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CLIMATE, PEACE AND SECURITY

The United Nations Security Council and Climate Change

Seminar for All Faculties

Winter Semester 2026/2027 *(Course No. 095932)*

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 also in resolutions related to peacekeeping operations, 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 request 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, disaster relief and humanitarian operations. The draft was supported by 12 Members of the Council and 113 UN Member States. However, it was vetoed on 13 December 2021 by the Russian Federation, with 12 votes in favor, 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 Seminar to explore the security implications of climate change and how the main organ responsible for international peace and security according to the Charter of the United Nations has dealt with the issue so far. The seminar will consist of an introductory meeting on **16 October 2026 (14.00 – 16.00 h)** where Briefings will be assigned. The actual seminar takes place on **Wednesday, 16 December, Thursday, 17 December, and Friday, 18 December, 10.00 – 18.00 h.** Participants are expected to provide a Briefing (teams of 1-2 persons) on a selected topic relating to Climate, Peace and Security (CPS). In addition, debating exercises will be held with a specific focus on debating skills, argumentation and rhetorics.

Please note that the seminar language will be **English**. It is possible to receive **5 ECTS-credits** (Schlüsselqualifikation or Fremdsprachenfachkompetenz, "ABV", Faculty of Law).

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Applications are to be sent via email until 6 October 2026 to Peggy Wittke, peggy.wittke@fu-berlin.de.

Your application should include:

- Personal Details (Name, Phone, **FU-Email**, Field of Study + Semester, Student ID Number)
- Short letter of motivation (3-4 sentences only)
- 2 Briefing preferences (Topic No. 1-9)

Briefings

16 December 2026	**Climate, Peace and Security (CPS) – Part One** 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) 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)
17 December 2026	**Climate, Peace and Security – Part Two** 4. A Turning Point? The Lake Chad Basin and Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017) 5. Sweden Takes a Lead: The Security Council Meeting on Understanding and Addressing Climate-related Security Risks, 11 July 2018 6. Diverging Opinions and a Veto: The Failed Draft Resolution by Ireland and Niger (2021)
18 December 2026	Climate, Peace and Security – Part Three 7. Institutional Developments: The Climate-Security Mechanism, the Group of Friends, the Informal Expert Group, and the UN Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change 8. Integrating CPS-Aspects Into Peacekeeping Mandates since 2020 9. After the Veto: Security Council Action on Climate, Peace and Security since 2021

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Preliminary Schedule

Class takes place Wednesday, 16-18h in Room 3306, Boltzmannstr. 3.

Date	Session
16 October 2026 **Friday** **14.00 – 16.00 h**	Introduction to the Seminar *Peggy Wittke*
16 December 2026 **Wednesday** **10.00 – 18.00 h**	**Climate, Peace and Security – Part One** *Please bring your computer for your personal use.*
10.00 – 11.00 h	**1. What is climate change? Facts and Figures** *Briefing by participants*
11.15 – 12.15 h	**2. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015)** *Briefing by participants*
ca. 12.30 – 13.30 h	**Lunch Break**
13.30 – 15.00 h	**Debating Exercise**
15.15 – 16.15 h	**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)** *Briefing by participants*
16.30 – 18.00 h	**Discussion**
17 December 2026 **Thursday** **10.00 – 18.00 h**	**Climate, Peace and Security – Part Two** *Please bring your computer for your personal use.*
10.00 – 11.00 h	**4. A Turning Point? The Lake Chad Basin and Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017)** *Briefing by participants*
11.15 – 12.15 h	**5. Sweden Takes a Lead: The Security Council Meeting on Understanding and Addressing Climate-related Security Risks, 11 July 2018** *Briefing by participants*
ca. 12.30 – 13.30 h	**Lunch Break**

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Date	Session
13.30 – 14.45 h	**Debating Exercise**
15.00 – 16.00 h	**6. Diverging Opinions and a Veto: The Failed Draft Resolution by Ireland and Niger (2021)** *Briefing by participants*
16.30 – 18.00 h	**Debate by UN Member States**
18 December 2026 Friday 10.00 – 18.00 h	**Climate, Peace and Security – Part Three** *Please bring your computer for your personal use.*
10.00 – 11.00 h	**7. Institutional Developments: The Climate-Security Mechanism, the Group of Friends, the Informal Expert Group, and the UN Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change** *Briefing by participants*
11.15 – 12.15 h	**8. Integrating CPS-Aspects Into Peacekeeping Mandates since 2020** *Briefing by participants*
ca. 12.30 – 13.30 h	**Lunch Break**
13.30 – 14.15 h	**Debating Exercise**
14.30 – 15.30 h	**9. After the Veto: Security Council Action on Climate, Peace and Security since 2021** *Briefing by participants*
16.00 – 18.00 h	**Final Discussion**

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, please read

- Research Report (June 2021): climate_security_2021.pdf
- 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 since their latest report 2022.

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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 the Peace Security Data Hub or Security Council Report:

https://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick/meetings/2026

You can watch the SC Meetings on UN Web TV, f.e. the three latest meetings (2025, 2024 and 2023):

Climate and Security: Environmental Impact of Armed Conflict and Climate-driven Security Risks - Security Council, 10035th meeting

Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Climate, Food Security and Conflict - Security Council, 9547th meeting | UN Web TV

Climate Change, Peace and Security - Security Council, 9345th Meeting | UN Web TV

Peace Security Data Hub: Security Council Data - Climate, Peace and Security in Security Council Decisions (contains as well CPS-related Meetings) https://psdata.un.org/dataset/CPS-Decisions

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/