

United Nations Security Council
Ministerial Open Debate
Climate Change, Peace and Security

Statement by
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of Belgium to the United Nations

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Madam President, [*Ms. Mariam bint Mohammed Saeed Hareb Almheiri, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment*]

Belgium aligns itself with the statements of the European Union and the Group of Friends on Climate and Security.

No country is currently safe from the devastating effects of climate change.

Climate change is a risk multiplier that exacerbates existing social, political, economic, environmental and gender-specific drivers of conflict. We have known this for quite some time now.

We thank the Presidency of the Council for convening this timely meeting on Climate, Peace and Security, and the briefers for their insightful remarks, and hope that the Council will react to the calls for action!

Several initiatives have been taken on the margins of the recent Climate Change Conferences of the Parties, such as the signing of the Climate Environment Peace Security Declaration and the adherence to the Initiative of the same name in November last year.

Last March, Belgium took part to the first meeting of the Steering Committee of the Climate Responses for Sustaining Peace (CRSP) in Cairo. We commend Egypt for this initiative focused on Africa and for its purpose of African ownership.

We also take note of the repeated call for action from a lot of countries, notably from Africa, some of them in this room.

I would like to insist on three points that mainly relate to the questions regarding our collective toolbox and the voices of those most impacted:

My first point touches upon mainstreaming. Belgium fully supports the Council in its attempts to mainstream the security-climate risks, notably by taking them systematically into account in its mandates, in order to lead to concrete action.

We welcome and support climate related initiatives by UN departments and agencies, such as the Climate Security Mechanism (or CSM) - which has entered a new phase - and the appointment of Climate, Peace and Security Advisors.

Appointing a Special Envoy for climate and security would enhance a UN-wide approach.

Furthermore, we are convinced that the Secretary General's early warning systems' initiative can prevent the most severe impact of climate related events and play an important part in the chain of conflict prevention. That's why Belgium will be contributing to the Systematic Observations Finance Facility, which gathers weather and climate data in order to increase resilience.

We join the numerous voices that would like to see regular comprehensive reports by the Secretary-General on the climate, peace and security issue, allowing the Council to focus on the most affected countries and regions.

Madame la présidente,

Mon second point - qui est directement lié au premier - a trait à l'**action concrète des missions onusiennes**. L'empreinte carbone de celles-ci doit être diminuée là où cela est possible, ce qui requiert un effort additionnel de la part de tous les acteurs concernés. Les opérations de maintien de la paix et les missions politiques spéciales ont un impact significatif sur l'environnement ainsi que, de façon plus générale, sur les contextes dans lesquels elles évoluent. Nous soutenons l'objectif du secrétariat quant à un recours plus important aux énergies renouvelables. Nous espérons que le prochain rapport du Secrétaire Général sur le maintien de la paix pourra y consacrer une attention particulière.

Mon troisième point porte sur les **voix des pays qui accueillent les opérations et les missions**. Nous regrettons l'absence de consensus global sur le lien entre le climat et la sécurité alors que certains pays d'Afrique centrale et de l'ouest appellent à porter une attention particulière aux conséquences du changement climatique sur la sécurité de leurs régions respectives. Nous espérons que leurs voix seront prises en compte et que cela permettra la publication prochaine des déclarations de la présidence relatives à l'UNOWAS et l'UNOCA.

Madame la présidente,

La lutte contre le changement climatique est une responsabilité collective. La COP 28 constituera une occasion unique pour franchir une étape additionnelle concernant la thématique « climat, paix et sécurité ». Nous espérons que le Conseil prendra ses responsabilités et qu'il apportera sa pierre à l'édifice.

Je vous remercie.