

**STATEMENT**

**by**

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to the United Nations**

**Open debate of the Security Council**

**on**

*Addressing climate-related risks to international peace and security*

under the agenda item

*Maintenance of international peace and security*

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Mr. President,

Thank you for organizing this important debate on *Addressing climate-related risks to international peace and security* under the agenda item *Maintenance of international peace and security*.

We are living through an extraordinarily difficult period in global history. COVID-19 reminds us that life is precarious and interconnected. Our world was already fragile, violent conflict, humanitarian need and displacement increased over the past decade influenced and intensified by climate change. The interaction between climate change, loss of biodiversity and international security must absolutely become a key item on the conflict prevention agenda. It is the only way to anticipate tomorrow's threats and to help the most vulnerable countries.

Slovakia is a strong proponent of climate action, peace, human rights and rule of law. That was reaffirmed by Slovak President, H.E. Zuzana Čaputová at the UN Secretary General's Climate Action Summit in 2019 and let me emphasize her words, "if we succeed to unite on our climate action, we can generate new sense of solidarity and common good. It can help restore international system, overcome divisions, and bring new opportunities in areas of peace and development".

We have seen important progress over the last years. The analytical basis of the Security Council's work on climate-related security risks has improved by the work of the Climate Security Mechanism in the Secretariat. The mechanism should be strengthened further as it brings the expertise from various parts of the UN system on conflict prevention and mediation, sustainable management of natural resources, climate change, resilience and gender closer together.

Similarly, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture needs to be enabled to address climate-related risks, including those over diminishing natural resources. In this regard, the increase in water stress as a result of climate change is particularly pertinent, increasing risks of conflict and undermining peacebuilding efforts. I would like to reaffirm Slovakia's support for the UN Secretary General's reforms aimed at rendering UN Peace operations a more effective tool in addressing spoils of climate change and their consequences on global security.

Slovakia and the EU remains strongly determined to implement our commitments under the Paris Agreement, including through EU Green Deal. We call on all partners to demonstrate the same determination on the road to COP 26. As the world's biggest climate donor, much of EU's help aims at combining adaptation to global warming and interventions to improve the sustainable management of resources with the prevention of conflict.

We fully support ambitions and plans which will ensure that COP26 will be a success. We are convinced that building resilience and supporting adaptation to prevent conflict risks and support peacebuilding and stability should be essential. Therefore, we welcome COP26 prioritizes focused on strengthening adaptation and resilience, particularly in climate-vulnerable regions. By building resilience, we can reduce risks, including climate-related security risks. Climate adaptation programs and projects can contribute to peacebuilding, and peacebuilding can have positive impacts on climate adaptation measures.

We welcome the United States of America back into the Paris Agreement on climate change, including announced US plans to set the country on a path to net-zero emissions by 2050, as a similar vein as the EU did by the European Green Deal.

On 20th of January Government of Slovakia adopted a document: *Vision and strategy of Slovakia's development until 2030 - Slovakia 2030*, which is an implementation document for the fulfillment of the national priorities of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this document, Slovakia declares compliance with European Green Deal based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. *Vision and strategy of Slovakia's development until 2030 - Slovakia 2030* serves to reflect and specify the priorities of Agenda 2030 and the European Green Deal in the specific conditions of Slovakia. As an integrated development strategy it also frames public policies and development policies of local governments to ensure their coordination, synergy, stability and more efficient use of public resources.

Furthermore, I would like to mention the heightened vulnerability of women and girls to the impacts of climate and security. UNEP, UN Women, UNDP and DPPA all report the close links between gender, climate and security and that women on the frontlines of climate action are playing a vital role in conflict prevention and sustainable, inclusive peace. It remains vital

to support local ownership, improving leadership and broadening inclusion in conflict and fragile settings, with special attention to gender and youth.

United Nations should to the best of its ability lead in facilitating and coordinating global efforts on climate action, working with regional partners and other stakeholders, including non-state actors such as businesses and local authorities, which play an increasingly important role in this field. Multilateralism is a key tool that can and should deliver on global solutions including climate change. Slovakia, in this regard, is fully committed to be a part of this collective responsibility.