



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

United Nations Security Council  
2021-2022

STATEMENT AS DELIVERED BY AMB. RAYCHELLE OMAMO, SC,  
EGH

CABINET SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF KENYA

DURING

THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE

ON

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY:  
CLIMATE AND SECURITY

23<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021 at 8:00am

**Thank you for giving me the floor,**

1. I congratulate you, Mr. President on Ireland's stewardship of the UN Security Council this month and thank you for personally presiding over the Council's open debate on the subject at hand.
2. I also thank the Secretary-General and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their insightful briefings.

**Mr. President,**

3. Climate change is leading to profound effects globally with respect to extreme weather conditions, migration, resource competition, and on the livelihoods and economies of millions of people across the world. These are combining to increase the fragility of states, propagating resource conflict and escalating existing violent confrontations.
4. This is particularly the case in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and in Small Island Developing States.
5. As we prepare to undertake COP-26 in a few short weeks, we should keep in mind that climate change adaptation will need to deliver on conflict prevention and resolution.
6. It will call for the commitments made to the regions that have not caused climate change but are experiencing its adverse effects to be implemented in a conflict-sensitive fashion.
7. On its part, and given its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the Council should also take a pragmatic approach to dealing with climate change particularly in climate conflict situations.

8. I will underscore **SIX** measures that Kenya considers pivotal in this regard:

- i. First: The growing body of evidence on the climate-security nexus must be developed with experts, states and institutions in the Global South where the challenge is most keenly felt. This research agenda must be inclusive for to enable emerging policy recommendations to be vividly embraced.
- ii. Second: The definitive research on this nexus will need to benefit from the Science-Policy Interface that is anchored in the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) domiciled in Nairobi. Mr. President, as UNEP prepares to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, its place at the centre of environmental multilateralism must be restored and strengthened if the battle against climate change is to be won.
- iii. Third: Technologies and practices that have been employed over long periods of time by millions of people are often not only resilient, but are also often, more fit for purpose. We therefore need to build on local knowledge and practices that are proven to work especially in enhancing resilience of communities against climate change effects. It is this indigenous knowledge (which is often the knowledge of women) that can form the basis of peace and mediation efforts with respect to climate induced conflicts.
- iv. Fourth: The highest priority must be given to climate action not compromising the ability of countries to develop rapidly. Climate action must be fair and must be seen to be fair for it to draw the support of the vast majority of states. After all, we all understand that the bulk of the resources for climate adaptation will need to be drawn from domestic resources.

Meaning that countries will need to have access to revenues from growing economies if they are to respond adequately in a fashion that protects peace and security.

- v. Fifth: We need the development of early warning systems that map climate change hotspots to enable decision-making tools that prevent and minimise conflict at the national, regional and international levels.
  - vi. Finally, Mr. President: UN Peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions especially those in Africa must have clear climate action mandates, including environmental protection and restoration particularly within the sprawling refugee camps within our continent. These missions must also have the ability to collect data especially gender disaggregated data to understand the nexus between women, climate change and conflict. Finally, our peace support missions must have the capabilities to respond to climate change calamities to protect vulnerable people.
9. As I conclude, Mr. President, Kenya commends Ireland and Niger, co-chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security for their efforts towards a thematic resolution.
10. Kenya will continue to be an anchor in the articulation of global environmental issues. We will, in this regard, remain a strong and consistent voice for Africa, and the Global South, including Small Island Developing States in the pursuit of representative climate and security solutions.

**I thank you for your kind attention.**