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Global Security and Climate Change

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Abstract

Climate politics has interdisciplinary nature and scientific intricacies tangled in climate change. The study evolved in the mid of 1980s, but failed to attain the lime light till 2008. Dramatic disarticulation in political, economic and social sphere because of climate change increased the importance of climate politics. Climate change is considered as ethical failure. Global warming, green house emission, carbon, droughts, famine, deforestations, floods, and water pollution are already destructive for mankind. The question arises about the link between climate crisis and security, should it be or not? There are many extensive notions and ideas about what do it mean, and who has the power to invoke it as global security threat. The contemplations are essential to shape up the policy of climate change on international level to lessen the security challenges related to climate crisis. It's the dire need of the hour to accept the climate crisis as genuine security concern by the international institutions and in urgent time frame the best possible solutions should be set to reduce the climate change crisis for the sake of better human civilization.

Key Words: Climate Change, Crisis, Global Security, International, Conventions

Introduction

Climate change has been considered as the worst night mare for the mankind, posing threats to the lives of people, and all the species by increasing the effect of greenhouse emission, global warming, deforestation, acidifying ocean and soil erosion. This will not be the first time people have fought over land, water and resources, but this time it will be on a scale that dwarfs the conflicts of the past.¹ In past Centre for Naval Analysis has conducted a research to find out the challenges

¹ Parry, E. J. (2007). *The Greatest Threat To Global Security: Climate Change Is Not Merely An Environmental Problem*. Retrieved from UN Chronicle: <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/greatest-threat-global-security-climate-change-not-merely-environmental-problem>

and threats posed by the climate change. The report found out climate change as a threat to national security as well as global security. Climate change will be the reason of instability even in stable regions and thus national security would be on stake along with economic and energy dependencies. From Sahara Desert to Atlantic Ocean.

Caribbean to South East Asia the catastrophic effects of extreme temperature exacerbated the natural disasters. There are deadly heat waves in European states i.e. England, Croatia, floods and famine in Asian states i.e. Indian State of Madagascara or KPK province of Pakistan. It has become increasingly clear that climate change has consequences that reach the very heart of the security agenda: flooding, disease and famine, resulting in migration on an unprecedented scale in areas of already high tension; drought and crop-failure, leading to intensified competition for food, water and energy in regions where resources are already stretched to the limit.²

Coal, gas and production of oil release billions of tons' carbon dioxide in the air every year. This is the reason of greenhouse gas emission, increasing global warming at the crucial level where no corner of the globe is immune from the disastrous penalties. The irreversible destruction of the ecosystem has been in the way if the countries are not serious in combating the phenomena of greenhouse gas emission. Global warming is a risk multiplier as in the states of Latin America, Africa or Asia the droughts and famine are the cause of global warming. Food and water security got into trouble. The possibility of migration and displacement due to the socio-economic fabric of the country lead by the climate crisis agitated the political unrest and violence, observed in the developing states of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Perception of Security:

Security is considered as protection against troubles and certainly decreasing the probability of maltreatment to certain specified principles and values. The discipline of International Security Studies was emerged during the Cold War, focused primarily to control the state aggressions to protect the security of the other state, which is national security but only a typology of security. Even the security of the state can incriminate varied tenets and different extortion. There are different arguments that security should encompass, for instance, the intimidations postured by natural disasters. Most recently the pandemic of Covid-19, that killed millions of people and affected the economic infrastructure of the countries have reshaped the concept of security. In short, the concept of security is invoked to prioritize policy responses designed to protect certain specified objects and values that are considered

² Parry, E. J. (2007). *The Greatest Threat To Global Security: Climate Change Is Not Merely An Environmental Problem*. Retrieved from UN Chronicle: <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/greatest-threat-global-security-climate-change-not-merely-environmental-problem>

vital—typically involving human life and welfare—from imminent or urgent threats of harm.³

If we take climate change as national security threat and to frame security policies and to set agendas individually the chances are there to collapse of these policies and framework because it increases the environmental related conflict among the states. The climate change crisis needs to resolve through the collective action taken by the states jointly. Climate change possesses threats at almost every aspect and dimension, from individuals to communities, national to international level. And when we get into the details about the negative impacts of climate change on international global security find out the miseries and troubles of states even in the form of lack of basic necessities i.e. shortage of food, unavailability of clean drinking water and polluted air in which we breath. In 2014 report issued by the UN Intergovernmental Panel for climate change marked this matter of climate change as threat to human security. Whether emphasizing the threat to the state or to individuals - ultimately approach environmental change as a threat in and of itself, particularly defined in terms of the survival of (human) life. Subsequent approaches to the environment-security relationship in the academic world, however, focused on the environment as a threat to the extent that it was capable of precipitating (or at least triggering) violent conflict.⁴

Global Conflict on Climate Crisis:

The harsh reality is associated to the global security with the rapidly changing climate. In this havoc situation, it is the call of the need to prioritize the climate related issues. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change presaged the increasing intensity of global warming by 2050 even after cutting down the consumption of carbon gases emission. The global warming triggered the ice tips of numerous regions adding acceleration in the conflict and strains. The main concern related to the climate change global security is associated with the overburdening of states that effect and accelerate the political and security crisis. It interlinked with comprehensive effective approaches on international level. For instance, the goal of sustainable millennium development could be fragile if the crisis of environment is not mitigated properly.

It is of the view that total global GDP exceeding 20% would be the cost to deter climate change crisis. The developed states have concern over it. For example, one fifths of the world population are the resident of coastal areas. The sea level increases due to the global warming poses the threat to the economic infrastructure of the coastal areas of Caribbean, Central American and East coastal region of India

³ Martin, C. (2022, August). *Climate Change and Global Security: Framing an Existential Threat*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-journal-of-international-law/article/climate-change-and-global-security-framing-an-existential-threat/E87307D8FAE527B232D538FC738EDF79>

⁴ Mcdonald, M. (2010). The Environment and Global Security. In *Global Security and International Political Economy* (Vol. 1, p. 289). EOLSS Publications.

every year. This devastation put a heavy pressure on the fiscal budget of the donor countries. On the other part, the territorial conflicts related to the Law of the Sea appear by submergence of vast coastlines areas.

Environmentally-induced migration from the developing states to developed states contributed in the North and South differences. The South has renowned for the poor quality of life and infrastructure where the basic necessities are on the edge. The issues of unemployment, poverty and inflation are accelerated due to the change in climate. People choose to migrate in the developed regions to secure themselves. The pressure increases on the sustainability projects of the developed, and thus the result is in the strict policy of immigration.

One of the potential conflicts due to the climate crisis is the struggle to access and capture the green and renewable energy resources. However, because much of the world's hydrocarbon reserves are in regions vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and because many oil and gas producing states already face significant social economic and demographic challenges, instability is likely to increase.⁵ The use of nuclear energy for the power generation by the developed states intensified the instability on international level Transformation of global energy system is the need of an hour, because the political integrity and security of the states are interlinked with the decarbonization.

Global Conventions on Climate Change:

Since the decade of 1970s the states have pledged collectively to combat the issues create by climate change. But the consequences have been getting worse even after the effective diplomacy on this serious threat. In the 1970s authors such as Richard Falk (1971) and Lester Brown (1977) laid the foundation for later attempts to explicitly redefine security in the context of environmental change, even if operating at a broad level of abstraction and focusing as much on the opportunity costs of Cold War military expenditure.⁶ Through the United Nations Framework Convention, Rio Summit, Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement, states decided to control the greenhouse gas emission and to reduce the utilization of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere but proved futile. In the COP27 Summit, the United Nations cautioned the governments to be on track to fulfill the objectives of Paris Agreement in the COP27 Summit held in Egypt. In Paris Agreement, nationally determined contributions (NDCs) were planned by the governments to avert the global average temperature from rising 2°C (3.6°F) above preindustrial levels and following efforts to keep it below 1.5°C (2.7°F). G-20 countries assured to cut down the greenhouse gas pollution by not financing fired power plants abroad and to maximize the triple use of renewable energy resources, but failed to announce the deadline in this regard.

⁵ Singh, A. (2013). Climate Change and Meritime Security. In *Indian Ocean Challenges A Quest for Cooperative Solutions*. KW Publishers.

⁶ Christine Aghazarm, F. L. (2009). *Migration, Environment and Climate Change*. International Organization for Migration.

It's all pretty small relative to governments around the world setting a forceful climate policy.⁷

With the passage of time, the impact of climate crisis on global peace and security has gone worsened. This impact is manifested in multiple ways, the competition over natural resources, food and water is the bone of contention among the states. Climate change poses escalating risks to stability and security, with potentially far-reaching consequences, from the risks to fragile states from more volatile weather to the combined effects of rising sea levels and storm surge on the survival of island nations and coastal populations.⁸ On Sep 13, 2021, Niger and Germany presented a draft resolution in United Nations Security Council mentioning climate change as a threat to global peace and security first time ever. As under the Article 24 of the UN charter, Security Council is liable to maintain world security and peace. The draft was rejected by the UNSCs veto power of Russia, China abstained the voting process. Apart the draft had the support of 113 members of the United Nations. The draft resolution had crucial importance because it required comprehensive conflict management strategies to manage the climate change clashes.

Kyoto Protocol:

In 1992, Rio Earth Summit established an international agreement on climate change with addition of the formation of UNFCCC which is effective till to date. Kyoto Protocol was negotiated under the umbrella of UNFCCC by binding the states to work together to establish pollution free environment for the mankind. Kyoto Protocol, the first legal binding global agreement on the climate security, negotiated in 1997 bound the industrialized countries to reduce the greenhouse gas emission by the period of 2012. Trans-boundary nature of the global warming and air pollution commended the states to establish international agreement on climate change effectively. With more than 190 countries, the KP was truly seeking collective action. To facilitate cooperation among the countries, the protocol offered mechanisms such as the International Emission trading (IET), the Joint Implementation (JI) and Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) through which the countries can achieve their targets jointly or separately.⁹ Kyoto Protocol operationalizes the UNFCCC by directing industrialized countries to decrease the greenhouse gas emission.

⁷ Hill, A. C. (2021). *The Fight for Climate After COVID-19*. UK: Oxford University Press.

⁸ Joshua Busby, M. B. (2021, March). *Climate Change Must Be Tackled as a Global Security Risk*. Retrieved from Reliefweb: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/climate-change-must-be-tackled-global-security-risk>

⁹ Maamoun, N. (2019). The Kyoto protocol: Empirical evidence of a hidden success. *Journal of Environmental Politics and Management*, 95.

The Kyoto Protocol assigned the developed states to cut their greenhouse gas emission by an average of 5.2% by a year of 2012. The accord mandated the industrialized countries have the major responsibility of the climate crisis preceded with the glory of industrial revolution. The Kyoto Protocol categorized the countries into two separate wings, annex-1 identified the developed industrialized states that had liability to cut down the greenhouse gas emission and annex-2 was referred to the developing states that had function to investigate the projects designed to lower the carbon emission in their states. “United Nations has faced many challenges while fighting with the climate crisis issue on governance level. The governance problem is huge and will remain so in the foreseeable future as large developing countries such as Brazil, China and India have little incentive to help solve a problem that they themselves did not create.¹⁰ On the other hand, in the reign of Jr. Bush the Americans withdrew from this agreement, by taking into account the negative impact on the country’s economy.

At the end of the first round of the agreement, the Doha Amendments were initiated in 2012. This amendment mandated new targets and goals to cut down the greenhouse gas emission by 2020 for the participating countries. Kyoto Protocol has faced many challenges while fighting with the climate crisis issue on governance level. The governance problem is huge and will remain so in the foreseeable future as large developing countries such as Brazil, China and India have little incentive to help solve a problem that they themselves did not create.¹¹ In 2015, the Kyoto Protocol was replaced by the approval of Paris Agreement, a remarkable milestone for the protection of the natural environment.

Paris Agreement:

In the meeting of COP21, conducted by the UNFCCC at Paris, a major breakthrough was observed in the form of Paris Agreement, officially known as Paris Climate Agreement. The accord was adopted by 196 member countries of the United Nations, agreed on the economic and social transformation policies to save the world to climate crisis. Paris Agreement involved the states in the transition period of launching nation climate actions plans, known as Nationally Determined Contributors (NDCs). Through NDCs states are bound to submit the report and strategies to reduce the effect of greenhouse gas emission by 2020. The Paris Agreement is of great worth because it provides not only financial and technical support to the states that in dire need of help, but offers capacity building support too. In 2024, the countries “ll report the climate change policies of mitigation and, adaptation, under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF). Although climate change action needs to be massively increased to achieve the goals of the Paris

¹⁰ Nations, U. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/climate-adaptation?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI3cnxxNeZggMwV5GDBx3JFApcEAYASAAEgKR GfD_BwE

¹¹ Tarun Khanna, K. G. (2005, June). *Strategies That Fit Emerging Markets*. Retrieved from Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/2005/06/strategies-that-fit-emerging-markets>

Agreement, the years since its entry into force have already sparked low-carbon solutions and new markets. More and more countries, regions, cities and companies are establishing carbon neutrality targets. Zero-carbon solutions are becoming competitive across economic sectors representing 25% of emissions.¹²

All the developed industrialized major emitting greenhouse gas abide by the Paris Agreement to reduce the global warming and environmental pollution over the time, is the major success of the ideology that environmental justice for all. Even the USA the major emitter of the carbon dioxide signed the treaty under the Obama administration, and had the positive response to the articles mentioning in the accord by chanting a slogan of ambitious collective action plan to counter climate crisis. Later, the White House in the reign of Donald Trump backed out from the Paris Agreement. In the Biden administration, the executive order was initiated at the day first by the President Joe Biden to rejoin the Paris Agreement in order to achieve the goal of peaceful environment for the all the species across the globe.

In the modern era nations are hardly made any consensus over an issue. But the Paris Agreement gathered the world leadership on one platform to launch an infrastructure to combat the issues of mitigation and adaptation related to climate crisis. The focal reasons of the importance of Paris Agreement is as under

1. Countries agreed that human-generated emission of gases by is the major cause of global warming
2. The countries perceived the global warming as lurk to the global security
3. Changing weather pattern by the global warming jeopardizes the human health too

The states hardly hit by the phenomena of global warming are most developing and under developed states. These countries have low resources to adapt according to the changing environment situations. For example, smog contributed in the air pollution. Millions of people are affected by the poor air quality index. The air pollution contributes in the form of respiratory and skin diseases, with air-born allergies. Extreme heat also exacerbated the death rates due to the heat wave strokes. Severe weather impact on the agriculture sector is disastrous. Droughts and feminine play havoc role especially in the countries where agriculture is the back bone of the economy.

But climate change is not only affecting the developing states, the developed countries have also been experiencing the music of climate change. For instance, recently the six major climates disastrous in the form of floods have faced by the United States due to the increase level of rising in the sea surface. The floods, tornado and hurricanes forced the local community to migrate or displaced from one region to another. The health and security infrastructure is on the stake too.

Global Climate Security Risk and United Nations:

¹² *The Paris Agreement*. (n.d.). Retrieved from United Nations Climate Change: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>

United Nations, established on the ashes of World War 2 primarily focused on coordination and cooperation of the states to maintain peace and stability on the globe. Mediation, arbitration and conflict preventive peace building measures are always of great worth to mitigate the challenges caused by the climate change. The United Nations Security Council is perceived to formulate effective and efficient global climate policy to secure nature livelihood thus reduce the carbon development in the atmosphere. If “global security” encompasses human security and economic security rather than strictly military security, then humanity seems likely to face its greatest threats not from the weapons of war but from the inexorable and devastating effects of climate change. Many of the effects of war on society—death and injury, population displacement, hunger, disease, destruction of infrastructure, and economic recession—will result from the increasing severity of weather-related disasters such as droughts, fires, and storms.¹³ Keeping in view the resolution 63/281 a special representative has to appoint by the secretary general of the UN to give an adequate reporting regarding the climate-security risks. By promoting global security mechanism, fiscal aid should be provided to control disaster risk. The monetary assistance attained the United Nations by the states empowers them to conduct high end professional research on climate change crisis. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) secures the budget of millions of dollars every year for the research purpose.

The global framework is fundamental to tackle the climate change risks. In 2015, under the shelter of the United Nations the international community joined their hands together by agreeing on the three projects of climate change, Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Agenda of Sustainable Development, 2030. A-political nature of the United Nations made the institution credible for international community to implement and execute the global framework on climate change. United Nations piloted many climate change conferences, seminars, meetings, summits not only among the head of the states, or top diplomats but NGOs and civil society were given a chance to collaborate themselves to cater the climate change crisis. COP27, held in Egypt is the leading example of it.

In 2019, UN secretary general, António Guterres, explicated climate crisis seems to be expanding, but this race can win by the states by launching sustainable methods to control the gas emission. Decarbonization of economy permits the countries to step forward for the better place to live in by mitigating the ecosystem. The better livelihood, food, water and energy security will provide the better breathing room

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Goldstein, J. S. (2016). *Climate Change as a Global Security Issue*. Retrieved from Forum on the Future of Global Security Studies:
https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/6909271/mod_resource/content/1/Climate%20Change%20as%20a%20Global%20Security%20Issue.pdf

to the world. Nature-based tactics will be helpful too by promoting newly developed agriculture practices with the help of latest technology, preservation and refurbishment of land and greening of food supply chains.

The climate crisis will be proved as blessing in disguise if the countries improve the global governance by using the platform of United Nations. Focus attention on the security risks related to climate change in the multilateral arena; in particular, within the UN Security Council, the G-8 as well as the UN specialized bodies (among others by addressing a possible need to strengthen certain rules of international law, including the Law of the Sea).¹⁴ By improving multilateral cooperation with bolstering the political dialogues and deliberations the global security threat related to climate crisis should minimize.

Conclusion

The crisis of climate change has evolved as an impending and imminent global crisis imposing threats to the global security of the world. In this havoc situation, it is the call of the need to prioritize the climate related issues. Since 2015, the peer-reviewed research articles and individual research work has extended swiftly after the Paris Agreement. This is the acknowledgment of the severity of the environmental related issues that has aptitude to affect the peace, security and stability of the countries by distressing inter-governmental relations. For example, environmental crisis directly linked with the disturbance of economic situation. Many under developed countries have their economic dependency on agriculture sector. Scarcity of water, shortage of rainfall carried out the droughts and famines in the region causing increase in unemployment and inflation. The member states of African continent is the example, where at first political unrest and civil tensions take place and later convert into threat for global security.

Although the scientific studies of the topic reveal the political crisis, weak institutions, stagnant economy and the absence of rule of law and the belligerent neighborhood flare up the armed conflicts among the countries intensely in comparison with the issues of climate crisis. But research reports designate the environment-driven stressors hasten the probability of conflict risk. The intricacy of the crisis needs a proper analytical framework and infrastructure under the canopy of United Nations. It's the self-interest of all the countries to address the issue vigorously in common supportive ways. European Union at the regional level is the major supporter of 2° C temperature goal suggested by the Paris Agreement, and reshaping the energy policies in connection with the target. All the other developed states must take it into consideration by implementing the UNFCCC. NGOs for climate protection and international organizations should fulfill their responsibilities by forcing governments to actively contribute to protect the climate.

¹⁴ Madariaga, J. S. (n.d.). *Climate Change and International Security*. Retrieved from European Commission: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30862/en_clim_change_low.pdf

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