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SECURITY COUNCIL HOLDS FIRST-EVER DEBATE ON IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

ON PEACE, SECURITY, HEARING OVER 50 SPEAKERS

Some Delegations Raise Doubts Regarding Council's Role on Issue, While Others, Particularly Small Island States, Welcome Council's Consideration

With scientists predicting that land and water resources will gradually become more scarce in the coming years, and that global warming may irreversibly alter the face of the planet, the United Nations Security Council today held its first-ever debate on the impact of climate change on security, as some delegates raised doubts over whether the Council was the proper forum to discuss the issue.

The day-long meeting, called by the United Kingdom, aimed to examine the relationship between energy, security and climate, and featured interventions from more than 50 delegations, representing imperilled island nations and industrialized greenhouse gas emitters alike. While some speakers praised the initiative, there were reservations from developing countries, which saw climate change as a socio-economic development issue to be dealt with by the more widely representative General Assembly. Many delegations also called for the United Nations to urgently consider convening a global summit on the issue.

The session was chaired by British Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, whose country holds the presidency of the 15-nation Council for April. She said that recent scientific evidence reinforced, or even exceeded, the worst fears about climate change, as she warned of migration on an unprecedented scale because of flooding, disease and famine. She also said that drought and crop failure could cause intensified competition for food, water and energy.

She said that climate change was a security issue, but it was not a matter of narrow national security -- it was about "our collective security in a fragile and increasingly interdependent world". By holding today's debate, the Council was not seeking to pre-empt the authority of other bodies, including the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The decisions that they came to, and action taken, in all those bodies required the fullest possible understanding of the issues involved. "[So] climate change can bring us together, if we have the wisdom to prevent it from driving us apart," she declared.

Calling for a “long-term global response” to deal with climate change, along with unified efforts involving the Security Council, Member States and other international bodies, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that projected climate changes could not only have serious environmental, social and economic implications, but implications for peace and security, as well.

“This is especially true in vulnerable regions that face multiple stresses at the same time -- pre-existing conflict, poverty and unequal access to resources, weak institutions, food insecurity and incidence of diseases such as HIV/AIDS,” he said. The Secretary-General outlined several “alarming, though not alarmist” scenarios, including limited or threatened access to energy increasing the risk of conflict, a scarcity of food and water transforming peaceful competition into violence and floods and droughts sparking massive human migrations, polarizing societies and weakening the ability of countries to resolve conflicts peacefully.

China’s representative was among those who argued that the Council was not the proper forum for a debate on climate change. “The developing countries believe that the Security Council has neither the professional competence in handling climate change -- nor is it the right decision-making place for extensive participation leading up to widely acceptable proposals,” he said.

The issue could have certain security implications, but, generally speaking, it was, in essence, an issue of sustainable development. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change had laid down the fundamental principles for the international community’s response to climate change. The Kyoto Protocol had set up targets for developed countries -- limited, but measurable -- for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. To effectively respond to climate change, he said it was necessary to follow the principle of “common, but differentiated, responsibilities” set forth in the Convention, respect existing arrangements, strengthen cooperation and encourage more action.

The representative of Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China, agreed, saying that the Council’s primary duty was to maintain international peace and security. Other issues, including those related to economic and social development, were assigned to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The ever-increasing encroachment of the Security Council on the roles and responsibilities of the other main organs of the United Nations represented a “distortion” of the principles and purposes of the Charter, infringed on the authority of the other bodies and compromised the rights of the Organization’s wider membership.

But Papua New Guinea’s representative, who spoke on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, said that the impact of climate change on small islands was no less threatening than the dangers guns and bombs posed to large nations. Pacific island countries were likely to face massive dislocations of people, similar to population flows sparked by conflict. The impact on identity and social cohesion were likely to cause as much resentment, hatred and alienation as any refugee crisis.

“The Security Council, charged with protecting human rights and the integrity and security of States, is the paramount international forum available to us,” he said. The Forum did not expect the Council to get involved in Climate Change Convention negotiations, but it did expect the 15-member body to keep the issue of climate change under continuous review, to ensure that all countries contributed to solving the problem and that those efforts were commensurate with

their resources and capacities. It also expected the Council to review sensitive issues, such as implications for sovereignty and international legal rights from the loss of land, resources and people.

Singapore's speaker said that, while it was obvious that there was some discomfort about the venue and nature of today's debate, it was equally obvious that climate change was "the" global environmental challenge. Given their paucity of resources, developing countries would be the hardest hit, and some had their survival at stake. But it was not only the poor that would suffer. There was broad consensus that it was necessary to act to arrest what "we ourselves are responsible for". Many of the problems caused by climate change could only be tackled if nations worked together.

"Let us view our procedural disagreements against this backdrop," he said. While it might be difficult to quantify the relationship between climate change and international peace and security, there should be no doubt that climate change was an immediate global challenge, whose effects were transboundary and multifaceted. He was not advocating that the Security Council play a key role on climate change, but neither could he deny that body "some sort of a role, because it seems obvious to all but the wilfully blind that climate change must, if not now, then eventually have some impact on international peace and security.

Also participating in today's debate were the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy, the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (on behalf of the European Union), the Minister for Development and Cooperation of the Netherlands and the Minister for State and Foreign Affairs of the Maldives.

Others taking part in the meeting were the representatives of Belgium, Ghana, Congo, Qatar, United States, France, Indonesia, Panama, South Africa, Russian Federation, Peru, Switzerland, Japan, Namibia, Barbados, Ukraine, Egypt, Australia, New Zealand, Tuvalu, Bangladesh, Venezuela, Sudan (on behalf of the African Group), Solomon Islands, Palau, Denmark, Iceland, Marshall Islands, Philippines, Mexico, Brazil, India, Republic of Korea, Norway, Federated States of Micronesia, Argentina, Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Liechtenstein, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Costa Rica, Israel, Canada, Mauritius and Comoros.

The meeting began at 10:20 a.m. and suspended at 1:20 p.m. The Council resumed its debate at 3:15 p.m. and wrapped up at 6:35 p.m.

Background

The Security Council met this morning to hold its first-ever open debate exploring the relationship between energy, security and climate. As outlined in a letter from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the President of the Council (document S/2007/186), the discussion was expected to focus on the security implications of climate changes, including their impact on potential drivers of conflict, such as access to energy, water, food and other scarce resources; population movements; and border disputes.

Statements

The President of the Security Council, MARGARET BECKETT, Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, opened today's debate, saying that, while there was some doubt about whether the Council was the right forum, the Council's responsibility was the maintenance of international peace and security, and climate change exacerbated many threats, including conflict and access to energy and food. There was also potential economic disruption, which would inevitably have an impact on the world. The international community needed to recognize that there was a security impact from climate change, and begin to build a shared understanding of the relationship between energy, security and climate. By holding today's debate, the Council was not seeking to pre-empt the authority of other bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and various subsidiary bodies and agencies. The decisions that they came to, and action taken, in all those bodies required the fullest possible understanding of the issues involved. So, she very much looked forward to today's debate.

JÁN KUBIŠ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, said that the complexity of the climate system made it difficult to predict, but there was now an effective consensus among the world's leading scientists that there was a discernible human influence on the climate and a link between the concentration of carbon dioxide and the increase in temperature. Now was time to consider the policy dimensions of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had already finalized a new report that assessed the current and future impact of global warming and explored opportunities for proactively adapting to them. The report concluded that many elements of the natural and physical environment were already responding to the effects of humanity's greenhouse gas emissions.

Continuing, he said it was important to underline the scale of the implications for the developing world. It was fairly easy to appreciate the security, stability and health problems that would arise in a world in which there was increasing pressure on water availability, where there was a major loss of arable land, food shortages and large-scale displacements of population due to flooding and other climate change effects. The poorest countries would suffer most. Over the coming decades, the Arctic, sub-Saharan Africa, small island States, low-lying ecosystems and water resources, and agricultural production in certain regions would be at particular risk.

Such threats and growing social stress could only be properly addressed through international agreements and their consistent implementation, he continued. Only concerted action by Governments could successfully address the long-term challenges of fighting climate change and stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, while avoiding severe global economic and political strains and sustaining economic growth. The 1987 Montreal Protocol had shown how quickly a global environmental problem could be reversed, once targets were agreed upon. Slovakia was strongly engaged to work with the world's industrial countries and emerging economies to reach emission-reduction targets after the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol ended in 2012. Emissions trading was one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing carbon emissions, and the emission-trading scheme in Europe was of great importance to overall targets in that respect. A worldwide network of such schemes could accelerate positive effects. It was also necessary to continue to support investments of new low-carbon technologies, and there were ways to consider nuclear energy as a cleaner choice. Those were some of the reasons Slovakia would follow the respective decisions of the March European Council on energy that had established binding European Union commitments on carbon dioxide emissions.

Security was only one of the factors to be considered under the climate change overall agenda, he added, but, in this case, it was well in line with Security Council resolution 1625

(2005) to comprehensively address the root causes of armed conflict and political and social crises. Notwithstanding what the other forums, including the General Assembly, already dealt with, the Council was well positioned to incorporate that new dimension of perception of threats into its considerations, while still remaining within its mandate.

VITTORIO CRAXI, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy, said the present debate would help provide “food for thought on the right actions to take in the competent fora”. Climate change had the potential of affecting not only the environment, but also stability and security, especially when they coincided with problems of an ethnic, cultural, political or economic character. For example, territorial changes caused by a rise in sea levels might impinge on disputes over borders or the division of maritime zones. Environmental degradation related to climate change might drive entire populations away from areas such as sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia and small islands -- indeed, it had been estimated that, by 2010, such “population shifts” might number 50 million people. Those conflicts and mass exoduses would then contribute to an increase in poverty, which, in turn, would increase pockets of discontent and recruitment by rebels or terrorists.

He noted the relationship between climate change and energy consumption, which, he said, was reflected in crisis situations between States. Indeed, the modern lifestyle required huge amounts of energy, translating into a search for large quantities of fossil fuels, which could produce geopolitical tensions and “environmental unsustainability”. Common strategies were needed to address risks related to climate change and the world’s current model of economic growth. In the context of the United Nations, Member States should strive to implement a system of multilateral environmental governance, as referred to by the Secretary-General in his report on the recommendations of the Panel on System-Wide Coherence. Indeed, Italy believed firmly in creating a United Nations environmental organization.

He said the European Union had recently committed to reduce greenhouse emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 and by 30 per cent in the event that a post-Kyoto international agreement was reached. Targets were being set to increase energy efficiency, renewable energy and use of biofuel. Italy played an active role on environmental questions within the “Group of Eight” framework, and planned to hold a national conference on climate in September.

JOHAN VERBEKE (Belgium) said the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reaffirmed the scope of the phenomenon and the urgency with which it needed to be addressed. The international community must address the issue in an integrated manner, which dealt with the need to promote growth, while, at the same time, protecting the environment and reducing fossil fuel consumption. It was clear that climate change and global warming raised the risks of non-military threats, including, among others, sea-level rise, degradation of biodiversity, displacement of populations and crop depletion. They also increased the risk that fragile States would relapse into conflict or civil war. He added that it was also apparent that climate change most adversely affected those countries and peoples that were already struggling to achieve sustainable development.

It was necessary to broaden the scope of common thinking about security threats, he said. That would lead to the development of clear, agreed and effective policy frameworks to address climate change and energy use. There were several steps that the United Nations could take. Along with guiding reinvigorated global policy discussions and negotiations, the Secretary-General must be encouraged to use his office to generate political will to recognize not only the issue of

climate change, but the security dimensions of the phenomenon.

The Organization could also back efforts to ensure the capacity to prevent and manage climate risks could be strengthened and at national levels, he continued. States had everything to gain from close dialogue with civil society, which was today a crucial driving force for raising awareness about climate change. The picture drawn by experts was alarming, even dire.

Nevertheless, there was a window of opportunity to act, but not much time. Only a new spirit of political courage and dedication would “allow us to live up to our responsibility of collective security”.

L.K. CHRISTIAN (Ghana) commended the United Kingdom for holding the current debate, and said it was his country’s fervent hope that the “repeated alarm” about the threats posed by climate change, especially to regions that were already struggling with chronic instability, would “lead to action that is timely, concerted and sustainable”. For its part, the African Union was collaborating on climate issues with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the International Council for Science. At a session of the assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in January, the supportive efforts of development partners were acknowledged in an action plan entitled “Climate Information for Development Needs: An Action Plan for Africa”.

He said the issue of climate change in Africa should be framed in terms of how to combat the phenomenon without compromising the targeted 8 per cent growth rate needed to reduce poverty. To do so, it was important to consider the following: What sorts of compromises would developing countries be obliged to make, in line with the emergent international consensus on energy, security and climate change? Would they be politically sustainable within already fragile States? In light of the “unfinished business of the Kyoto Protocol”, in what direction should the partnership between developed and developing countries move towards?

He said that, with global energy consumption estimated to grow by 70 per cent by 2030, the acquisition and protection of energy supplies was of strategic importance to nations. The Gulf of Guinea Commission, comprised of oil-rich countries in West and Central Africa, had been working to ensure that potential maritime border disputes were peacefully resolved, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. That peaceful approach was exemplified in the dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, which had been brokered by the United Nations. Yet, sharp increases in temperature, which might have a hand in worsening drought and flooding, led to food shortages, the spread of disease and the displacement of people. The expanding Sahara desert had brought with it some cross-border problems -- for example, there were credible reports of nomadic Fulani cattle herders arming themselves with sophisticated assault rifles to confront local farming communities, who had become impatient with the roaming cattle. It was important that, from time to time, the Council evaluate the dangers of such confrontations. The deadly competition over resources in Africa could not be glossed over; be they over water, shrinking grazing land or the inequitable distribution of oil.

BASILE IKOUEBE (Congo) said that climate change represented one of the major challenges today. He shared the concerns of the “Group of 77” developing countries with regard to the functions of various bodies of the United Nations when it came to issues of sustainable development. There was a need, however, for an urgent response, and the Security Council was well placed to help the international community become aware of the threat posed by climate

change. Congo also supported the Secretary-General's call for urgent action.

He said that the report published in Brussels on 6 April was unequivocal regarding the threats and clearly indicated that the areas most affected would include the Arctic, sub-Saharan Africa, small island developing States, low-lying and coastal areas. It also stated that the poorest would suffer the most. The irony would be that the poor would be paying for the excess consumption and carefree attitude of the rich. Africa was concerned about climate change, and a recent summit in Addis Ababa had addressed that issue. Congo was already facing the challenges of climate change. For the first time in history, men and women would fight for food, energy and water, but, this time, at a larger scale and with disastrous effects that would dwarf the conflicts of the past.

It was useful that the main body of the United Nations in charge of security sought to galvanize universal awareness of the issues involved, he continued. He expected the Council to sound an alarm bell, but details and strategies needed to be elaborated elsewhere. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol set the framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. For their part, seeking to protect the second greatest forest mass after the Amazon forest, several African countries had adopted a partnership to promote sustainable management of the Congo Basin. That was a huge initiative, which brought together several bilateral and multilateral partners and sought maximum participation. He hoped there would be greater commitment from the international community regarding climate change, and that would be expressed at the conference to be held in Bali in December. The International Panel on Climate Change had pointed out that conflicts might develop for water resources and that climate change could lead to an increase in migration, if adequate adaptation measures were not adopted and included in long-term strategies. The Council should shape the necessary awareness for urgent action.

NASSIR ABDULAZIZ AL-NASSER ([Qatar](#)) said that climate change had become an urgent and pressing reality that left the global community with one option: international collective action to alleviate its repercussions and dire consequences for the planet. An optimal and effective solution to the problem could only be reached through an approach that would address climate change in the context of sustainable development. As the subject of climate was part and parcel of development, the processes to address it must begin with the developing countries.

To that end, he recalled two important elements of the 1992 Rio Declaration: those who brought about climate change in the first place, alone bore the financial burden of the damage done; and the development process must neither be sacrificed nor compromised due to climate change. He said that it was noteworthy that the negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol had completely overlooked the subject of development, which had led to a failure to effectively address the issue. The inability to produce a single comprehensive report on the twin questions of climate change and sustainable development was indicative of that failure.

Any successful solution to the climate change problem must emerge as a part of an integrated approach to sustainable development, he continued. He posed a series of questions that the international community must ask itself, including what the impact of population density, income levels, energy and carbon concentration was. The answer to those and other questions -- questions that could not be raised in the Council -- would require in-depth and detailed studies, which must precede the formulation of precise policies or recommendations.

Much had been said and written about the threats emanating from climate change and, as the picture was becoming clearer, the question could not be addressed by debates limited exclusively to the Security Council. "We need mechanisms capable of enforcing their resolutions, provided that they are of wider representation," he said. He added that Qatar did not believe that the Council was the optimal mechanism to address the question of climate change, because the power line-up in the 15-nation body lacked balance. What was needed was a specialized, competent and expanded membership forum like the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Economic and Social Council and, first and foremost, the General Assembly.

ALEJANDRO D. WOLFF (United States) said climate change presented serious challenges. Under the presidency of the United Kingdom two years ago, the Group of Eight leaders meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, had emphasized that energy, security, climate change and sustainable development were fundamentally linked. In consultations with development partners, the Group of Eight leaders had committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the global environment and enhance energy security in ways that promoted human development. For its part, the United States was, among other things, working with Brazil to advance biofuels and leading the global efforts for the commercial deployment of near-zero-emission coal technology through \$1.65 billion in tax credits. At home, the United States was on track to meet its goal of reducing the greenhouse gas intensity of its economy by 18 per cent from 2002 to 2012.

He went on to say that the Bush Administration had pledged some \$500 million to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) over the next four years, the largest contribution of any country, to help developing countries address climate change issues. The most effective way to bolster security and stability was to increase the capacity of States to govern themselves effectively. States that could govern themselves effectively could anticipate and manage change. He said that successful development strategies focused on education, rule of law, human freedom and economic opportunity. The international community had joined together in recognizing that at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development.

He said that well-governed countries grew and prospered. Economic growth provided the resources, in both developed and developing countries, to address energy and environmental challenges associated with climate change. He said that the United States had a long history of extending help so that people could live in democratic societies with robust economies and strong and stable Governments. It continued to support working with freedom-loving people everywhere to face the future with confidence and determination.

JEAN-MARC DE LA SABLIERE (France) saluted the United Kingdom presidency for having planned today's debate. Climate change was among the main threats to the future of humankind. It was a basic threat, whose consequences were already affecting the world. Its possible impact on international peace and security had been outlined in a useful concept paper presented by the United Kingdom. The awareness of the problem was growing, but it had not yet been translated into concerted action to reduce the damage. The Security Council was certainly not the main -- and the only forum -- to address the issue. The Framework Convention on Climate Change clearly played a central role. However, the Council could not ignore the threats to peace and security caused by climate change. Everyone had a role to play. All the climate change threats were real and would affect security among nations.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had issued its report that included scientifically corroborated conclusions, he continued. On 6 April, the Panel had concluded that

climate change phenomena would cause extreme natural disasters, lead to serious food crises and increase health dangers, because of the changes in the ecosystems. There was convincing evidence of the dangers. Clearly, depletion of resources could increase competition for food, energy and water. Other dangers included the loss of arable land, natural disasters and a rise in water levels, which could lead to an increase in the number of refugees and cause uncontrollable migratory flows. No one was immune, but the impact would be greater where accompanied by pre-existing vulnerability. The most vulnerable countries would pay the highest price, because of their low capacity to respond. The situation required decisive, urgent collective action to mitigate climate change and reduce its consequences to a tolerable level. The cost of failure to act was infinitely greater than the cost of taking action.

The issue fell within the Security Council's mandate to prevent conflicts, he said. Thus, it was the duty of the Council to consider what could be done in terms of preventive diplomacy. The Secretary-General could reach out to areas where climate change could have an impact on peace. The consequences of climate change should be mainstreamed in risk analysis by the Secretariat. The Council, in its efforts to resolve conflicts, must also integrate the depletion of resources dimension. That was already an important factor for conflict in Africa. Conflict prevention meant mobilization of all instruments in support of the efforts of developing countries. The Council might promote integration of the security, environmental, social and other dimensions of the issue, since poverty and environmental degradation could no longer be considered isolated threats.

Recognizing the importance of the issue, France had also proposed creation of a United Nations organ devoted to the environment, in addition to UNEP. Also, the international community could not win the battle against climate change, unless it implemented existing instruments.

LIU ZHENMIN ([China](#)) said that the international community was fully aware that climate change would affect national economic and social development, and was related to the sustainable development of human society. China was, therefore, ready and willing to discuss with other countries how to reinforce international cooperation and jointly respond to climate change. The issue could have certain security implications, but, generally speaking, it was, in essence, an issue of sustainable development. The Framework Convention on Climate Change had laid down the fundamental principles for the international community's response to climate change. The Kyoto Protocol had set up targets for developed countries -- limited, but measurable -- for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Conference of the parties of the Convention, the Commission on Sustainable Development and UNEP were all involved in related discussions and actions. To effectively respond to climate change, it was necessary to follow the principle of "common, but differentiated, responsibilities" set forth in the Convention, respect existing arrangements, strengthen cooperation and encourage more action.

Climate change solutions required the concerted effort of the international community, he continued. Discussing the issue in the Security Council would not help countries in their efforts, and it would be hard for the Council to assist developing countries affected by climate change to find more effective adaptations. Discussions on climate change should be conducted within the framework that allowed participation by all parties. The developing countries believed that the Security Council did not have expertise and did not allow extensive participation in decision-making. It would not help produce widely acceptable proposals. Discussions in today's meeting should be regarded as an exception, with neither outcome documents, nor follow-up actions.

The Chinese Government attached great importance to climate change, he added. As a developing country, China had formulated its national sustainable development strategy as early as

15 years ago. It was now formulating a national response strategy for climate change. China would continue to vigorously implement its sustainable development strategy and make its contribution to addressing climate change in its own way. He supported conducting full and pragmatic discussions on related issues within the mechanisms of the Climate Change Convention.

China also favoured international cooperation on clean development. At the end of this month, discussions on climate change would be conducted at the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. He looked forward to working with other countries for climate change solutions.

BAN KI-MOON, United Nations Secretary-General, said that, throughout human history, people and countries had fought over natural resources. From livestock, watering holes and fertile land, to trade routes, fish stocks, spices, sugar, oil, gold and other precious commodities. War had too often been the means to secure possession of scarce resources. Even today, the uninterrupted supply of fuel and minerals was a key element of geopolitical considerations.

Things were easier at times of plenty, when all could share in the abundance, even if to different degrees. "But, when resources are scarce -- whether energy, water or arable land -- our fragile ecosystems become strained, as do the coping mechanisms of groups and individuals," he said, adding: "This can lead to a breakdown of established codes of conduct, and even outright conflict."

In a series of reports on conflict prevention, he said that former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan had pointed to the threats emanating from environmental degradation and resource scarcity. Quoting from the latest of the reports, he said: "Environmental degradation has the potential to destabilize already conflict-prone regions, especially when compounded by inequitable access or politicization of access to scarce resources. I urge Member States to renew their efforts to agree on ways that allow all of us to live sustainably within the planet's means."

Mr. Ban said he wanted to renew and amplify that call. Compared to the cost of conflict and its consequences, the cost of prevention was far lower -- in financial terms, but, most importantly, in the cost of human lives and life quality. He added that he firmly believed that, today, all countries recognized that climate change, in particular, required a long-term global response, in line with the latest scientific findings and compatible with economic and social development.

According to the most recent assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the planet's warming was unequivocal, its impact was clearly noticeable and it was beyond doubt that human activities had been contributing considerably to it, he went on. Adverse effects were already being felt in many areas, including agriculture and food security; oceans and coastal areas; biodiversity and ecosystems; water resources; human health; human settlements; energy, transport and industry; and in extreme weather events.

"Projected changes in the earth's climate are, thus, not only an environmental concern. They can also have serious social and economic implications, and -- as the Council points up today -- issues of energy and climate change can have implications for peace and security," he said. That was especially true in vulnerable regions that faced multiple stresses at the same time -- pre-existing conflict, poverty, unequal access to resources, weak institutions, food insecurity and incidence of diseases, such as HIV/AIDS.

By example, he asked the Council members to consider some scenarios -- "all alarming,

though not alarmist” -- among others, the adverse effects of changing weather patterns, such as floods and droughts, and related economic costs, including compensation for lost land, could risk polarizing society and marginalizing communities. That, in turn, could weaken the institutional capacity of States to resolve conflict through peaceful and democratic means, to ensure social cohesion and to safeguard human rights.

Offering another sobering scenario, he asked the Council to consider that migration, driven by factors such as climate change, could deepen tensions and conflicts, particularly in regions with large numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees. Further, scarce resources, especially water and food, could help transform peaceful competition into violence. “Limited or threatened access to energy is already known to be a powerful driver of conflict. Our changing planet risks making it more so,” he said.

While those were only possible scenarios, the international community could not sit back and watch to see whether they turned into reality. The entire multilateral machinery needed to come together to prevent it from becoming so, he said. “We must focus more clearly on the benefits of early action,” he said. “The resources of civil society and the private sector must be brought in. And this Council has a role to play in working with other competent intergovernmental bodies to address the possible root causes of conflict discussed today.”

BEZLAN ISHAN JENIE ([Indonesia](#)) supported the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and said that, while his delegation could agree with the objectives of today’s debate, it believed that the issue was being addressed effectively in other fora, including the Commission on Sustainable Development, which would deliberate on the issue of energy and climate change at its fifteenth session. Future threats to security posed by climate change must be avoided and he called on all States to adhere to the Rio principles, especially the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, the “Agenda 21”, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. Developed countries should immediately fulfil their commitments, particularly with regard to means of implementation. Without that, the adverse impact on the environment would not only continue, but also increase poverty and impede economic development -- an issue closely linked to potential security threats.

Realizing the formidable challenges of energy and climate change, the international community should seize the opportunity to reach a global consensus on ways to adapt and mitigate climate change in the relevant fora, he added. The upcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the thirteenth Conference of the Parties of the Climate Change Convention in Bali in December were two very important forums in which the issue of climate change and energy should be deliberated. The success of those meetings would contribute to creating a conducive environment that could prevent the potential negative effects of climate change on security.

ALBERTO ARIAS ([Panama](#)) said that there was a broadly recognized link between the availability of clean reliable energy and the ability of peoples to achieve sustainable development. But, it was clear that the international community still needed to further study the impact of socio-economic growth on global warming, as well as on international peace and security. The answers should be pursued at all levels, with a view towards integrated and synergistic approaches. All United Nations organs should debate the impacts of climate change, in accordance with their respective mandates.

The Council had, from time to time, held debates on issues that fell under the competence of other bodies. The Council's debates served to raise awareness of issues that were at the top of the global agenda. There was no doubt that there were some security concerns attendant with the climate change phenomenon, including the effects of land and resource degradation that led to crop depletion and food insecurity. Those and other issues needed to be addressed urgently and head on. Indeed, it was the very gradual build-up of the effects of climate change that made dealing with the phenomenon such a pressing matter, for, in the words of T. S. Eliot: "This is how the world ends, not with a bang, but with a whimper."

DUMISANI KUMALO ([South Africa](#)) underscored that today's debate did not fall within the mandate of the Council and would be better addressed in other forums. Adopted in 1992, the Rio principles included the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, which was fundamental to any debate on climate change. The World Summit in Johannesburg had reaffirmed that principle and assigned the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Sustainable Development and UNEP, as well as the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, with the responsibility of following up on climate change and sustainable development.

Recent reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had reconfirmed that Africa was one of the vulnerable continents because of multiple stresses and low capacity, he continued. Some of the impacts for Africa included the fact that, by 2020, between 75 million and 250 million people were projected to suffer exposure to an increase in water stress due to climate change. Agricultural production, including access to food, was expected to be severely compromised. Other issues included decreasing fisheries and resources of lakes, as well as a projected sea-level rise, which would affect low-lying areas.

The costs of adapting could amount to some 5 to 10 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), he said. Clearly, an inequitable global response, where the largest emitters in the developed world did not shoulder their respective responsibilities to mitigate and assist others to adapt, could contribute to instability and exacerbate conflict potential. Developed countries should take the lead in funding the adaptation activities. All countries should meet their obligations under the Kyoto Protocol. The world was relatively unprepared to deal with disasters, and the vulnerable countries could not bear the brunt of the costs. A new focus was needed on predicting, preventing and handling climate-related disasters. The Climate Change Convention and Kyoto were in place, and he looked forward to the Bali meeting later this year.

He added that all countries should honour the existing instruments, in order to avoid future disasters. The issues discussed here were, first and foremost, developmental in nature, and would be best dealt with by the General Assembly. The mandate of the Council did not deal with such matters. It was vital for all Member States to promote sustainable development, especially the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and fully implement Agenda 21. South Africa attached great importance to the reassurance by the United Kingdom that today's meeting would not result in any outcome or summary. He also hoped that the discussions would not in any way elevate the issue of climate or environment to being an agenda item of the Council.

VITALY CHURKIN ([Russian Federation](#)) said that his country had been an active participant in global efforts to address climate change. Indeed, it had been Russia's decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol that had brought that important instrument into existence. Since then, the

Russian Federation had significantly reduced its greenhouse gas emissions and it intended to continue to carry out the quantitative commitments it had undertaken under the Kyoto Protocol through 2012. His Government believed that all future action in the area of global warming and climate change should be based on sound scientific information. He appealed to the international community to avoid panic and to consider the issue of climate change in all its aspects in a comprehensive manner and within the appropriate international forums, such as the World Meteorological Organization, the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development, among others. The Security Council should only deal with issues directly under its mandate, he added.

JORGE VOTO-BERNALES (Peru) welcomed the United Kingdom's initiative. In the last weeks, the presentation of reports by the International Panel on Climate Change had confirmed the world's tendencies as a result of climate change. The projections would have significant effects on the environment, food security and human society in general. It was important to consider their impact on international peace and security, as well. The threats to international peace and security would include poverty, degradation of the environment and natural disasters. Of even more concern was the fact that climate change would lead to flooding, droughts and serious storms. Climate change could exacerbate social and economic conditions, which could lead to conflicts and exclusion. The Council had drawn attention to that situation.

Continuing, he said that climate change was the result of the actions of man, and it was necessary to address that responsibly. Any efforts to change course would not have an immediate effect, however, even if countries did drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions now. Attention, therefore, should be focused on prevention and not reaction to possible effects on international peace and security. That was Peru's approach on the national level. The country was concerned about the effects of climate change on stability. The population of Peru lived in a high diversity of ecosystems, and the high intensity and frequency of El Niño had serious effects on the population. The country's glaciers were also affected, leading to water supply problems. The Peruvian Amazon forest, the second largest in Latin America, would also be affected.

Climate change was a problem of global dimensions and could only be faced through multilateral action by the whole international community within the framework already available, he said. Based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, it was important to strengthen the Kyoto Protocol and meet its targets. What was required was a firm will and political cooperation within competent bodies to avoid the worst scenarios. The greatest challenge was to face the situation collectively, as a matter of urgency.

Council President, Ms. BECKETT, Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, speaking in her national capacity, said that climate change was transforming the way the international community thought about security. Indeed, scientific evidence had confirmed, and in some cases exceeded, everyone's worst fears about the current and future impacts of the phenomenon. She said it was clear that those impacts went beyond the environmental to the very heart of the security agenda. One had only to look at the results of crop failure and lingering drought, sea-level changes, river basin degradation and the consequences of food insecurity.

Charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, she continued, the Security Council could go a long way towards building a shared understanding of what the effects of climate change would mean to international peace and security, now and in the future. Climate change was a threat multiplier. The United Kingdom agreed that a full account of climate risks

should be undertaken when examining the root causes of conflict. The fact that so many delegations without membership in the Council had chosen to speak was proof of the bitter truth that instability was first visited upon those that were already struggling with other development and security concerns.

She stressed that, for the United Kingdom, climate change was a security issue, but not of “narrow national security”. It was about collective security in an increasingly fragile world for all. She said that a new, low-carbon and sustainable economy must be built, not at the expense of development, but to make development better and more attainable for all. Further, the United Kingdom did not believe that the debate on global warming, climate change and energy was an “either/or”. Indeed, the United Kingdom would welcome similar debates in other forums, be it in the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council, she said, adding that she was looking forward to the outcome of the upcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in May, which would address climate change and energy. She said that climate change was not just of grave concern, but of common concern. It was important for everyone to enjoy better prospects for security. To that end, “climate change can bring us together, if we have the wisdom to prevent it from driving us apart”, she declared.

HEIDEMARIE WIECZOREK-ZEUL, Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, speaking on behalf of the European Union and associated States, said that the security implications of climate change should receive more attention and she, therefore, welcomed today’s opportunity to convey the Union’s perspective on that matter. The Council usually dealt with more imminent threats to international peace and security, but less obvious and more distant drivers of conflict should not be neglected. The Security Council was committed to a culture of prevention, as incorporated in resolution 1625, and there was a clear link between climate change and the need for conflict prevention. Recent findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change provided clear evidence that the globe was already being heavily affected by man-made temperature increases. Some of the profound changes in many of the earth’s natural systems projected by the Panel would have direct or indirect implications on security.

The cost of action on climate change was far outweighed by the consequences of inaction, she stressed. There was a need for a global framework of risk management — based on mitigation and adaptation — to address the challenges. To keep the changes of the world’s climate within manageable limits, it was necessary to formulate a forward-looking climate and energy policy. The world was expecting new and determined measures from Governments and the United Nations that would shape the future of humanity. The Union was prepared to play its part, and was calling upon others to do the same. In March, the Union had put itself on a fast track to a low-carbon economy, having decided to unilaterally reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by 2020, compared to the level of 1990, regardless of progress made in international negotiations for a post-2012 agreement. Yet, since the Union was responsible for only 15 per cent of worldwide emissions, the effects of its reductions would be limited. It was necessary to come to a global and comprehensive agreement on how to combat climate change beyond 2012. She offered a binding 30 per cent target, compared to 1990, provided other developed countries took similar steps, and economically more advanced developing countries adequately contributed, according to their responsibilities and capabilities. The Union had also adopted a binding target for increased use of renewable energies.

Concerning adaptation, she said that it was necessary to consider the consequences of

unavoidable climate change. The security dimension should be duly reflected in future research and reports on the effects of climate change. A framework of preventive diplomacy was needed, and climate change should be addressed in a holistic and preventive manner, like hunger, disease, poverty, water scarcity or migration. Realizing the interdependency of those factors, it would be easier to come up with coherent and holistic approaches. No country could tackle problems alone, and environmental, economic and energy decisions in one part of the world directly or indirectly affected people in other parts, and could be a root cause of conflict there. Sound environmental policies were, therefore, essential. It was necessary to develop concrete strategies for coherent, integrated and holistic responses of the United Nations family and institutions to address that challenge. Various bodies should work hand in hand in a cooperative manner. No institution could claim an exclusive competence for that cross-cutting issue. She was sure that today's debate would deliver a valuable and powerful message, which would contribute to the December climate negotiations for a post-2012 framework, in Bali.

BERT KOENDERS, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, said that, while the Council's primary responsibility was to maintain international peace and security, and it tended to deal with current conflicts, there were times when "we need to look beyond the horizon of current conflicts to explore the challenges and threats the future may bring". Recalling that the Council had held useful discussions on the impact of HIV/AIDS on peace and security in Africa, he said that millions of people would listen to and watch the planned "Live Earth" concerts this coming July and they would wonder what the leaders of the world were doing about global warming. The Council's discussions today would underline the Council's commitment.

He said that the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel had shown that urgent action was needed to alleviate the impact of global warming. The world was being exposed to the increasingly devastating effects of climate change, which would lead to far-reaching and potentially dramatic consequences for security in regions throughout the world, such as shortages of food and water, health problems, population movements and environmental and social stress. He said that new sources of conflict might emerge and disasters might occur more frequently, with more devastating effects. The United Nations estimated that, by 2010, the world would host some 50 million "environmental refugees", without even taking the effects of climate change into account.

Moreover, the Intergovernmental Panel had suggested that there was an 80 per cent chance that the availability of water in subtropical areas would decline substantially. By 2050, billions of people could be coping with inadequate or even nonexistent water supplies, he said, stressing that climate change had social, economic, humanitarian and security dimensions. It was also clear that peace and security and climate change were global public goods of crucial importance. Though the poorest countries had contributed the least to the phenomenon, they would be the most seriously affected by it. At the same time, those countries lacked the knowledge, capacity and resources to deal with it.

"We have to ensure that countries can cope with the risks posed by climate change," he said, adding that, not only individual countries, but United Nations agencies, the World Bank and other institutions, had an important role to play in ensuring full-fledged disaster preparedness. Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome's call for a "culture of prevention", he went on to urge the Secretary-General to alert the Security Council to climate-related crisis situations that might endanger peace and security. He also strongly encouraged the Secretary-General to press ahead with his efforts to convene an international summit on climate change.

ABDULLA SHAHID, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Maldives, recalled that, some 20 years ago, his country's President had said that for his country, a mean sea-level rise of 2 metres would suffice to virtually submerge the entire country of 1,190 small islands. That would be the death of a nation. Almost 20 years from that General Assembly address, it was important to recall the efforts made by small countries like the Maldives to draw the world's attention to the urgency of climate change and its consequences. For the people of the Maldives, dealing with climate change was already an everyday fact of life. Over the past two decades, the country had seen first hand the real, practical reality of climate change and sea-level rise. Today, over 60 per cent of its inhabited islands were facing varying degrees of coastal erosion, which was threatening the human settlements on them.

He was heartened by the increased attention to environmental degradation and climate change, he said. Today's debate should stress the fact that close cooperation and coordination among all principal organs was indispensable for the United Nations to remain relevant and capable of meeting the existing and emerging threats and challenges. The environment, energy and climate change had been dealt with by various organs, including the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Sustainable Development and UNEP, as well as the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. He supported the view of the Group of 77 that it was vital for all Member States to promote sustainable development by adhering to the Rio principles -- especially the principle of common but differentiated responsibility -- and fully implementing Agenda 21. He also stressed an urgent need to fulfil all other commitments, including the transfer of available technologies to developing countries. Capacity-building was essential. He called on all countries that had not done so to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

Reaffirming the key role of energy in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, he also said that his country had attained a number of those goals and was on track to achieving many of the rest. However, ensuring environmental sustainability was a challenge that the Maldives could not meet on its own. Next year, the country would embark upon a three-year transition period, after which it would graduate from the least developed countries category. However, its inherent vulnerabilities would remain. It was ironic that the Indian Ocean tsunami had washed away 20 years of development work, only six days after the General Assembly had adopted its resolution to graduate the Maldives from the list of least developed countries. The Maldives had recently developed its first National Adaptation Programme as part of actions to implement the Climate Change Convention. Substantive financial resources were urgently required for speedy implementation of adaptation projects by the most vulnerable countries, like the Maldives. He called for a meaningful emission-reduction commitment for the post-2012 regime. Negotiations in that regard should be accelerated, with a tangible commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to pre-industrial levels. The rich nations must demonstrate their leadership, and accept the moral responsibility to safeguard the vulnerable, poor countries confronted with climate change.

FARUKH AMIL (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China, said that his delegation believed that the Council's primary duty was to maintain international peace and security. Other issues, including those related to economic and social development, were assigned to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The ever-increasing encroachment of the Security Council on the roles and responsibilities of the other main organs of the United Nations represented a "distortion" of the principles and purposes of the Charter, infringed on the authority of the other bodies and compromised the rights of the

Organization's wider membership.

He said that the issues of energy and climate change were vital for sustainable development, and responsibilities in that field belonged to the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and other relevant subsidiary bodies, including the Commission on Sustainable Development and UNEP. The issue of climate change was also addressed in a binding multilateral agreement in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. No role had been envisioned for the Security Council. The Group of 77 was of the view that it was vital for all Member States to promote sustainable development in line with the Rio principles -- in particular common but differentiated responsibility -- and to fully implement Agenda 21 and other commitments related to the provision of financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity-building of developing countries.

The Group also maintained that the Kyoto Protocol was the appropriate forum to consider the risks associated with climate change and action needed to address the phenomenon, in accordance with principles enshrined in that instrument. It was inappropriate for the Council to consider the issue of energy. The Group would reaffirm the key role of energy in achieving the goals of sustainable development, poverty eradication and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and would, therefore, emphasize the role of the international community for the provision of adequate and predictable financial resources and technology transfer to that end. The Group also held that the decision by the Council to hold this debate did not create a precedent or undermine the authority or mandate of the relevant bodies and processes already addressing the issue.

PETER MAURER ([Switzerland](#)) welcomed the United Kingdom's initiative and said that it was important for the Security Council to contribute to raising awareness about the repercussions of environmental degradation on international peace and security. He did not consider today's debate an encroachment by the Security Council on the responsibilities of the General Assembly. Climate change and environmental issues in general were challenges to which different bodies would have to contribute from the viewpoint of their respective mandates.

He was particularly concerned about the looming food and water insecurity in many parts of the world, due to the cumulative effects of many factors, including population growth, shortage of cultivable land, spreading land degradation and water-resource constraints. Climate-related factors tended to aggravate the already overwhelming challenge of producing more and healthier food, from less land with less water. The countries most exposed to negative impacts were often those with inadequate means to adapt or take necessary preventive measures. The negative impact of climate change could not be mitigated simply by adapting energy policy priorities and technology innovations. Further substantial efforts must be directed at reducing inequity, as well as economic and socially disrupting disparities within and between countries. Member States had the primary responsibility for conflict prevention and efforts to reduce the risks of disaster. Switzerland would like to invite all stakeholders to participate in the first session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, to take place in Geneva in June. That high-level event aimed to raise awareness and consider ways and means of moving disaster risk reduction higher up on the international agenda.

Regarding the impact on migration, he said that, in their efforts to better manage that phenomenon, Member States were urged to respect their obligations towards international law. In that respect, he highlighted the positive contribution made by the Inter-Agency Standing

Committee in adopting the Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and Natural Disasters. The guidelines were increasingly used by humanitarian and development actors.

Environmental protection and sustainable development were the pillars of Switzerland's foreign policy, he continued. The country had longstanding experience in research into environmental and conflict-related issues and was currently undertaking a more structured analysis of the links between environmental degradation, the use of natural resources and violent conflict. Each and every conflict had its specificities with regard to the environmental drivers of conflict. There were no simple answers. There was, therefore, an obvious need to strengthen analytical capacities, in order to channel targeted and authoritative input into the policy debate of the Council.

However, he added, potential risk factors should be examined on a case-by-case basis. Where environmental factors were obvious elements affecting security, the Council might wish to create the function of an environmental adviser, or strengthen its own capacities in that area. When debating a specific conflict, the Council should listen to key environmental expertise, and UNEP should be strengthened, so that it could respond to such requests by the Council. He hoped that today's debate would give impetus to decisive action, including the need to strengthen system-wide coherence, as well as international environmental governance.

ROBERT G. AISI (Papua New Guinea), speaking on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, said that the Forum's members, some of the most vulnerable communities in the world, were already experiencing the effects of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had spotlighted the Pacific islands as countries whose survival was at extreme risk. Many of the islands were not more than a few metres above water, so a sea-level increase of as little as half a metre would completely inundate those island States and threaten their populations.

He said that climate change was also expected to increase the intensity of tropical cyclones and, while the scientific evidence on that point was not yet so clear, the pattern of tropical storms over the past few years was definitely a cause for concern. He said that, prior to 1985, the Cook Islands had been considered to be outside the main cyclone belt and could expect a major twister every 20 years or so. But all that had changed, he said, telling the Council that in 2005, in one month alone, five cyclones had swept the Cook Island waters, three of which were classified at category 5 intensity. He added that, in 2004, Niue had been hit by Cyclone Heta, with the ocean rising above the 30 metre cliffs, leaving two people dead and 20 per cent of the population homeless.

Turning next to highlight some other serious impacts of climate change, he said that vector borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever were on the rise in the upland regions of his own country. He also said that the effects of El Niño would have a major impact on the economy, due largely to changing sea temperatures and winds that would spark a significant westward shift of major tuna stocks. "Climate change, climate variability and sea-level rise are, therefore, not just environmental concerns, but also economic, social and political issues for the Pacific Islands," he said.

He stressed that, while the Islands were not "standing idly by", but working with development partners to take action to prepare for and mitigate the effects of climate change related events, there was still a need to strengthen the Climate Change Convention regime. Negotiations on future commitments of the international community should, among other things,

give equal priority to adaptation, as well as mitigation; minimize the costs to developing countries of preventing dangerous climate change; promote massive worldwide expansion of renewable energy; and give strong signals to industry that climate change was a serious issue and that their input was needed to bolster the search for solutions.

He said that the impact of climate change on small islands was no less threatening than the dangers guns and bombs posed to large nations. Pacific Island nations were likely to face massive dislocations of people, similar to population flows sparked by conflict. The impact on identity and social cohesion were likely to cause as much resentment, hatred and alienation as any refugee crisis. "The Security Council, charged with protecting human rights and the integrity and security of States, is the paramount international forum available to us," he said. The Forum did not expect the Council to get involved in Climate Change Convention negotiations, but it did expect the 15-nation body to keep the issue of climate change under continuous review, to ensure that all countries contributed to solving the problem and that those efforts were commensurate with their resources and capacities. It also expected the Council to review particularly sensitive issues, such as implications for sovereignty and international legal rights from the loss of land, resources and people.

KENZO OSHIMA ([Japan](#)) said that the global challenge of climate change would require a global response. The United Nations should not only continue to play a leading role, but also a stronger one, by involving all relevant organs and bodies of the system, including the Security Council, as relevant to their respective mandates, because doing so was essential for system-wide coherence on the issue. Three issues that required urgent attention included greenhouse gas emissions, the use of clean energy and adaptation.

Stressing the overriding importance of controlling greenhouse gas emissions and creating an effective post-Kyoto framework, he said that it was of the utmost importance that the maximum number of countries responsible for any significant emissions participate in that effort, developed and developing countries alike. Currently, only some 30 per cent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions were covered by the parties to the Kyoto protocol. That was grossly and dangerously inadequate. Any new post-Kyoto arrangement must seek to enable all countries to cut emissions according to their ability, thus maximizing emission controls on a truly global basis. In doing so, it was necessary to acknowledge the close link between development and climate change strategies. In that connection, he said that, last week, Japan and China had issued a statement on further enhancement of cooperation in the area of environmental protection, and both sides had pledged to actively participate in the process towards construction of an effective beyond-2012 framework.

Supporting the development and use of clean energy, including nuclear and renewable energy, and effective energy-saving technologies, he said that it was obviously an essential part of any effort to reduce the level of greenhouse gas. Cooperation and exchanges on such technology at all levels should be strengthened. United Nations agencies had an important role to play in that regard, including facilitation of the transfer of advanced clean energy and energy-saving technology to developing countries, which should be encouraged in any way possible.

He stressed the importance of preventing, mitigating and adapting to the negative effects of climate change. Such action should be taken now, because global warming, with all its potential consequences, was here to stay, and would get worse before it got better. Governments had set out what needed to be done to reduce vulnerabilities and disaster risks in the Hyogo Framework for

Action 2005-2015, agreed at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Japan in January 2005. Urgent action was needed to simultaneously reduce the emissions causing climate change and adapt to the changes that were unavoidable, in implementation of the Hyogo document.

He welcomed Secretary-General Ban's decision to make climate change one of his priorities, and said that Japan would welcome any initiative to strengthen the United Nations role and enhance its agenda in that area. To that end, he proposed that the Secretary-General be requested, perhaps not by the Council, but more appropriately by the Assembly, to present recommendations on how the United Nations system as a whole could best organize itself, so that it would be able to address that matter more effectively and coherently. The report should address such issues as the role and function of the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. As for his country's role, he said that climate change was expected to remain high on the agenda for the Group of Eight next year, when Japan would be hosting the Summit. Japan gave high priority to projects related to climate change in its bilateral and multilateral development cooperation and partnership arrangements with countries of Asia and the Pacific, including the Pacific Island Forum, Africa, the Caribbean Community and others.

KAIRE MUNIONGANDA MBUENDE (Namibia) said the United Nations Charter had recognized the link between social and economic development and peace and security, and the Economic and Social Council had been created with a view to addressing that link. Indeed, threats to peace and security arising from social and economic factors would best be addressed through investment in economic development, while threats brought about by climate change and global warming would best be addressed through instruments designed to deal with the environment. For Namibia, climate change was not an academic exercise, but a life or death matter. For that reason, the country's delegation would not question the legitimacy of holding the current debate in the Security Council, seeing that there was room for reflection on various angles of the issue. However, action must be taken by the appropriate organs.

He said developing countries, in particular, had been subjected to what could be described as "low intensity biological or chemical warfare". Greenhouse gases were destroying plants, animals and human beings. Namibia's two deserts were spreading, while rising sea levels could culminate in flooding. The change in temperature had allowed malaria-carrying mosquitoes to extend their range, but attempts to produce cheaper generics had been met with resistance from multinational pharmaceuticals. Plants used for traditional medicine were in danger of becoming extinct, further increasing the impact of climate change on health.

He said the world knew what caused climate change, and also knew who were responsible. Namibia was encouraged by the steps taken by some industrialized countries to reduce greenhouse gases, since every step to curb emissions was important. But climate adaptation would be a costly exercise for Namibia -- the solution suggested by some experts that poor regions reliant on agriculture should encourage people to shift out of farming and into urban areas was not sustainable, given the high rate of urban unemployment. Meanwhile, official development assistance had declined from \$110 per capita in the 1990s to \$60 per capita in 2005. The number of bilateral donors was also decreasing.

He said high hopes had been placed in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, in which provisions had been made for developed countries to provide developing countries with the means to protect themselves from the consequences of climate change. But, developed countries continued to pay lip service to

reducing the levels of greenhouse gas emissions. For its part, Namibia intended to recommend, to the appropriate organs, a mechanism to monitor and ensure compliance of States parties to the Convention.

CHRISTOPHER HACKETT (Barbados) said that, as his country was caught squarely in the cross-hairs of the current global emergency, it was ever conscious of the enormous challenges posed to its sustainable development by climate change and its attendant impacts. Developing countries were most vulnerable in that regard and were least able to protect themselves. For small island developing States, the challenges were even more complex and their needs more urgent, with sea-level rise, hurricanes and floods threatening their very existence, despite their negligible contribution to the problem. There was now greater scientific certainty that dangerous climate change was already occurring and, as the Stern report on climate change had put it, if the world continued to ignore climate change, the impact on the global economy would be “on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the twentieth century”. There was no excuse -- scientific or otherwise -- to delay immediate action.

There was still a glimmer of hope that, if the international community acted rapidly, it could soften the blow of the looming climate catastrophe, particularly on the poorest and most vulnerable. Those who had historically contributed most to that problem had a moral and legal obligation to assume primary responsibility. Developed countries must take the lead in significantly reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions and providing the necessary financial and technological assistance to developing countries. The Kyoto Protocol should not be abandoned. Those that continued to reject their agreed commitments under that instrument must exercise good judgement, demonstrate good global citizenship and show their leadership. The international community must attach the highest priority to completing ongoing climate change negotiations within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on a post-2012 arrangement by the end of 2008. Any new global agreement must lead to the achievement of substantial emission reduction in the shortest time frame possible and significantly increase the level of resources available to vulnerable countries, particularly small island developing States and least developed countries.

He added that today's debate should inspire the other principal organs of the United Nations to fully assume their Charter responsibilities in addressing the problem. While the Convention on Climate Change remained the primary forum for addressing the matter, consistent with Assembly resolution 61/16, the Economic and Social Council should convene a special session on the level of Foreign Ministers in September, on the margins of the main part of the General Assembly session, to discuss the sustainable development impacts of climate change. That would provide much-needed impetus to the negotiations in Bali in December. He also emphasized the need for development partners to join Barbados and other small island States in the full and rapid implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and Mauritius Strategy, of which the issues of climate change and energy were important components.

VIKTOR KRYZHANIVSKYI (Ukraine) said that world leaders at the 2005 Summit had reaffirmed the emerging belief that security and development were closely linked. Indeed, it was becoming increasingly clear that there could be no security without sound economic systems, fair trade regimes, social welfare and rule of law. But how could all those be achieved if the forces of nature changed the shape of continents, sparked dramatic changes in human behaviour and undermined well-planned human achievements? Recent studies had shown that climate change,

global warming and pollution could have sudden and dramatic impacts if not urgently and effectively addressed.

He said that modern industrial development, in particular energy production, was the main source of environmental degradation. Therefore, it was crucial that climate change and security were tackled jointly to realize sustainable development for all. The Ukraine called for, among other things, relevant policies and prescriptions that built on appropriate incentives, public-private partnerships, low-carbon emitting technologies and innovations. To that end, he particularly underscored the importance of the recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which had been convened to compile and synthesize scientific and technical data and socio-economic information on the phenomenon. He added that, in order to achieve collective objectives aimed at combating climate change, the international community must move quickly to implement domestic greenhouse gas reduction measures and promote the full and effective use of relevant internationally agreed mechanisms.

KHALED ALY ELBAKLY ([Egypt](#)) said that the subject of today's debate lay clearly and squarely within the realm and mandate of other bodies of the United Nations system, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Security Council's debate also coincided with the preparations for the Commission on Sustainable Development session on the same subject, which was also addressed through the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. He was concerned with the Council's encroachment on the mandates and responsibilities of other United Nations bodies, as well as indifference to the repeated demands by Member States to put an end to that dangerous and unjustified practice, leaving the way open for every President of the Council to decide on the theme of focus, even if it was totally beyond the mandate. That emphasized the importance of reforming the methods of work of the Security Council, together with expansion of its membership. It was also necessary for the General Assembly to take more decisive measures to stop such infringement.

In light of recent reports, scientific studies and the latest Secretary-General's report on climate change, there was no room for arguing against the dangers of climate change and its impacts on humanity, he continued. However, objectivity required focusing on the circumstances that had led the world to the current dangerous juncture, and the proper way to address it.

Developed countries were responsible for climate change. Developing countries -- including Egypt -- viewed the debate in the Security Council as an attempt on the part of those countries to shrug off their responsibilities in that regard. The right way to combat climate change was clear: all parties -- developed and developing -- should implement their commitments according to the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", and not according to the principle of "shared responsibilities", which some countries were seeking to promote. It was also necessary to deal with the causes and adaptation.

ROBERT HILL ([Australia](#)) said that, over the coming decades, climate change would progressively alter biospheres and sea levels, as well as add incrementally to the intensity of climate-related events, such as cyclones and droughts. By moving early to address the risks, the international community could do much to reduce the potential threats to human well-being and security. Australia was particularly vulnerable to climate change, and it was the planet's most arid continent and uniquely susceptible to drought. Global action to mitigate climate change could temper its future effects, and the burden of responsibility fell on to the world's major greenhouse gas emitters.

Australia was playing its part and had already dedicated billions of dollars to develop, prove and deploy low-emissions technologies throughout the country. He said that the Government was also supporting more efficient energy use, the uptake of renewable energy and reduction in land clearing. As a result of those and other measures, Australia was tracking well to meet its targets under the Kyoto Protocol. He said that Australia would also help others in the region and beyond to adapt to the future impacts of climate change, cognizant that the least developed nations were likely to be less likely to respond to the effects of the phenomenon.

He encouraged other countries to further strengthen their support for disaster mitigation, preparedness and response, and commended the work of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in coordinating the implementation of the Hyogo framework for action. That framework represented a global blueprint for building the resilience of nations and their communities on the impact of disasters.

ROSEMARY BANKS (New Zealand) said that, in contributing to the debate, her country was able to offer the perspectives of a small country that recognized that the future was dependent on sustainable long-term strategies for its economy, society, environment, culture and way of life. Today, Governments were becoming more aware that the effects of climate change were much more than threats to the environment alone. They also threatened some of the most fundamental needs of their citizens: a safe place to live; access to water; health; food; and the ability to earn a living. When those needs were threatened, whole societies were at risk of instability. So it was entirely appropriate that the Council was discussing the security dimensions of climate change.

Sustainable development, including responses to climate change, and energy security needed to be considered together, she said. She was pleased that the Commission for Sustainable Development was bringing some of those themes together in its current cycle. New Zealand was developing its energy and climate change policies in tandem, in particular focusing on ways to maximize the energy derived from renewable sources and promoting diversity in its energy supply. The use of low-emissions technologies and improving energy efficiency were fundamental to both industrialized and developing countries. Energy issues were also a major challenge for the Pacific. In recognition of that, Pacific Energy Ministers would be meeting at the end of April to discuss how the region might address those challenges, particularly in the renewable energy sector.

Many of the countries in the Pacific were among the most vulnerable to climate change impacts, she said. That was likely to exacerbate such issues as access to fresh water and vulnerability to cyclones, drought or flooding. The Mauritius implementation strategy spoke of the existential risks that climate change and sea level rise posed to small island developing States. It also noted ongoing risks posed to the sustainable development of those nations and the priority that should be given to adaptation.

AFELEE F. PITA (Tuvalu) said that, as with the issue of security threats of HIV/AIDS, it was strongly believed that the Security Council should permanently place on its agenda the issue of climate change and environmental security. It was a topic of extreme importance to small, atoll nations like Tuvalu, whose vulnerability to the impacts of climate change were highlighted in the Intergovernmental Panel's recent report. Coral reefs and fish stocks were being affected. There was an increased threat from severe cyclones and water shortages. The possibility of rising sea levels had caused many people to consider migrating, threatening Tuvalu's nationhood. Such a

reality constituted an infringement on the people's rights to nationality and statehood as constituted under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments.

He said the world had moved from the cold war to the "warming war", in which chimney stacks and exhaust pipes were the weapons, and it was a "chemical war of immense proportions". The world needed a mix of energy sources easily accessible to all countries, since it was clear from ongoing world crises that there were security dimensions to prohibitive access to and use of energy. Imported fossil fuel was one of the greatest drains on Tuvalu's economy, and the high costs of energy threatened the country's security. The Security Council was called on to understand and respond to such new concepts of security and conflict.

He said the threat posed by climate change demanded solutions at the highest level of Government, and Tuvalu strongly recommended a Security Council resolution to urge the Secretary-General to convene a world leader's summit on the subject soon. Such a summit should create the impetus to establish a new economic forum to boost access to environmentally friendly, energy security options for all countries. However, Tuvalu and many small island developing States could not accept nuclear and clean fossil fuels as part of the solution, due to security risks to their fragile environment. Rather, solutions should focus on renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. The world also needed a global strategy on adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The Security Council should review its mandate to fully embrace the concept of environmental security.

MUHAMMAD ALI SORCAR (Bangladesh) said energy and environment issues were critically important to the debate on sustainable development, particularly for developing countries. But, even though the development aspects of the phenomenon had been extensively deliberated, the security implications of global warming had not merited consideration by intergovernmental bodies in the United Nations. The issue had been the subject of study outside the world body and, while the interrelation between climate, energy and security was still being examined, years of general consideration had proved that there was little doubt that the global climate was changing, relentlessly and inexorably, with perhaps dire consequences for the planet. He said that the report of the Intergovernmental Panel had stated that, unless very drastic measures were taken, humanity would face unprecedented challenges.

He said that projects for Bangladesh were ominous. The Country was basically a vast river delta -- split nearly in half by two mighty rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra -- that was home to some 147 million people. With climate warming, experts had posited that the Himalayan snows would melt and torrential waters would stream down from the mountains and flood the alluvial plains. At the same time, with sea-level rise, saline water would flow up from the south and meet the melting mountain ice. Millions of people would be caught in between, with nowhere to go. While what might come next would take some imagination, the mere thought of the impact of those joint phenomena was sufficient reason to look seriously for ways to "prevent a future which none of us will be able to handle", he said.

Bangladesh would not be the only country affected by such change, and it was clear that, with the sunset date of the Kyoto Protocol fast approaching, all nations needed to map out a plan for the future. It was regrettable that no action had been taken and, now, the international community needed to urgently look for mechanisms, institutions and consensus-building processes that would motivate everyone to join forces to avoid "a horrendous future of our own making". To that end, he welcomed the growing calls for the convening of a world summit on

climate change and encouraged the Secretary-General to explore the possibilities of launching talks on such an event, which would give the international community an opportunity to take a fresh look at common and differentiated responsibilities.

PUI LEONG (Venezuela) supported the position of the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement and said that her country was aware of the seriousness of the climate change situation. However, the Security Council was not the appropriate body to deal with that subject.

The Council should adjust its actions to the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations. Venezuela considered that each State was sovereign in determining its priorities in that area, as had been recognized by various international instruments. Energy was a matter of sovereignty, and every country had the authority to decide on the use of its natural resources and on its environmental and energy policy. Interference by the Council could have adverse effects in that regard. To bring to the Council the matters that were not within its purview could lead to an illusion that the body was democratic, while that was far from the case.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, to which Venezuela was a party, represented the most appropriate framework for dealing with climate change, she said. Dealing with it in other forums could produce an impression of an effort to dilute the responsibility of developed countries for greenhouse gas emissions. The United States, whose economy produced the greatest amount of greenhouse gas emissions, needed to contribute to the objectives of the Convention and its Protocol. Once there was a joint responsibility to mitigate the effect of climate change, there was also differentiated responsibility to take into account the factors that had led to the damage to the environment and the capacity of countries. Stereotypes should not be applied to the efforts to solve the problem. It was necessary to carry out studies to determine the real dimensions of the problem and consider possible measures to mitigate their effects, in particular for vulnerable States. Countries producing the greatest amount of greenhouse gases should take the responsibility to reduce their levels in conformity with the Convention on Climate Change.

She added that, although Venezuela's emissions were not significant, the country had adopted a series of initiatives, including a programme that aimed to promote reforestation of some 150,000 hectares by planting trees. Another initiative related to rational use of energy.

ABDALMAHMOOD ABDALHALEEM (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the African Group, expressed concern regarding the Council's decision to hold an open debate on issues not falling within its mandate. The Charter had made clear that issues related to social and economic development remained the domain of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The Council's increasing and alarming encroachment on the mandates of other United Nations bodies, which the Council was trying to justify by linking all issues to the question of security, was compromising the principles and purposes of the Charter and undermining the relevant bodies. The situation was much more alarming as it was taking place at a time when the process of system-wide coherence was gaining momentum within the United Nations.

He said the African Group cautioned against attempts to shift the agenda of interest of all Member States to an institution that had vested final decisions to few members of the Organization. Energy and climate change were development issues, which should be tackled within the parameters of development and the impediments to its achievement. If concerns and challenges arising from climate change and energy were more profound than ever before, particularly in Africa, the fundamental reason was the lack of fulfilment of commitments and the

absence of concrete action, particularly from developed countries, to tackle the adverse effects related to those issues.

Developed countries should honour their commitments in the economic and related fields, by providing, especially for Africa -- the most vulnerable continent -- adequate and predictable resources, environmentally sound technology and access to energy, including through promoting foreign direct investment in Africa's energy sector. As binding multilateral agreements, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol offered sufficient provisions for actions needed to address risks associated with climate change on the global level. The solution to such constraints resided in a broader adherence to those agreements and, most importantly, in the fulfilment, especially by developed countries, of all commitments in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Convention, particularly the Rio principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. He hoped the decision to hold the debate did not constitute a precedent, as the Council was not the appropriate body to deal with such themes.

COLLIN BECK ([Solomon Islands](#)) said his country, located in a disaster-prone region, faced the effects of climate change on a daily basis, and regarded the phenomenon as not only a development issue, but a security concern. His delegation believed that all the main organs of the United Nations should seize the opportunity to address the issue, which threatened the survival of millions of people worldwide, and particularly those in the small island developing States, which were largely dependent on fragile ecosystems to generate economic livelihoods for their inhabitants. It was troubling that, while everyone said that they were aware of the effects of climate change, nations had been slow to address its impact. The fact that more people died each year from the effects of climate change than from conflict had not spurred the international community to action. Neither had the tragic 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the disastrous effects of which had not spared the Solomon Islands. Some 5,000 people had been displaced by that event.

He said that, despite the work United Nations and its Member States usually undertook on each others behalf, the Organization remained divided on whether to address the global effects of climate change as a development or a security issue. He said the United Nations handled climate change like it was a rare comet that came round every five or six years and was worthy of discussion only at those times. Outside the Commission on Sustainable Development, which examined the effects of climate change on a regular basis, no organ dealt with it year round. "If we are, indeed, serious about addressing our environmental challenges, we must give climate change the attention and commitment [given to issues like] terrorism," he said. The entire United Nations system needed to respond to that call, not just the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, but the Security Council, as well. The issue of climate change needed to be depoliticized, and all Member States needed to work to close the existing divide and build bridges towards a common and integrated response to deal with climate change, including by implementing the Kyoto Protocol and other international arrangements.

STUART BECK ([Palau](#)), aligning himself with the statement by Papua New Guinea, said that small islands like Palau were particularly challenged by rising sea levels, and he called the Council's attention to the risks posed by "warming", which was not specifically identified in the concept paper. Global warming threatened to destroy coral reefs. In 1998, the El Niño warming incident had caused the bleaching and death of nearly one third of Palau's coral reefs, and sensitive species had been virtually eliminated. The reefs were central to Palau's economy, which relied on tourism, and to its food security. Taken together, the destruction of Palau's coral reefs

was tantamount to the country's destruction, and would inevitably lead to the migration of its people and an end to their culture.

He went on to say that coral reef ecosystems were vital to scores of States, not just Palau. They provided one quarter of the fish catch in developing countries, and fed over 1 billion people. Their destruction would pose a threat to every country to which former fishermen and their families would migrate. The United Kingdom was applauded for compiling the influential Stern review on the economics of climate change. The United States and European Union were to be thanked for their effort to ensure that coral bleaching was addressed during recent deliberations on the General Assembly's oceans resolution. France was applauded for leading the Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific, as were other nations that had addressed the threat to coral reefs. The international community was called on to squarely address coral reef destruction and the amelioration of damage already done.

CARSTEN STAUR (Denmark), aligning himself with the European Union, said resource shortages were powerful conflict drivers -- the situation in Darfur was one example. There was also a growing realization that climate change threatened security and stability, and the Security Council should be commended for taking on the responsibility of discussing that concept early on. But, the debate should not preclude discussion in a wide range of forums outside the Council. For its part, Denmark would host the fifteenth Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Climate Change Convention in 2009, with the aim of ensuring that agreement was reached on a future accord on climate change. Without such an agreement, it would be difficult to launch a successor to the Kyoto Protocol in 2012.

He said climate change must be treated in line with other major global threats, since it might undermine the carrying capacity of many developing countries, exacerbate tension over scarce water resources and fertile land, lead to environmental refugees, drive conflict over strategic trade routes and newly accessible resources, and lead to territorial losses. There was no silver bullet to fix the complex issue of climate change. There was both a need to mitigate climate changes, as well as to adapt to it. Developing countries, especially, needed help to deal with security threats arising from climate-induced degradation and potential tension over scarce resources. The world must also meet the challenge of changing from carbon-based economies to "something still unknown". Indeed, recent reports from the International Panel on Climate Change provided a strong basis for action.

HJALMAR W. HANNESSON (Iceland) said that, from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, it was clear that climate change would hit the poorest the hardest. The world could expect more extreme weather events, glaciers would melt and the sea level would rise. There would be severe droughts and floods and desertification would increase. There was clear evidence of climate change in his own country, as well, where glaciers were shrinking fast. Prior to taking his post in New York, he had been an Ambassador in Canada, where he had also witnessed the effects of climate change. One did not need to spend a long time at the United Nations before it was made abundantly clear that, for a number of Member States, especially small island developing States, climate change with rising sea levels was the greatest threat to their security. He agreed that climate change was a serious security issue.

If climate change was to be effectively slowed and eventually halted, and if its effects, particularly on developing countries, were to be mitigated, then wide-ranging and long-term international cooperation was the only course open, he said. However, the international

community was not fully succeeding through its international cooperation, possibly because climate change was treated principally as an environmental issue. With open debate in the Council, climate change was finally recognized for what it was: a significant security issue that required the highest attention of world leaders. The next 20 years were crucial. If the international community acted quickly and effectively to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it would have taken significant steps towards savings millions from suffering and conflict in the future. The scale of the problem was such that a solution would need commitment of every Member State. Iceland, as a party to the Kyoto Protocol, was fully committed to doing its part. The country had recently adopted a new climate change strategy, with a vision to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 50 to 75 per cent by 2050.

Mitigation measures should not hinder development, he continued, for which increased energy consumption was crucial. Within the lifetime of one generation, Iceland had moved from being largely dependent on coal and oil to fulfilling 70 per cent of its total energy needs from renewable resources, and a remarkable 100 per cent of its electricity production was based on clean and sustainable energy. The country was exploring new technologies, including the use of hydrogen for transportation. By increasing use of renewable energy, developing countries would be in a position to use their own resources, which would provide secure access to energy. In fact, hundreds of experts from developing countries had graduated from the United Nations geothermal training programme, which had been established in Iceland three decades ago. There were many possibilities to ensure sustainable energy supply. Iceland would continue its development cooperation strategy to focus on sustainable development and sustainable utilization of natural resources.

ALFRED CAPELLE (Marshall Islands) said that the fate of his country and many other small island developing States already experiencing the earliest ecological impacts of climate change, was not an isolated concern, but the first link in a chain of world events that would weaken the structure of global peace. Indeed, in addition to consideration by other United Nations and international bodies, the issue of climate change deserved the ongoing attention of the Security Council and needed to be an item on the 15-nation body's regular agenda. He said that population relocations sparked by sea-level rise was already a reality in his region and, with land in limited supply, the issue would quickly reach critical mass.

He said low-lying nations like the Marshall Islands were at serious risk of spawning an entirely new class of displaced persons: "environmental refugees". Faced with the foreseeable loss of their islands, the struggle to redefine his country's Marshallese identity would compound existing political and social stresses already prevalent in the Pacific region. He went on to say that two impacts associated with climate change -- ocean acidification and increased water temperatures -- were already impacting marine ecosystems. The reduction of food supplies in the face of rising populations not only threatened nations' subsistence, but would intensify international competition for increasingly scarce essential resources. "Such future rivalries will create an invitation to global conflict," he said. But the international community still had the opportunity to move beyond "lip service" and reduce the threat of climate change. While the Marshall Islands realized the complex challenges and costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change, the cost of inaction, or inadequate action, would be far greater.

HILARIO G. DAVIDE (Philippines), broadly associating his delegation with the views of the Non-Aligned Movement and Group of 77 and China, said the Philippines was participating in

today's debate because of the importance it placed on energy, security and climate change issues. In that context, he highlighted a landmark Supreme Court decision on the environment that enforced the doctrine of intergenerational responsibility and intergenerational justice. He hoped today's debate would generate the consensus needed for speedy cooperation.

It was undeniable that consumption and production patterns, especially in developed countries, had led to the current climate situation, he explained. In keeping with the doctrine of intergenerational justice, States should examine how to mitigate climate change. Citing promises made at the Second East-Asian Summit to work closely to cut greenhouse gas emissions, he reminded States that potential measures included promoting cleaner fossil fuel technologies and developing clean coal technologies. East Asia's decision to cooperate in mitigating climate change should be replicated by other large regional groupings. He also recalled the 2006 Cebu Declaration on Sustainable Development, in which the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) expressed its concern at the impact of climate change on ecosystems.

Regional cooperation appeared to be outpacing global cooperation, he said. As such, it was important to focus on inter-regional cooperation. Further, ASEAN and European Union ministers had stressed the need for participation in the Montreal process. For its part, the Philippines had created a Presidential task force on climate change that was tasked with assessing vulnerable sectors.

Developed countries must take the lead in modifying longer-term trends in anthropogenic emissions, he added, stressing that they were better equipped to manage risks than developing countries. Further, cooperative development of technologies to address climate change would ensure no barriers existed to effective technology transfer. He urged all countries to comply with their legally binding obligations under the Convention on Climate Change and take climate change considerations as an integral part of their development plans.

CLAUDE HELLER (Mexico) said climate change represented a growing and serious threat for sustainable development, with direct repercussions on energy supply and demand. The result would be a geopolitical environment that would be determined by the availability of alternative sources of energy and by the capacity of access to appropriate technologies for its use. The anticipated impacts of climate change also put at risk existing oil and electrical infrastructure. Climate change would alter energy requirements, as well as production and consumption patterns of diverse goods, resulting in distortions in the productive sectors. The present challenge demanded redoubled efforts to diminish the use of carbon in the economies on a worldwide scale. Climate change would also continue to intensify extreme meteorological phenomena, creating humanitarian emergencies in many countries. Increases in poverty and inequality, if not reversed, would cause major social conflicts.

Today's meeting was a valuable exercise that would contribute to efforts to increase awareness, he said. While deliberating on the issue, however, clarity was needed on the role of the various United Nations institutions. Although the nature of the threats was urgent, conferring the responsibility for adopting preventive measures to the Council that belonged to the specialized forums would confuse the content and scope of the duties adopted in diverse legal instruments, while also eroding its efficiency regarding the maintenance of international peace and security. In the present reform process, members had agreed on the objective of ensuring coherence of the Organization's actions. Consistent with that spirit, it was necessary to strengthen the different organs that could affect the issue, such as the General Assembly and the

Economic and Social Council.

PIRAGIBE TARRAGO ([Brazil](#)) acknowledged the United Kingdom's initiative, but advocated extreme caution in establishing links between conflicts and the utilization of natural resources or the evolution of climate on our planet. To determine whether any particular environmental phenomenon represented a threat to international peace and security remained a very complex task. Not only should conflicts not be traced back to a single cause, but the matter was also invariably loaded with many political connotations, which might impair an objective analysis. There was a more relevant link between climate change and development, as opposed to security. In the case where the countries listed in annex I of the Climate Change Convention, which were historically responsible for the current global warming, did not fulfil their commitments regarding the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, scientists had agreed that there was a high probability that the world climate would be seriously affected, thereby becoming another factor of social and economic instability in many areas of the world.

His Government supported strengthening the international regime on climate change, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, he said. The negotiating process must continue to take place exclusively in the context of the international regime. The contribution of each country must be proportional to its contribution to the creation of the problem. The debate on the issue should take place in a forum with universal representation, such as the General Assembly. The increasing importance of the matter warranted serious consideration of the possibility of convening a special session of the Assembly. The debate at the United Nations should not seek to become a substitute for the negotiations in the context of the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. It might, nonetheless, add to the political perspective of the debate and underline issues of utmost importance for developing countries, such as the recognition of the historical responsibilities and the funding of adaptation measures in the context of both the "polluter pays" and "common but differentiated responsibilities" principles.

The strategic nature of issues related to climate change and energy required stronger and more effective cooperation frameworks that recognized the role of developing countries and took into account the challenges of global warming, while contributing to economic growth and social justice. His Government was in favour of encouraging diversification of energy sources and recognized the strategic importance of renewable energy. It was, indeed, convinced that biofuels could help to address the challenges of energy supply, environmental sustainability, employment and income generation in rural areas; and technological development.

NIRUPAN SEN ([India](#)) said the catastrophic scenarios posited by the Stern report -- which presented political argument as the outcome of an objective scientific modelling process regarding climate change and its fallout -- could hardly be discussed in any meaningful manner. In marked contrast, a more immediate and quantifiable threat was from possible conflicts arising out of inadequate resources for development and poverty eradication,, as well as competition for energy.

He said the concerns of developing countries centred squarely on poverty eradication, a prerequisite for which was the acceleration of growth in developing countries. In turn, by mitigating the potential for conflict, poverty eradication had positive implications for global peace and security. To tackle the problems that might lead to conflict, action was required on resource flow, adaptation and technology. Diversion of official development assistance (ODA) resources

from economic growth and poverty eradication in developing countries was not the answer. Besides new and additional resources, there was a need to upscale the realization of resources from the carbon market.

He said the appropriate forum for discussing issues relating to climate change was the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In so far as international peace and security was concerned, if developed countries reduced their greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, it would considerably reduce such threats through a reduction in the need for privileged access to energy markets. Nothing in the greenhouse gas profile of developing countries even remotely reflected a threat to international peace and security, yet their taking on greenhouse gas mitigation targets would adversely impact their development and increase their insecurity.

CHOI YOUNG-JIN (Republic of Korea) said that, as well documented by recent reports by Sir Nicholas Stern and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, it was increasingly clear that climate catastrophes caused by global warming would gravely affect the whole world, if not checked by immediate joint action by the international community. The phenomena associated with climate change would not only have a devastating impact on global economies, but also have serious security implications, as the concept paper poignantly recognized. It had been reasonably predicted that the effects of climate change would be more severe for unstable States and poorer, vulnerable populations. The understanding of the security dimensions of climate change should, therefore, bring the international community together for tackling that global issue urgently and collectively. Climate change certainly demanded fundamental rethinking in many policy areas within a limited amount of time.

Revisiting “a classical but still illustrative thesis of the Tragedy of the Commons”, he said that, if humankind abused or misused its public goods -- in this case, the planet -- the present generation, as well as future generations, would lose them. To escape that trap, it was necessary to explore common solutions based on “enlightened national interests”, instead of being bound by the narrow and immediate concerns of each country. As the level of the individual living within national borders “enlightened self-interest”, balancing individual needs with the common good best served each citizen in the long term. In the same vein, it was time to accept the same logic at the level of the global village. As the era of globalization ushered a new set of transnational problems, of which climate change was a prime example, traditional national interests needed to expand to encompass “enlightened national interest” -- the interests of each nation in tune with a global perspective. Once nations adopted such an approach, a corollary “leadership by example” might also be required.

“We must mobilize our powers of reasoning and abstract thought, which are unique to humankind,” he said. Those new concepts might best ensure long-term national interests by enabling the world to better respond to global problems. He hoped that today’s debate would jump-start the search for wise solutions for the far-reaching problem of climate change, leading to meaningful progress towards a breakthrough at the Bali conference in December.

JOHAN LØVALD (Norway) welcomed the fact that, for the first time, the Security Council was addressing the security aspects of climate change. Climate change and energy were broad issues addressed in other United Nations forums, but there was no doubt that they posed threats to collective security. Climate change was the world’s main environmental challenge. It affected economic development; threatened the livelihood, health and resource base of societies; and

caused the spread of infectious diseases. It would likely reduce the world's food security through droughts and unstable weather conditions, as well as endanger habitable earth through rising sea levels and result in more humanitarian emergencies. Climate change as part of the peace and security agenda should and must be addressed by the Security Council, which would run the risk of becoming less effective in preventing and resolving conflicts by ignoring the environmental dimension in the underlying causes of conflict.

To do that, the Council needed to base decisions on facts and specific knowledge, he continued. It was necessary to fill the current knowledge gap on how climate change and changing energy needs affected specific conflict situations on the Council's agenda. Such improved knowledge would help the international community prevent and deal more effectively with future conflicts. It could also prove essential for preparing a coherent response to the risk of climate change among the United Nations membership and across United Nations organizations. He called on the Department of Political Affairs, in cooperation with UNEP and other relevant United Nations institutions, to look at ways to improve and make more readily available the current knowledge base on links between climate change and security.

JEEM LIPPWE (Federated States of Micronesia) said that, for his country, like other small island developing States, climate change had been a serious security problem for quite some time. From the viewpoint of an islander, living on island atolls merely a few metres above sea-level, global climate change was a security threat that must be confronted urgently by the Council. The circumstances of climate change that confronted the world today were unprecedented and threatened to render meaningless all apparent social and economic achievements and developments in all areas. In the Pacific, the results of climate change were severe and widespread. In Micronesia, within the past three months, islands in the state of Chuuk had experienced unusually high tides that had caused damage to food crops, sea-walls and homes, resulting in relocation of residents and prompting a declaration of a state of emergency in the affected areas. The truth was that climate change was a security threat and a threat to every aspect of life on Pacific islands.

Regarding regional threats, he said that rising sea levels would change coastlines and quite likely submerge entire islands. In addition to the irreversible loss of territory, changes in geography could lead to disputes over exclusive economic zones. Saltwater intrusion had already destroyed crops on islands throughout the region. Damaged fish stocks would be devastating to the livelihood of residents. The frequency of tropical storms would increase. As a result, environmental refugees would put additional strain on small and vulnerable economies.

DIEGO LIMERES (Argentina) said the living conditions of populations worldwide might be significantly affected unless urgent measures to mitigate the effects of and adapt to climate change were not adopted. Agriculture and food production might be transformed and pose great risks for political and social stability in some regions. Densely populated areas might be flooded due to sea-level rise, sparking massive population movements. There were actions the international community could take to mitigate the phenomenon "as much as was still possible", especially those courses of action to provide assistance to developing countries that had been agreed through international cooperation.

In both the 1992 Rio declaration and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the international community had adopted the principle of "common and differentiated responsibilities", by which the developed countries committed to lead mitigation initiatives and bear the greater burden for reversing the effects of greenhouse gas emissions. He

said that the patterns of production and consumption in those countries had given rise to the current alarming levels of carbon emissions in the atmosphere. Those countries responsible for such grave changes in the world climate also possessed the best and most abundant material, technical and financial resources to deal with the challenges of reducing the effects of climate change.

ILLEANA NUÑEZ MORDOCHE (Cuba) speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that her delegation had evidence that some delegations that had spoken before it had presented their formal request for inclusion on the list of speakers after Cuba had made its request. Cuba believed that this was another instance of the lack of transparency that characterized the work of the Security Council and of the need for an urgent and profound reform of the 15-nation body, including its working methods.

The Non-Aligned Movement would once again underscore the need for United Nations Member States to fully respect the functions and powers of each of the Organization's principle organs, particularly the General Assembly, and to maintain the balance among those organs within their respective Charter-based functions and powers. She said that the Movement would also reiterate its concerns regarding the continued and increasing encroachment of the Security Council on the functions and powers of the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other organs, by addressing issues that traditionally fell within their competencies. The Climate Change Convention was the appropriate forum for considering the risks associated with and actions to address climate change.

VANU GOPALA MENON (Singapore) said that, while it was obvious that there was some discomfort about the venue and nature of today's debate, it was equally obvious that climate change was the global environmental challenge. Given their paucity of resources, developing countries would be the hardest hit, and some had their survival at stake. But it was not only the poor that would suffer. There was broad consensus that it was necessary to act to arrest what "we ourselves are responsible for". Many of the problems caused by climate change could only be tackled if nations worked together.

"Let us view our procedural disagreements against this backdrop," he said. While it might be difficult to quantify the relationship between climate change and international peace and security, there should be no doubt that climate change was an immediate global challenge, whose effects were transboundary and multifaceted. Given that complexity, could Member States realistically limit themselves to finding one "correct" forum to discuss all the aspects of the problem? Or should they use all their resources to try to understand the issue and all opportunities to explore various perspectives? He was not advocating that the Security Council play a key role on climate change, but neither could he deny that body "some sort of a role because it seems obvious to all but the wilfully blind that climate change must, if not now, then eventually have some impact on international peace and security". Of course, the Council was not the only or the main player, however. With a broader membership and mandate, the General Assembly was clearly another body that must discuss the issue. Other bodies were UNEP and the Economic and Social Council, and the upcoming fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was expected to play a key role.

After today's open debate, Member States should not put the issue aside, he added. Given the magnitude and urgency of the problem, the Assembly should consider convening a high-level event or a special session dedicated to climate change. There was no point "sitting

around and complaining that the Security Council is encroaching into areas that should be dealt with by the General Assembly. The Assembly should rise to the challenge and do something about that global issue. Hopefully, today's debate would inspire the international community to take the next step of dealing with the issue in a broader setting involving the entire United Nations membership.

CHRISTIAN WENAWESER (Liechtenstein) said that the concept of international peace and security had been subject to an increasingly broader interpretation over the past few years, and today's debate constituted a further step in that evolution. He agreed with those who had 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 had the potential of posing a threat to international peace and security. The debate, therefore, was an appropriate way of addressing a potential future threat and a good way for the Security Council to adopt preventative approaches, wherever possible. It was quite clear that environmental issues had, in many cases, at least a strong corollary effect on situations that threatened peace and security. Several ongoing conflicts, for example, were, among other factors, driven by the scarcity of water resources. Other obvious issues were mass displacement and migration due to adverse environmental conditions, food shortages and lack of cultivable land.

He strongly welcomed the Secretary-General's personal commitment to making climate change one of his priorities, he said, as well as the current efforts to address that threat in a more effective way, beyond the year 2012 and beyond the terms of the Kyoto Protocol. The international response had been insufficient in the past, but determined action would allow the international community to design a more effective response. Of course, it would not be the Security Council that would make a decision on the collective response to climate change.

However, the Council — as the most prestigious United Nations body — could make a significant contribution to promoting understanding of the nature of the threat and to addressing some of its elements on an ad hoc basis and as part of situations that threatened peace and security. He hoped that today's event would have a positive effect on how the Council conducted its work in the future.

Environmental factors of conflict had clearly been neglected in the past, even where they were of obvious relevance, and there was much room for improvement there, he added. The Council could increasingly resort to relevant expertise on those matters, which was available in the United Nations system, but not necessarily in those parts of the Secretariat that traditionally serviced the Council. Formal and informal briefings from competent agencies and programmes 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 it in its capacity in the area of conflict prevention.

MARIA-ALICIA TERRAZAS ONTIVEROS (Bolivia) said that the United Nations Development Programme's 1944 Human Development Report had introduced the idea that human and collective security perhaps deserved a broader definition than had ever been considered before that time. Since then, many multilateral forums had stressed that development, peace and security were all linked. She said that developing countries knew the realities of the interdependence of ecological and environmental factors and sustainable development.

Indeed, many such countries, particularly in Africa, were aware of the importance of clean water to their development, particularly to agriculture and sanitation, and for infant, child and maternal health. She said that the privatization of many water supplies during the 1990s had led to “water wars” in some areas and, seven years before the target date for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, the international community’s efforts to secure the human right to water of some 1.6 billion people had been woefully inadequate. It was high time for all stakeholders to come together to address the world’s serious clean water needs before it was too late.

FATIMA LIMA DA VEIGA (Cape Verde) said that the recent findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change could not be more eloquent on the risks and challenges for the sustainability of development efforts at the national, regional and international levels, and for the very survival of mankind. If the international community failed to deal seriously and urgently with the issues of energy and climate change, those challenges could, in the long run, constitute potential threats to overall global security.

She said that her country was severely affected by drought and land degradation, as well as by the effects of climate change that generally impacted small island development States, such as sea-level rise and salination of underground water and soil. The international community must build on the momentum generated by recent international events on climate change, chiefly the recent “Citizens of the World” gathering in Paris and the release of the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel. Only partnership could ensure mitigation of the causes and effects of climate change, enhance adaptation, combat air pollution and improve access to energy and cost-effective technologies. Such global partnership should also aim to develop and disseminate renewable energy technologies to increase the use of such renewable energy resources in the global energy mix.

SAUL WEISLEDER (Costa Rica) supported the position of the Group of 77 and China, and said that climate change was one of the most urgent issues before the international community now. Apart from the increasing encroachment of the Security Council on the prerogatives of other bodies, it was important to remember that the principal aim of its work was maintenance of international peace and security, and all bodies must contribute to the achievement of that aim. Further arguments were not needed to prove the link between the issues of energy and climate change with security. It should suffice to refer to such phenomena as disappearance of small island States and triggering of conflicts due to deterioration of ecological systems.

Central America was suffering from the effects of climate change, including changes in weather patterns and increased frequency of hurricanes and floods, which resulted in loss of human lives and infrastructure, he continued. Changes threatened the security of those countries and hindered their human development. The countries of Central America also experienced a reduction in their water resources, and climate change had an impact on renewable resources.

Costa Rica’s national strategy was based on ethical points of internal and external responsibility, he said. His country called for a set of policies to achieve environmental, development and security goals, on the basis of shared principles of sustainable development, international cooperation, solidarity and common but differentiated responsibility, which had been enshrined in the 1992 Rio Declaration. On the national level, Costa Rica had set the aim of being the first country to develop “neutral carbon balance”, seeking to totally compensate for greenhouse gas emissions with sustainable actions. He also called for a high-level debate in the

Assembly on climate change and energy issues.

DANIEL CARMON ([Israel](#)) said that energy played a critical role in all societies.

Historically, adequate and affordable energy had always been central to economic development, and access to energy had enabled the shift from agricultural economies to modern, industrial and service-based economies. At the same time, energy also adversely affected the climate.

Vulnerable areas around the world were even more susceptible to those issues. Governments and other players could use the tools in their hands for the benefit of mankind, but they could also misuse them. There was no doubt that the security of certain regions related directly to, among other things, the availability of energy resources. History had shown that competition between States seeking to satisfy their energy needs could instigate conflict, particularly in places where tensions already existed.

He stressed that it was not only the potential scarcity of oil and gas that could be drivers of conflict, but access to water, food and fertile soil. Further, recent scientific research had shown that all those factors were exacerbated by climate change. With all that in mind, the international community must cooperate in researching and developing renewable and alternative energy resources for the betterment of all societies. Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change would enable all nations to work together to promote sustainable practices. In that regard, he said his delegation looked forward to the upcoming Commission on Sustainable Development meeting next month, as well as other forums dealing with sustainable development, climate change and related issues.

JOHN MCNEE ([Canada](#)) said that the science of climate change was clear, and it was necessary to focus international attention on solutions to protect the planet's fragile ecosystem.

The impacts of climate change were already being felt in many areas. All regions could be affected, including in Canada, where traditional ways of life in the north were already being threatened. Poor communities could be especially vulnerable, in particular those concentrated in high-risk areas. Efforts were also needed to better integrate climate change into the international community's long-term security and humanitarian strategies. Technology advancement would play a critical role. Collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors needed to be rapidly accelerated to advance technology uptake.

The time for action was now, he stressed. In the weeks ahead, Canada's Government would set out enforceable regulatory targets for greenhouse gas emissions. Canada also stood ready to work to build a truly global approach to achieve deep reductions in emissions, with full participation of all major emitter countries. There must be greater cooperation to integrate climate change adaptation efforts more effectively into national development policies of the most vulnerable developing nations, supported through more effective bilateral, regional and multilateral assistance. Working together, the international community must put in place effective strategies to respond to the challenges of climate change to sustainable development and human and ecosystem health and security. Addressing climate change was a matter of good global stewardship and, as such, deserved sustained attention and action.

SOMDUTH SOBORUN ([Mauritius](#)) stressed the importance of the issue under discussion, and said that it was no longer possible to doubt that global warming was accelerating and that human activity was contributing substantially to that acceleration. As predicted in various reports, that acceleration would have devastating effects: small island developing States, including Mauritius, though contributing insignificantly to the global greenhouse gas emissions,

would be among the countries facing the full adverse impacts of climate change. Small island developing States and low-lying coastal countries were highly vulnerable to climate change. Unique features of island ecosystems, including fisheries, coral reefs and mangroves, also faced increasing threats from climate change and natural disasters. That had huge adverse implications for such economic sectors as tourism and agriculture, as well as food security and nutrition. Saline intrusion and changes in rainfall patterns were seriously affecting their freshwater resources and agriculture.

He said that adaptation was vital for those countries in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the goals of the objectives set by the World Summit on Sustainable Development. That would necessitate increased assistance at both technical and financial levels. Mauritius called upon the international community to set up a special small island developing States fund to enable the development and implementation of adaptation measures in the same manner as the special fund for the least developed countries. To enable better monitoring of climate variations associated with global warming and sea-level rise, there was also the need to set up regional climate observation systems to assist small island developing States. He underscored the engagement of the international community in building partnerships in technology development, transfer of cleaner technologies and building management capacities for vulnerability reduction and disaster management. Developed countries' assistance was also needed in exploring and expanding the use of renewable energy, including biofuels. Small island States depended on global actions to combat the problems of climate change and sea-level rise.

In conclusion, he supported the outcome of the "Conference de Paris", which had called for the creation of a United Nations environment organization. The twenty-third Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Commission, held on 2 April under the chairmanship of Mauritius, had recently discussed the proposed body.

MAHMOUD ABOUD (Comoros) noted that the main objective of today's debate was to consider the link between energy, security and climate, as well as the impact of climate change on security. Solutions were difficult to find, given the problems some countries were facing, particularly due to their least developed countries or small island developing States status. Speedy sustainable solutions were needed. The future of coming generations was threatened by the negative impact of human activities on the global climate. The effects were particularly pronounced in small island developing States, but droughts, torrential rainfall and hurricanes now occurred at the global level, resulting in loss of life and material damage.

The Comoros suffered from the destruction of its coastal areas and was witnessing great internal displacement of its population as a result of the loss of agricultural land and soil degradation, as well as poverty. Many people had crossed the sea in inhuman conditions to reach the island of Mayotte. A group of young people had delivered a message of alarm at the Johannesburg Sustainable Development Summit — a message that it was possible to buy everything, except another planet. It was necessary to make the best of the world's natural resources. Comoros did not cause climate change, but was threatened by it. The challenge was to promote new and renewable energy. Comoros supported the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the principle of anticipating the phenomena linked to climate change and preparing for their impact. However, such efforts required technical and financial support.

Adapting to the potential impact of climate change was a new area, and the international community had a challenge of helping small island developing States in that respect. The Security

Council had the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Other questions, including those of economic and social development, energy and climate change were entrusted to Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development. He also emphasized the importance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and announced that, in the coming days, his country would ratify the Kyoto Protocol. It was time to act together to make the international community aware of the needs of small island developing States, who were the first to suffer from climate change. Everyone's future was at stake. The international community should not wait to the last minute — otherwise, the islands could disappear forever.

Wrapping up the debate, Security Council President EMYR JONES PARRY ([United Kingdom](#)) said that some 55 delegations had participated in the meeting — that was a record for such a debate. He particularly welcomed the large number of non-members that had addressed the Council. The overall discussion had highlighted the complexity of the issue and the breadth of the challenge that climate change posed for all nations.

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