



Summary: CSEN ROUNDTABLE JANUARY 2021

The Climate Security Expert Network (CSEN) Roundtable took place on 28 January 2021 in a digital format. It aimed at updating CSEN members on progress and achievements within the network, reviewing past political developments and future possibilities relating to climate and security, especially within the UN Security Council, and presenting the flagship climate security risk and foresight assessment, [Weathering Risk](#). The event was also an opportunity for CSEN experts to share their thoughts on key priorities for the UN Security Council on climate and security, hear about the perspectives of incoming UN Security Council member states, and connect and exchange with other CSEN experts.

PROGRESS ON CLIMATE AND SECURITY

In his opening remarks, **Hinrich Thölken, Ambassador, Special Envoy for digitalisation and digital transformation of the German Federal Foreign Office**, highlighted that one central goal of Germany is to enable the UN Security Council (UNSC) to address and develop strategic responses to climate-related security risks. To this end, context-specific and localised analyses and information, such as those provided by the CSEN, are essential. He further outlined Germany's engagement beyond its UNSC membership, which will include continuing chairing the Group of Friends on Climate Security, linking it with the Informal Expert Group, engaging with the new US administration on climate and security, hosting the Berlin Climate and Security Conference and supporting Weathering Risk.

Janani Vivekananda, Head of Programme at adelphi, presented [Weathering Risk](#). The multilateral climate and security risk and foresight assessment initiative, led by adelphi and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), aims to facilitate risk-informed planning, enhance capacity for action and improve operational responses that promote climate resilience and peace. [Link?](#)

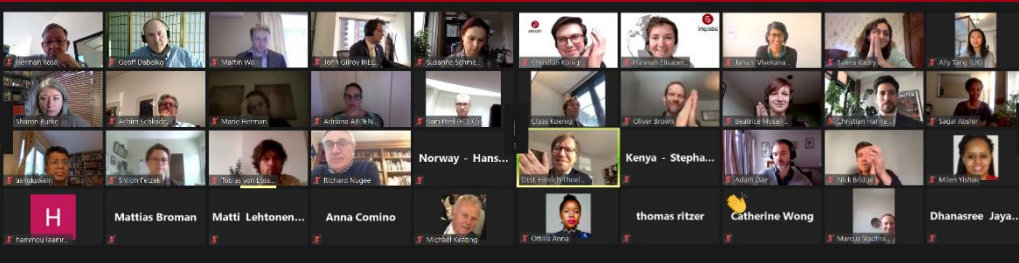
Beatrice Mosello, Senior Advisor at adelphi, shared highlights from the CSEN, such as its [report library](#), which includes 11 CSEN Risk Briefs and Factsheets looking at climate-related security risks in several geographical contexts, and eight Policy Papers, covering specific aspects of the climate and security debate. She stressed the CSEN's important role in advising governments and international organisations on entry points for building resilience to climate-related security risks. For example, CSEN briefers were present at the UNSC [Open Debate on 24 July 2020](#). The CSEN has helped to strengthen a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities related to climate and security through the organisation of seven workshops for five different regions together with local CSEN members and partner organisations.

DISCUSSION

Nick Bridge, UK Foreign Secretary's Special Representative for Climate Change, underscored the UK's commitment to advance the topic of climate and security using its unique opportunity as a chair of the UN Security Council, COP26 and G7 presidency in 2021. He stressed that the debate should move towards the question of how to concretely tackle climate-related security risks and highlighted the UK's ambition to build on Germany's achievements to continue growing the support among UN member states to mainstream climate and security within the UN system.

Building on Nick Bridge's input, **Lieutenant General Richard Nugee from the UK Ministry of Defence** highlighted that Weathering Risk brings in and cooperates with Ministries of Defence. He reiterated that the military is not the only solution to climate-induced security risks, but is a part of it.

CSEN members articulated the important contributions of Weathering Risk, as well as future possible work areas for the CSEN. They suggested areas for more evidence and analysis from the CSEN, including on the gender dimensions of climate and security, climate-driven migration and internal displacement, climate-related security risks in urban areas, environmental degradation, and the inclusion of regional frameworks into the climate and security debate. They noted that the climate and security agenda remains mostly driven by Northern countries; anchoring the agenda with a broader spectrum of stakeholders globally will be crucial to ensure inclusivity, comprehensiveness and to avoid backsliding. There was also broad agreement that the new US administration offers significant opportunities to expand multilateral action on climate and security.



WHAT'S NEXT FOR CLIMATE AND SECURITY IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL?

Martin Wall, Deputy Director, Climate Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs Ireland, presented two priorities for Ireland, which has a seat in the UNSC in 2021-2022, regarding climate and security: 1) build consensus and bridges among member states to advance the climate and security agenda; 2) take a practical look at how and where to add resources and how to interlink different agendas. He noted that a UNSC resolution on climate and security would be historic, but currently there is no consensus for it.

Hans Olav Ibrek, Policy Director Section for Energy and Climate from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlighted the need for context-specific and actionable data and information to adequately respond to changing risk landscapes. He called for moving climate and security from the preambular to the operational paragraphs of UNSC resolutions, and stressed the importance of multilateral and intersectoral research to provide the required evidence base. He thanked Germany and the CSEN for taking leadership and providing valuable insights into the climate and security debate, and stressed the key role of the Climate Security Mechanism, the Group of Friends and the Internal Expert Group in moving it forward.

Stephanie Muigai, Second Counsellor/Security Council, Foreign Ministry Kenya, noted that climate and security is a priority for Kenya and asked the CSEN members for concrete suggestions for strengthening the topic within the UNSC during its membership. **Adriana Abdenur, CSEN expert and co-founder and Executive Director of Plataforma CIPÓ**, identified some concrete entry points, including a) improved risk assessment tools, b) the deployment of advisors, c) enhanced climate mitigation and adaptation via peace operations, and d) linking climate and security to other agendas, such as the women, peace and security or the youth, peace and security agenda.

CSEN experts stressed the importance of considering the impacts of national policies on global developments with regard to climate change and climate security, and how those most affected see these issues, which is essential to meet the needs on the ground.

Participants were clear about the importance for the UNSC to look at climate change impacts across different work areas, and cooperate with other UN organs to address them. The range of available tools to deal with climate-related security risks should be broadened, for example by starting to conceive and implement climate change mitigation and adaptation interventions simultaneously. To make progress and convince more peace and security actors to engage, real peace dividends are needed.

NEXT STEPS

The CSEN will continue to produce publications, such as risk briefs, and policy papers to strengthen the evidence base on climate-related security risks, and organise events to share knowledge and experiences on how to address them. Due to strong demand for local expert knowledge, the CSEN will most likely focus on more context-specific outputs, for example at the regional level. Regional Dialogues will also be continued in future, including in digital formats. Weathering Risk will go beyond providing specific and reliable data and information, and make research available and easy to use for policy makers. The CSEN is open to broaden its expert base, especially in regions under-represented in climate and security research. Suggestions for new members can be submitted to the [CSEN Secretariat](#) for review.

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The **Climate Security Expert Network**, which comprises some 30 international experts, supports the **Group of Friends on Climate and Security** and the **Climate Security Mechanism of the UN** system by synthesising scientific knowledge and expertise, advising on entry points for building resilience to climate-security risks, and helping to strengthen a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities of addressing climate-related security risks.

www.climate-security-expert-network.org

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