

KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Intervention of

Ambassador Karen Van Vlierberge
Deputy Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

Virtual Arria meeting on Climate and Security at the Security Council

New York, 22/4/2020

Dear Mr. President, dear colleagues,

We are delighted to co-organize today's meeting and thank France for their initiative. We align ourselves with the intervention of the European Union.

Climate change is increasingly seen as a **major factor influencing peace and security**. Belgium sees three priorities in improving the work of the UN and the Security Council in this regard: (1) further mainstreaming the issue into mandates and in-country action; (2) improving information management; and (3) strengthening reporting.

Belgium's primary focus is **mainstreaming** climate-related security risks into relevant Council action. We are pleased that currently ten national, regional or thematic mandates, including most recently MONUSCO and UNOWAS, integrate this aspect which better equips missions with regard to risk management. We expect these missions to have dedicated capacity for climate-related security risks, both in terms of personnel and training, and to support the efforts of national and regional organizations.

Second, we need **better data and improved information management**. Developing analytical and forecasting tools for risk assessment will feed early warning systems and improve our capacity for conflict prevention. To this end, the UN needs an 'institutional clearing house' that mobilizes existing expertise and makes it available to the Security Council. We strongly support the work of the Climate Security Mechanism in this regard which could usefully be complemented by strengthened member state coordination.

Third, this strengthened information basis should subsequently result in a regular **report by the Secretary General** to the Security Council on climate-related risks and recommended preventive measures. This should include age and gender-disaggregated analysis and will improve our collective understanding of which regions and sectors are most impacted. We also expect regular country-level reporting to fully integrate climate-related security risks and encourage the Secretariat to organize horizon-scanning briefings related to climate.

In conclusion, the **engagement of the Security Council** on climate-related security risks has steadily increased over the past years. More and more countries are experiencing the security and humanitarian implications of climate change. They look to us for strong and concerted action. We

should do so in an inclusive manner, involving civil society and recognizing the important role of women, while also being mindful of the environmental impacts of peacekeeping mission's operations.

Belgium looks forward to working together with all Council members to make this happen.

Thank you.