

**OPEN DEBATE OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL:
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENERGY, SECURITY AND CLIMATE**

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madame President

We thank you personally for presiding over this meeting and thus giving it additional significance. We are also grateful to your delegation for launching this initiative as well as for preparing a very useful note verbal in order to provide guidance for this debate. The concept of international peace and security, as provided for under the Charter, has been subject to an increasingly broader interpretation over the past few years, and today's debate constitutes a further step in this evolution. We agree with those that have pointed to the competence of other bodies in the area under discussion today, in particular the Commission on Sustainable Development and the General Assembly. At the same time, climate change and energy problems certainly have the potential of posing a threat to international peace and security. This debate is therefore an appropriate way to address a potential future threat and a good way for the Security Council to adopt preventative approaches, wherever possible.

Madame President

It is quite clear already that environmental issues have in many cases at least strong corollary effects on situations that threaten peace and security. Several ongoing conflicts, for example, are among other factors driven by the scarcity of water resources and all figures available indicate that this particular issue will be dramatically exacerbated in the near future, since the availability of water will significantly decrease globally over the next few years. Other obvious issues are mass displacement and migration due to adverse environmental conditions, food shortages and lack of cultivable land. It would appear that all potential threats from environmental damage come together in the overarching threat posed by climate change. While this threat was recognized quite some time ago, the collective international response has nevertheless not been very swift and it has not been adequate. We strongly welcome the personal commitment of the Secretary-General

to make climate change one of his priorities as well as the current efforts to address this threat in a more effective way, beyond the year 2012 and beyond the terms of the Kyoto Protocol. Clearly, the international response has been insufficient in the past. But at the same time, it seems clear that determined action will allow us to design a more effective response. There is barely an issue on which multilateral action is more obviously needed and indeed indispensable.

Madame President

It will of course not be this Council that will make a decision on the collective response to climate change. However, the Council – as the most prestigious UN body – can make a significant contribution both to promoting a full understanding of the nature of the threat and by addressing some of its elements on an ad hoc basis and as part of situations that threaten peace and security. We understand that this meeting will not result in a formal outcome. This is in keeping with the character of this debate whose main goal is to raise awareness and to promote a shared understanding of the risks we are facing. Nevertheless, we hope that this event will positively affect the manner in which the Council conducts its work in the future. In making its decisions and designing a response to situations that threaten international peace and security, the Council must take into account all relevant factors. Environmental factors have clearly been neglected in the past, and even in instances where they are of quite obvious relevance, and there is much room for improvement there. In order to do so, the Council could increasingly resort to the relevant expertise on these matters which is available in the UN system, but not necessarily in those parts of the Secretariat that traditionally service the Security Council. Formal and informal briefings from the competent UN agencies and programs could greatly assist the Council in its efforts to make informed decisions. The Council could also consider setting up a special entity providing such expertise or simply include such expertise in its capacity in the area of conflict prevention.

I thank you.

