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Statement delivered in the name of the Benelux countries  
by Ambassador Philippe KRIDELKA

**United Nations Security Council High-Level Open Debate**  
***"The Impact of Climate Change and Food Insecurity on the***  
***Maintenance of International Peace and Security"***

New York, 13 February 2024

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Mister President,  
Excellencies,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the three Benelux countries: the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and my own country, Belgium.

The **interlinkages between climate change, food insecurity and the maintenance of international peace and security** are obvious as we have painfully been reminded over the last years.

We therefore thank the Presidency of the Council for convening this important debate and for the concept note.

We will **focus** today **on guiding question number 4** [approach to address the challenges and support of efforts of worst affected countries].

Climate change is a **risk multiplier**. It exacerbates existing social, political, economic, environmental and gender-specific drivers of conflict. We have known this for quite some time. Climate change impacts food security specifically through less predictable weather patterns and higher temperatures. This leads to lower productivity and food quality, and can contribute to conflicts over scarce water and land.

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The **climate-food insecurity-conflict nexus** works the other way as well: conflicts exacerbate food insecurity, like in the Sahel region and especially in Sudan. We need to act now, and we need to act better.

The **following solution-oriented** elements should allow both for peace-positive climate action and addressing conflict-induced food insecurity in situations of armed conflict:

- Council members' repeated "**pledges**" to focus on the implications of climate change for international peace and security are good and practical examples of what action should look like.
- The **mainstreaming** of a climate informed peace and security approach has become a necessity. The Benelux countries further support the inclusion of climate change language in **Security Council products and mandates**.
- The Benelux countries echo the numerous voices that would like to see regular comprehensive **reports by the Secretary-General** on climate, peace and security issues. This is also true for food security issues, as requested by resolution 2417. This would allow the Security Council to focus on the most affected countries and regions and trigger the Council's action.
- We hope that a consensus will be reached on the suggestions presented in the UN Secretary-General's policy brief on a "**New Agenda for Peace**". The Benelux countries support the recognition of **climate, peace and security as a political priority** and the strengthening of connections between multilateral bodies to ensure that climate action and peacebuilding reinforce each other.

- In this line of thought, it is critical that we collectively support the **Climate Security Mechanism (CSM)** and its development. The exchange of data, experience and good practices, is crucial. The Climate Security Mechanism is a leading example in this field. We fully support the enhanced deployment of Climate, Peace and Security advisors in UN missions and operations as well as regional organisations that enable both deeper analyses and concrete actions.
- We would like to emphasize **the impact of food systems on climate change** and the fact that adapting them is part of the solution to the climate, environmental and food crisis. We therefore welcome the importance given to food systems at COP28 and believe food systems should feature prominently at the Summit of the Future as well.
- We welcome the excellent work done by the **Food and Agriculture Organization**, the **World Food Program**, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development in **reporting to** and contributing to informing the **Security Council** on food security in crisis countries and territories with conflict situations.
- Finally, the Benelux countries reiterate the call for collective action and for a renewed commitment to the **implementation of Resolution 2417**, which bars using hunger and starvation as weapons of war. We consider it a landmark resolution. We have to collectively live up to the commitment of breaking the unbearable cycle of conflict and hunger!

I thank you for your attention.