to be widely embraced.

Secondly, the definitive research on this nexus will need to benefit from the science-policy interface that is anchored in the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), domiciled in Nairobi. As UNEP prepares to celebrate its fiftieth birthday, its place at the centre of environment multilateralism must be restored and strengthened if the battle against climate change, particularly in the South, is to be won.

Thirdly, technologies and practices that have been employed over long periods of time by millions of people are often not only resilient, but also more fit for purpose. We therefore need to build on local knowledge and practices that are proven to work, especially in enhancing resilience of communities against climate change effects. It is this indigenous knowledge, often of women, that can form the basis of peace and mediation efforts with respect to the conflicts that are continuing to accumulate across our world.

Fourthly, the highest priority must be given to climate action not compromising the ability of countries to develop rapidly. Climate action must be fair and must be seen to be fair for it to draw the support of the vast majority of States. After all, we all understand that the bulk of resources for climate adaptation will need to be drawn from domestic resources. That means that countries will need to have access to revenues from growing economies if they are to respond adequately in a fashion that protects peace and security.

Fifthly, we need the development of early warning systems that map climate change hotspots in order to enable decision-making tools that prevent and minimize conflict at the national, regional and international levels.

Finally, peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, especially those situated in Africa, must have clear climate-action mandates, including environmental protection and restoration. This is particularly important in the sprawling refugee camps in Africa, where environmental degradation is the order of the day. These peacekeeping missions must also have the ability to collect data, particularly gender-disaggregated data, for us to understand the nexus between gender, climate change and conflict. Our peacekeepers must also have the ability to mobilize for emergencies in order to respond quickly to communities in the face of calamities.

As I conclude, Kenya commends Ireland and the Niger, the co-chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security, for their efforts towards a thematic resolution. Kenya will continue to be an anchor in the articulation of global environmental issues. In that regard, we will remain a strong and consistent voice for Africa, the Global South, including small island developing States, in the pursuit of representative climate and security solutions.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad of Tunisia.

**Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*):** At the outset. I would like to express my sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, and to the Republic of Ireland for dedicating today's meeting to discuss, once again, climate change and its impact on international, peace and security. I would like also to thank the Secretary-General for his valuable briefing and to express to him our appreciation for his continued efforts and support for his priorities in addressing the impact of climate

change. My thanks also go to Ms. Elman for her valuable briefing.

Threats to international, peace and security are no longer limited to the conventional threats of geostrategic tensions, arms races and conflicts in several regions. Our world today is confronted with many emerging challenges that target the necessities of life on our planet and future generations.

Undoubtedly, climate change, along with environmental disasters and health pandemics, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and natural disasters, which are becoming more frequent and severe, constitute the biggest challenges to our countries, individually and collectively. They are also a challenge to multilateralism, the United Nations system and international cooperation.

The attention that the Security Council pays to these issues when discussing them as items on its agenda reflects its conviction in the need to integrate these risks into the Council's work. We can no longer overlook the extent to which climate change exacerbates elements of fragility and instability, while threatening food and water security for vulnerable groups. This in turn raises tensions and prolongs many conflicts, especially in the African continent, and leads to forced displacement and irregular migration,

Although climate change is a global phenomenon, its impact is uneven. Certain regions of the world will be more affected than others, not only because they will be more exposed to the impact of climate change, but because their peoples, especially the vulnerable groups, will be less capable of coping with climate shocks. Therefore, when dealing with security risks related to climate change, there is a need to recognize the development aspect of any strategy pertaining to the preservation of peace and security. In this context, there is a need also to strengthen international cooperation and solidarity to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals, including Goal 13, on taking urgent action to address climate change and impact.

Given its belief in the common destiny of all the people of our planet, Tunisia calls for serious consideration to be given to reprioritizing the objectives of the United Nations development support system and reforming the international financial system to meet the needs of developing countries and enable them to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. This is the responsibility of all countries of the North

and the South but to varying degrees, depending on the extent to which each country has contributed to climate change. We hope in this regard that all countries concerned will show a genuine commitment to the peoples and the planet at the twenty-sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, which will be held in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November. Tunisia will make every effort, alongside the international community, to reduce the existential threat of climate change to life on our planet by advancing our commitments to addressing it, which we will announce at the Glasgow conference.

In conclusion, I reiterate my country's commitment to collective action at the United Nations and other multilateral and bilateral forums to address these emerging threats to international peace and security. We are determined to pursue our efforts to advance the Council's work on this issue. Tunisia reiterates its support for the appointment of a special envoy of the Secretary-General to follow up on this matter. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report on the impact of climate change on international peace and security. We also look forward to a Council resolution in this regard. Tunisia supports such a resolution and will engage with it.

**The President:** I now call on the Minister of State for the Commonwealth and Development, the United Nations and South Asia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**Lord Ahmad** (United Kingdom): At the outset, I should like to thank the Secretary-General and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their very powerful and insightful contributions, which have really set the tone of today's important debate. With the climate crisis posing an existential threat, not just to our shared environment but to our common security, this debate is absolutely critical. I therefore thank you, Taoiseach, and Ireland for convening this very important debate in a very timely fashion.

As we look around our world, the nations suffering most from this crisis were already counted among the world's most fragile. A dozen of the most vulnerable are already enduring the weight of armed conflict. Climate change acts as a cruel multiplier in such cases, making bad situations much worse. With institutions failing, communities displaced and societies insecure, conflict-riven nations are ill equipped to cope with the impacts of climate change.

It risks pushing fragile regions over the edge. It threatens to displace millions of people. Cities, towns and villages could be erased from the map. And, as we have already heard, the consequences of climate change hit the most vulnerable people. They hit women and girls particularly hard, from the risk of violence in camps for displaced people to the threat of child marriage when parents are plunged into poverty. And as we heard so powerfully from Ilwad Elman and as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, it was particularly poignant to hear from her how we continue to see sexual violence tragically still used as a weapon of war, as a weapon of conflict.

The world is therefore looking to the Security Council to act — and act swiftly. We welcome the efforts in many areas that the United Nations, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, has made to address this issue. But, as the Secretary-General has once again advocated, there is much more still to do. In that regard, the Security Council must play its important part. We need the United Nations system to report comprehensively on the links between climate and security so that we have the best information to inform our decisions.

We also need the right people with the right training and experience within United Nations missions to anticipate and respond to the climate crisis that exists. Of course, those missions should be as clean and as green as possible, through responsible stewardship.

To serve our shared interest in international peace, the Security Council should listen to those countries experiencing at first-hand the impact of insecurity compounded by climate change. It is also crucial that women and girls play a full and meaningful role in the work to address climate change and resolve conflict, if we are to address gender inequality and truly achieve our set objectives.

Inclusive and united, we can show global leadership in the face of global threats. As all members are aware, the United Kingdom is truly honoured to be hosting the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, but a few weeks from now in Glasgow. At that Conference, as our Prime Minister articulated only yesterday in his speech to the General Assembly (see A/76/PV.9), we are approaching a crunch point, where those efforts

need to turn into urgent action from us all, irrespective of who we are or where we are.

We must act now if we are to stop temperature increases breaching 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. We must do that by bringing forward the net-zero commitments, ambitious, nationally determined contributions and, most important, the policies and actions needed to deliver them. We must act. We must act now to secure the financing to help vulnerable States adapt to our changing climate. The United Kingdom is already demonstrating how that can be achieved. We welcome other recent announcements, including those from the United States this week.

Last year, we committed to cutting emissions by at least 68 per cent by 2030, the fastest rate of reduction of any major economy. Our climate financing commitments for the next five years stand at more than \$16 billion. The new Adaptation Action Coalition, which we launched in January, will target action on priority sectors.

However, as we have heard today, and, indeed, as the Council has repeatedly shown since its inception, global threats can be countered only with united global action. All the arms of this great institution that is the United Nations, including the Security Council, have a critical role to play to meet this existential threat. We must act effectively. We must act urgently. And we must act together. It is that critical action that is required. Indeed, it is our collective moral duty, for it falls on all of us — all of us here today — as custodians of the future we are choosing and building for our children and generations to come.

**The President:** I now call on the Vice-Minister, Secretary (West), in the Ministry of External Affairs of India.

**Ms. Sandhu (India):** We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's discussion on climate and security. We also appreciate the briefings by Secretary-General António Guterres and Ms. Ilwad Elman, underlining the different risks of climate change.

There can be no doubt that climate change is one of the defining challenges of our time. Over the past several decades, Member States have engaged purposefully and in a focused manner to put in place commitments relating to mitigation, adaptation, financing, technology transfer and so on, so that climate change can be addressed holistically. Indeed, the Paris

Agreement on Climate Change clearly brings out the interconnectedness of those issues under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The measures to tackle climate change have been built on an integrated structure so that it is equitable to all parties, especially developing countries. Therefore, addressing one aspect of climate change while ignoring others will be counter-productive. Climate action needs to be based on fundamental and agreed principles, the most important of which is the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Furthermore, the issue of climate change is being discussed in a focused manner by the United Nations in the relevant mechanisms. Whether it be on climate change, biodiversity, desertification or other issues, mechanisms have been put in place to take further action. Countries across the globe have taken on several commitments under those mechanisms, including the nationally determined contributions.

Given that background, picking one aspect of climate change — namely climate security — and dealing with it in this forum, which is not designed to address a multifaceted problem of that nature, would not be desirable. Bringing climate security into the Security Council discourse while disregarding basic principles and practices relating to climate change has the potential to disrupt our overall discussion on this extremely important topic. When we deliberate the securitization of climate, we should be careful not to build a parallel climate track. We need to continue on the path of inclusive decision-making, to which Member States have already agreed.

While we appreciate that climate change has impacted the lives of people and exacerbated conflict, to view conflicts in poorer parts of the world through the prism of climate change will serve only to present a lopsided narrative, when the reasons for the conflict are to be found elsewhere. The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change clearly states that the effect of climate variability on violence is contested. Climate change may enhance conflict but cannot be determined as a reason for it. A study of nationally determined contributions also indicates that, while parties acknowledge the adverse effects of climate change on their economies, we need to be conscious about looking at it as a risk to their social stability or as an issue of peace and security. An over-

simplification of the causes of conflict will not help resolve them, or will it justify extreme policy measures.

We need to bring back our focus to where it should be — combating climate change. India is a leader in climate action and is on track to meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement. We currently have the world's fastest-growing solar energy programme and have expanded access to clean cooking fuel to cover more than 80 million households, making it one of the largest clean-energy drives globally. In addition, 370 million LED light bulbs have been distributed, resulting in a reduction of more than 38 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually. We are committed to installing 450 gigawatts of new and renewable energy by 2030.

Apart from domestic actions, India has also taken a lead in bringing together international coalitions to generate long-term impact through partnerships. The International Solar Alliance is a leading example of how collective action translates into a positive global climate impact. It is among the fastest growing international organizations today, with 80 members and 24 more joining. India has set aside \$1.6 billion under soft loans to supplement such efforts. The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure is another successful initiative for enhancing cooperation and building resilience against natural disasters. India has allocated \$70 million to support the work of the Coalition. India and Sweden launched the Leadership Group for Industry Transition, with the support of the World Economic Forum in 2019, providing a platform for energy-intensive industry to progress on low-carbon pathways. India is also one of the 10 global champions for energy transition.

What we need now is to enhance action on all important policies that address climate change, including fulfilling the commitments on climate financing and technology transfer. For a vast number of developing countries — especially during the pandemic, when financing is drying up — robust financing for climate action cannot be overemphasized. While we may call for innovative financing, we need to be careful not to indulge in innovative accounting. The pathway to \$100 billion in climate financing is critical for meeting targets under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

To conclude, we call for a more comprehensive and collective approach, through stronger partnerships and strengthened global efforts, so that we can address the challenge of climate change together.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): We are confronted by the continued deepening of the planetary crisis that is climate change. As a small island developing State particularly affected by that existential threat and facing ever-increasing loss and damage from the adverse impacts of climate change, we value this timely meeting. I thank the Secretary-General and Ms. Elman for their excellent contributions to advancing understanding in that context. We hope that today's meeting contributes to comprehensive multilateral approaches that systematically address the consequences of climate change for international peace and security. Allow me to share our views on how we should approach that threat multiplier.

First, in order to tackle climate-related security risks in relevant situations on the Security Council's agenda, we must build capacity and enhance expertise across the United Nations. That includes embedding climate security advisers in relevant operations and considering the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary General on climate-related security risks to strengthen coordination within the system on the issue. We commend the work of the Climate Security Mechanism, which has enhanced the capacity of the United Nations system to address climate-related security risks in an efficient and logical manner.

Secondly, the Security Council must not sidestep its responsibility to address the security implications of climate change. To be sure, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change remains the primary body tasked with the responsibility to address climate change. At the same time, by utilizing the tools at its disposal, the Council can take tangible actions. Such actions include requesting increased training and enhanced reporting on climate and security; strengthening coordination with relevant actors at the local, national and regional levels; and adopting a focused draft resolution to better enable the Council to address climate and security risks. Furthermore, the Council's Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security is a useful forum to help the Council improve its awareness and understanding of the issues, and it should be supported.

Thirdly, as the foremost way to avert climate-driven security risks remains significant mitigation action, major and historical emitters must honour their commitments made under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and act to keep temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Fourthly, it is also crucial that developed countries meet their overseas development assistance commitments and provide greater support for climate adaptation and mitigation as part of a strategy to avert climate-related security risks. Scaled-up support to conflict-affected countries through concessionary loans, debt relief and quick-impact projects should be provided to alleviate some of the challenges encountered.

Fifthly, as they are integral to the whole-of-system approach, peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding should be pursued concurrently as part of a peace and security, development and humanitarian continuum. In order to be sustainable, plans and strategies must include climate change considerations at all policy stages, namely, early warning and assessment, planning and financing, implementation and monitoring. Failing to account for the reality of the adverse effects of climate change in those contexts can have long-term impacts, undermining agreements and settlement arrangements in peace negotiations due to the changed environmental conditions.

Sixthly, the Peacebuilding Commission plays a valuable role, alongside partner institutions, in assisting Member States with advancing peacebuilding in line with national priorities. We encourage closer coordination between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council, including on issues related to climate, security and peacebuilding.

Finally, we will not effectively tackle this issue without the inclusion of all stakeholders, especially those who have been consistently underrepresented and yet are the most impacted by the security consequences of climate change. Women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership is critical as we seek solutions. Similarly, young people must be included and engaged in these discussions and decision-making processes. Climate change has multi-layered and compounding effects in fragile and conflict contexts. The Security Council has recognized that, even if framed as a possibility, in a number of resolutions, but we need to act on it.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation wholeheartedly shares the international concern regarding the issue of climate change. According to our calculations, the climate in Russia is warming 2.5 times faster than the global average. At the same time, we are witnessing increasingly destructive natural phenomena. The need

to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and adapt to the negative consequences of climate change is therefore clear to us.

We welcome the Secretary-General's consistent calls for the mobilization of political will and resources to reach effective agreements on the climate track. The recent meeting organized by the Secretary-General together with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for members of the Group of Twenty and the most vulnerable countries was once again an opportunity to make sure we are on the same page and engage in a constructive exchange of views. That will undoubtedly have a positive impact on preparations for the upcoming twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Glasgow. We also commend the targeted engagement by Mr. Guterres with Member States on that matter, taking into account national specificities.

For our part, we are committed to fulfilling our international obligations in the climate sphere. The Government of the Russian Federation is taking consistent steps to reduce the carbon footprint of the national economy. We are in the process of finalizing our Low Emission Strategy for the Socioeconomic Development of the Russian Federation until 2050. We are also paying special attention to reducing methane emissions. We stand ready to cooperate with all interested parties.

Since climate change concerns us all, we believe it must become a kind of unifying agenda for the international community. That is the only way to ensure that the issue can be effectively addressed for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind. Indeed, the development of such cooperation is the focus of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Relevant efforts are also under way in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Peacebuilding Commission and in other specialized bodies. In line with the principle of a division of labour at the United Nations, they have been designated to deal with the issue of combating climate change.

We are increasingly witnessing attempts by our colleagues to add climate change to the Security Council's agenda, as has been mentioned during many of the statements we have heard today. And yet we have a couple of questions: how effective is this in terms of resolving the tasks we have before us? And to what

extent does the Council have the necessary mechanisms for this purpose without duplicating the main bodies of the United Nations, and, more importantly, without impeding their efforts? There is a Russian saying that illustrates this point: too many cooks spoil the broth.

I will be frank. We believe that the persistent and insistent attempts to advance the premise of climate change as a threat to international peace and security in the Security Council agenda at all costs introduces a completely unnecessary political component to an already complicated and sensitive discussion. Such an approach is also liable to artificially simplify the way we deal with the situation, which in turn is liable to result in one-sided or futile solutions that do nothing to strengthen stability worldwide.

Perhaps our colleagues, by involving the Security Council, simply wish to raise the profile of the climate discussion. However, I think that they would agree that the inclusion or non-inclusion of any theme or issue on the Security Council agenda should not be a gauge of its importance or relevance. The question of climate change is fully applicable in this regard, owing to its specificities. It will not benefit in any way from incorporation into the Council's agenda, and yet misunderstandings and duplications will be abundant in such a scenario.

Turning to the consequences of climate change, Russia stands ready to discuss this subject solely vis-à-vis specific country and regional matters, relying on verified scientific data and taking into account the full picture of every specific incident. To be frank, there are many more such situations than there are agenda items on the Security Council. Moreover, let us not forget that climate is but one of a host of factors that make the economic and social situation for people in specific countries all the more difficult.

I wish to emphasize the following. We believe it is counterproductive to include the climate component in the mandates of peacekeeping and special political missions. The assessment of climate-related risks, the conduct of the relevant analyses and the development of response measures should be carried out in specialized forums. Peacekeepers do not have the relevant expertise nor the necessary tools to propose viable solutions for climate change, given that experts have completed the requisite studies in this field and have the necessary training, but specialists in peace and security do not. Skills-building courses for the latter will not be enough.

Moreover, expansion of the mandate of peacekeepers is liable to result in additional administrative and financial costs and can undermine the effectiveness of mandate delivery by Blue Helmets.

In conclusion, I wish to note that the Security Council is a very serious but not universal instrument at the disposal of the United Nations, and its use is liable to backfire with respect to our struggle to counter climate change. Let us not forget this. Let us not, for the benefit of the advancement of political agendas, disperse our efforts on this important track.

**Mr. Zhang Jun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the Prime Minister of Ireland to the Chamber as he presides over today's meeting. We thank Secretary-General Guterres and Ms. Elman for their briefings.

China highly commends the United Nations and its Secretary-General for their role in leading and coordinating the multilateral process on climate.

The recent report issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change entitled *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis* warns us that climate change has become a real threat to the survival and development of humankind. The international community must therefore shoulder its responsibility, take action and work together to tackle this challenge.

China supports the upcoming twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change so that it can achieve a fruitful outcome and promote the comprehensive, effective and sustained implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The relationship between climate and security is very complex. The Security Council, on the basis of its mandate emanating from the United Nations Charter and of its existing agenda, needs to get it right in terms of the manner and extent of its engagement in discussing and addressing issues related to climate and security. In this regard, I would like to make the following comments.

First, it is imperative that we maintain the main channel for international cooperation on climate change. Climate change is a shared challenge facing humankind that requires a global response. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement constitute the most authoritative platform. The principles of common but differentiated responsibility, respective capability and equity are

the cornerstones of global climate governance. We must uphold the Framework Convention and the Paris Agreement as the main channels of the work in this area, and we must respect the right of all countries to speak on equal footing on climate change issues. It would be inappropriate for the Security Council as a forum to replace collective decision-making by the international community.

Secondly, it is essential for developed countries to earnestly fulfil their international obligations and commitments. Developed countries bear a historical responsibility for climate change. In discussing climate change and security, regardless of the platform or perspective, we should not lose sight of this very basic fact. Developed countries cannot always look to others to shoulder their responsibilities. They must take concrete actions that lead to the substantial reduction of emissions, realize net-zero or even negative carbon emissions at an early date while honouring their commitments on climate financing, fill the pre-2020 annual funding gap of \$100 billion to the greatest extent possible, provide a clear timetable and road map from 2021 to 2025, and formulate a new collective quantitative funding target post-2025.

In that regard, we have heard the appeals issued by many countries. We have also heard the Secretary-General himself. We hope that developed countries will respond to those appeals positively, which is key to the early achievement of the net-zero target. There is not only a need for the international community to make such an appeal, but also a need to establish an oversight mechanism to ensure with certainty that developed countries will live up to their commitments.

Thirdly, it is necessary that the challenge of climate change be addressed in the course of sustainable development. Climate change is a by-product of humankind's unsustainable development models. The only way out, once and for all, lies in a holistic approach within the framework of sustainable development. For enhanced resilience to climate change, countries should integrate a climate-change response into their national development programmes, aligning it with poverty eradication, employment promotion, security and clean-energy rollout.

In view of the insufficient capacity for climate-change mitigation and adaptation in countries in conflict, the Security Council may focus on climate-change-reduced risks under country specific

agenda items, mobilize, in the light of the situation on the ground, a greater input of resources from the international community and support United Nations specialized agencies in helping countries in conflict better meet the challenge.

It is worth pointing out that not all of the countries on the Council's agenda have been plunged into war and chaos because of climate change. Neither does the Council have the necessary specialized knowledge, mechanism or tools to address climate change. We therefore must refrain from using a wholesale approach to the climate issue as the key to addressing all problems. We must refrain from including it in the mandate of peacekeeping operations so as to not impact the Security Council's ability to effectively deliver on its mandate and to refrain from a duplication of effort.

As the world's largest developing country, China has always been a contributor to global climate governance, a leader in the building of a global ecological civilization and an implementer of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

In his address during the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session on 21 September (see A/76/PV.3), Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that China will step up support for other developing countries in developing green and low-carbon energy and will not build any new coal-fired power projects abroad. That is another important measure of the initiative announced by President Xi to address global climate change. He also announced last year that China will strive for its carbon dioxide emissions to peak by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060. That represents another

of our active contributions to promote a green global recovery and achieve global goals on climate change. And it demonstrates China's unwavering determination and practical action in building a community of life for humankind and nature.

China has made its support for the global effort to address climate change known and has continued its support. China is a reliable partner and takes concrete actions in that regard.

The fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity will take place next month in Kunming, Yunnan province, China. Using the opportunity of the fifteenth session of the Conference, China stands ready to work together with other countries around the world to make new contributions to global environmental governance and to jointly build a clean and beautiful planet that we call home.

**The President:** There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

Before concluding, I would like once again to thank all of the participants who joined us today. In particular, my thanks go to Secretary-General Guterres for being with us for the entirety of the meeting. We appreciate his commitment and interest.

I would also like to thank the Member States and regional groups that have so far submitted written statements on the subject of today's discussion. Statements that are received by the end of today will form part of the compilation of statements from this meeting. We look forward to receiving more.

*The meeting rose at 10.05 a.m.*