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CLIMATE, PEACE AND SECURITY

The United Nations Security Council and Climate Change

Model United Nations and Seminar for All Faculties (Course No. 096914) Summer Semester 2024

The Security Council first discussed the thematic issue of climate change and its relationship with energy and security during a ministerial-level open debate in 2007 at an initiative by the United Kingdom. In 2011, during the German Presidency of the Security Council, a Presidential Statement was adopted after extended negotiations due to diverging opinions in which the Security Council expressed “its concern that possible adverse effects of climate change may, in the long run, aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security” (S/PRST/2011/15). Criticism included that the issue of climate change rather belonged to the realms of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and, moreover, was substantially addressed by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

While the Security Council has mentioned climate change in several country- or region-specific resolutions since then, and since 2021 in resolutions related to peacekeeping operations, as well, it did not adopt a thematic resolution on climate change, peace and security until today. An attempt was made in 2021 by Ireland and Niger. The draft resolution expressed the intention that the Security Council would include “information on the security implications of climate change” into its conflict management strategies and requested the Secretary-General to “integrate climate-related security risk as central component into comprehensive conflict-prevention strategies of the United Nations” as well as include “security implications of the effects of climate change” into the planning of UN Missions, peacebuilding strategies, as well as disaster relief and humanitarian operations. The draft was supported by 12 Members of the Council as well as 113 UN Member States. However, it was vetoed on 13 December 2021 by the Russian Federation, with 12 votes in favour, one abstention (China), and India voting against, as well.

Security Council Members remain divided on the question whether climate change is a matter of peace and security, or rather a matter of sustainable development to be dealt with by the General Assembly, the ECOSOC or the UNFCCC.

We like to invite you to a **simulated Session of the Security Council** to discuss the security implications of climate change in the main organ responsible for international peace and security according to the Charter of the United Nations. Class sessions (**Thursday, 16.00 – 18.00 h, c.t.**) prior will give you an ample overview of the topic. With this class we hope to deepen your knowledge about the functioning of an international body, various aspects of international diplomacy, negotiation techniques, and also hopefully the roots and causes of the diverging opinions on the subject among UN-Member States.

You will be asked to represent one of the members of the Security Council and take an active part in the class and negotiations. Participants are expected to research their respective countries position independently and to provide a Briefing on a selected topic relating to the topic climate change, peace and security. Delegations are also asked to prepare a one-page Position Paper. Each Delegation will consist of 1-2 persons.

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Please note that the seminar/conference language will be **English**. It is possible to receive 5 ECTS-credits (Schlüsselqualifikation or Fremdsprachenfachkompetenz, FB Rechtswissenschaft). **All faculties are invited to apply.**

Applications are to be sent via email until **8 April 2024** to Peggy Wittke, peg@zedat.fu-berlin.de.

Your application should include:

- Personal Details (Name, Phone, Email, Field of Study, Student ID Number)
- Short letter of motivation (3-4 sentences only)
- 3 Country preferences
- 2 Briefing preferences

Members of the Security Council 2024: Algeria, China, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

Briefings

23 May 2024	<p>Climate, Peace and Security – Part One</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is climate change? Facts and Figures 2. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015)
30 May 2024	<p>Climate, Peace and Security – Part Two</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The First Open Debate on Energy, Security and Climate in the Security Council (2007) and the Presidential Statement on the Impact of Climate Change (2011) 4. A Turning Point? The Lake Chad Basin and Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017)
6 June 2024	<p>Climate, Peace and Security – Part Three</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Institutional Developments: The Climate-Security Mechanism, the Group of Friends, and the Informal Expert Group 6. Diverging Opinions and a Veto: The Failed Draft Resolution by Ireland and Niger (2021)

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Preliminary Schedule

Class takes place Thursdays, 16-18h in Room 4404, Boltzmannstr. 3, (if not announced differently).

Date	Session
18 April 2024	Introduction to the United Nations System <i>Peggy Wittke</i>
25 April 2024	Peace and Security I Researching the United Nations <i>Peggy Wittke</i>
2 May 2024	<i>No class due to May 1 Holiday</i>
9 May 2024	<i>No class due to Christi Himmelfahrt Holiday</i>
16 May 2024	Peace and Security II Information on Position Paper Writing <i>Peggy Wittke</i>
23 May 2024	Climate, Peace and Security – Part One <i>Briefings by Participants</i>
30 May 2024	Climate, Peace and Security – Part Two <i>Briefings by Participants</i>
6 June 2024	Climate, Peace and Security – Part Three <i>Briefings by Participants</i>
10 June 2024	Deadline Position Papers – please send to peg@zedat.fu-berlin.de
13 June 2024	The Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Security Council
20 June 2024 Thursday 10.00 h – 17.00 h Conference Room TBC	Session of the United Nations Security Council: Climate Change, Peace and Security
21 June 2024 Friday 10.00 – 16.00 h Conference Room TBC	Session of the United Nations Security Council: Climate Change, Peace and Security

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Reading strongly suggested

Security Council Report: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/index.php>

(see Topics: Energy, Climate and Natural Resources)

To get an overview of the topic, read

- ❖ Research Report (June 2021): [The UN Security Council and Climate Change](#)
- ❖ Research Report (December 2022): [The UN Security Council and Climate Change: Tracking the Agenda after the 2021 Veto : Research Report : Security Council Report](#)

Security Council Report gives a good listing of Security Council Meetings and provides selected important documents, as well.

Look at their posts What's in Blue, Monthly Forecast, and In Hindsight to get an overview of Security Council dynamics.

The United Nations – Important Websites

The United Nations Security Council: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

UN Security Council – Meeting Records and Outcomes (look for Meetings on “Maintenance of international peace and security” or “Threats to international peace and security” and find the Press Releases with summary of statements (f.e. UN Doc. SC/15318, 13 June 2023) and/or the word protocols (S/PV.9345), as well as the outcomes. For the dates, refer to Security Council Report:

<https://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick/meetings/2024>

You can watch the Security Council Meetings on UN Web TV, f.e. the last meeting on 13 June 2023:

<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1g/k1gx2kcimt>

United Nations News on the Security Council: <https://press.un.org/en/content/security-council>

UN Member State on the Record: <https://www.un.org/en/library/unms>

United Nations Climate Change – UNFCCC Platform: <https://unfccc.int/>

UN Environment Assembly (UNEA): <https://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/>

UN Environment Programme (UNEP): <https://www.unep.org/>

UN Development Programme (UNDP): <https://www.undp.org/>