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Proceedings from the Presidency Conference on “Environment Climate Change and Security - Facing the Challenges”

The Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI hereby presents the proceedings from the conference on climate change and security held on October 14-15 at the National Defence College in Stockholm. The conference was a co-arrangement between FOI, the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), the Swedish Fortifications Agency (Fortv) and the Ministry for Defence and attracted around 150 participants.

Many very interesting presentations were given and the discussions afterwards, time allowing, could have been even more extensive. For more information on the speeches and presentations given at the conference, see www.foi.se/eccs/.

Sincerely,

Christina Edlund

Conference coordinator

“Environment Climate Change and Security - Facing the Challenges”

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**Proceedings from the Presidency Conference "Environment,
Climate Change and Security - Facing the Challenges",
Stockholm 14-15 October 2009**

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Front photo: Zarah Jonsson, Swedish Armed Forces

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1. Background

The linkage between climate change and security is an issue of growing interest and urgency. The European Council welcomed the joint report by the High Representative and the Commission on 'Climate Change and International Security' in March of 2008 and the EU is currently implementing its recommendations.

During the Swedish Presidency, the aim has been to highlight and address the linkage between climate change and security in the broadest sense of the term with the arrangement of the conference 'Environment, Climate Change and Security - Facing the Challenges'. Already in the autumn of 2008, discussions between the Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Ministry for Defence and Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI, began on arranging a conference on the subject. In the early spring of 2009 the planning started and the conference with the title 'Environment, Climate Change and Security - Facing the Challenges' was set to October 15.

In September of 2009, the UN Secretary General presented a report on climate change and possible security implications. The Conference became one of several meetings addressing the issue of climate change and security on the road to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 15, which will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December of 2009. Denmark has for instance held two seminars during the autumn of 2009 and the Danish Foreign Minister will host an event in December on the subject during the negotiations in Copenhagen.

The aim of the Stockholm Conference was to increase our understanding of the challenges and contribute to the search for solutions. The starting point is that a common human learning process will benefit all societies, regardless of the degree of development and vulnerability. The Conference particularly aimed to deal with the consequences of climate change for the most vulnerable societies and regions in the world, as well as to reflect over the growing challenges to emerging economies and developed countries. Climate change represents a truly global challenge and solutions to its security implications will therefore have to be found in a global context. Basic questions were:

- What are the challenges, how is the world changing and to what extent is climate change a conflict driver?
- How are human societies across the globe adjusting to climate change?

1.1. Disclaimer

This report is based on the notes taken by the organisers with the purpose to summarise the key messages from the conference. Reservations are made for eventual misinterpretations and the summary from each speech shall not be considered quotes from the speaker, but merely what the writers - subjectively - interpreted as the key messages.

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2. Conference speeches and presentations in short

The conference featured an informal buffet dinner with opening session and keynote speech at the Stockholm City Conference Centre on October 14. Being a presidency conference, the opening session on October 15 provided participants with an overview of the role of the EU on the subject; what is the EU doing and what have we done so far? Speakers at the conference mirrored the ambition to address the subject in a broad sense - geographically and thematically; and represented the African continent, Bangladesh, the US and the EU and gave their views within their respective field of expertise such as; development, health issues, security, peace keeping, crises management and infrastructure.

The participants at the conference also reflected the cross-border nature of the subject. Policy makers, researchers, diplomats and NGO representatives/field workers from the EU, Australia, China, Norway, Russia, South Africa, the US and others were taking part in the conference and the discussions. The issue of climate change lies within different governmental bodies in different countries, consequently, a broad spectrum of representatives from several ministries were found such as; the Ministries of Interior, Energy and Environment, Foreign Affairs and Defence.

Below is a short summary from the speeches given at the conference, the speeches and the presentations in full can be found at www.foi.se/eccs/.

2.1. Opening session and keynote speech

Dr Lars-Erik Liljelund, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Climate Change held a welcoming speech introducing the participants to the conference. He mentioned that the security issues are likely to be addressed during the negotiations in Copenhagen. The linkages are there, we can already see the consequences and their effects are global.

2.1.1. Climate Change Impacts on Human Health

Dr. Kristie Ebi, Executive Director, IPCC Working Group II Technical Support Unit, began with referring to the war games made by CNAS, the Center for New American Security, and emphasized the need for understanding the different effects of climate change in society and how to meet them. The effects of climate change are uneven and unjustly distributed around the world and will have negative consequences for human health both directly and indirectly including social and economic disruption.

The local context is of central importance in assessing the health implications and consequences of climate change. In Mozambique, for instance, one of the main causes of death for the victims of the floods was landmines, which were exposed or moved by the water masses. The importance of developing systems on how to proactively meet and minimize the consequences was stressed. Examples on how this is done were given from Delhi and Phonpei. In Delhi, it is a crime to have standing water due to the spreading of dengue fever and malaria. Phonpei is a positive example on how adequate precautions and preparations on e.g. securing food and water access diminished the feared negative health impacts of El Niño.

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Risk assessment in general but risk management in particular are paramount - the focus has traditionally been on risk assessments, but there is a need to move from the assessments and to start developing strategies and plans of actions (what-if scenarios) on how to manage the consequences. Climate change is taking place right now; adaptation is already ongoing around the world and is a process to be managed, not a problem to be solved. This calls for: awareness that the problem exists; understanding of the causes; a sense that the problem matters; the capability to influence and; at least, a strong political will to deal with the problem.

2.1.2. EU Approaches to Climate Change and Security

Helga Schmid, Director Policy Unit, the Council Secretariat of the European Union, started by stating that this is a prioritised area and stressed the importance of looking at the intersections between security, climate change and development. In her speech she particularly addressed the role of the EU, where in the process the EU is, and what the EU position is. The two reports from the High Commissioner (2008) and the UN Secretary General (2009) on Climate Change and Security Implications were referred to as important documents bringing the subject to the political agenda. She emphasised that the EU is working hard with the issue and has been at the forefront with e.g. the European Security Strategy (2003) touching upon the linkage to climate change.

The already vulnerable states will face the most severe consequences and the EU has a possibility and capability to carry on the issue. Schmid emphasised that climate change should be seen as a threat multiplier, which is particularly challenging for already vulnerable countries. A comprehensive approach, which begins with development, is vital to strengthen the capacity in vulnerable societies. Raising the awareness is important but must be followed upon by actions; adaptation should, therefore, be done through threat minimisers.

One key issue is global monitoring and the development of early warning systems, which the EU currently is working on. Concluding, Schmid pointed out two important challenges in the future; they are bridging the gap between science and policy, and integrating environmental aspects and climate change into foreign policy.

2.2. Part I: 'Climate Change and its Challenges'

The aim with the first session was to increase the knowledge and awareness of the challenges we are facing with respect to climate change. Besides stressing the security risks and negative effects of climate change, the linkages between development, conflict and climate changes were addressed. As became apparent during the conference, these linkages are pivotal for meeting the challenges of climate change. The speakers came from International Alert, the Commission on Climate Change and Development, the European Commission, the Finnish Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa and Sudan and the Swedish Minister for Defence.

2.2.1. Development and Climate Change

Dr. Johan Schaar, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, and Director for the Commission on Climate Change and Development, started out by

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giving a few images of ongoing adaptation to climate change; how in Cambodia traditional rice varieties no longer produce as they used to do due to shifts in seasons; and how farmers in Mali no longer can trust the birds return as a sign on when to sow.

‘Climate change stands in way of development’. By referring to the analysis of the Commissions on Climate Change and Development, Schaar addressed three importance aspects of adaptation. First; the need to understand resilience; second, the role of institutional linkages; and third, climate change is not the only ongoing crises, it is interlinked to the recent food crises and economic crises.

By addressing what it is that builds resilience of households, Schaar underlined that for poor household resilience to climate change comes from a diversification of incomes and livelihoods. Diversification distributes risks. In this sense, mobility or migration can be seen as an adaption strategy, e.g. through a family member migrating abroad, seasonal mobility or urbanisation. He moreover stressed that local society must be the starting point in adaptation processes and the importance of linking institutions vertically/cross-sectoral and horizontally (local/national/regional/global). At the societal level, social capital and trust among citizens as well as between citizens and the government are essential. A society that can cope with risks is fundamental. This requires an accountable government and an enabling environment for partnerships between the public and private sectors. When such trust is there, joint management of common resources can be achieved and human security enhanced. As conclusion, Schaar emphasised that the focus for managing the effects of climate change must be through a reinforced development effort, ‘there are no short-cuts to development’.

2.2.2. Missions in a Changing Environment

Pekka Haavisto, the Finnish Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa and Sudan, began his presentation noting the importance of the environmental assessments that have been carried out after conflicts to show the impact these have had on the environment. He thereafter pointed out three levels on which environment are linked to conflicts:

1. Natural resources and environment can trigger the conflicts.
2. Conflicts are impacting on the environment and natural resources.
3. Natural resources and environment can function as a peace building tool.

Natural resources can contribute to conflicts through competition for resources, for instance over oil and mineral resources, but could also have effects on displacement and economy. The impacts from conflicts on the environment are both direct and indirect. The direct effects include bomb damages, landmines, sabotage of resources, depleted uranium, military waste and troop movements. The indirect effects include refugees, sanctions, collapse of management systems, military exploitation, corruption, the use of marginal lands etc. Haavisto gave some examples where natural resources can be seen related to conflicts; in Afghanistan (forests, opium), in Angola (oil, diamonds) and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (diamonds, minerals, forests).

However, natural resources can also contribute to peacebuilding efforts, and examples were given of where sustainable management of resources or sharing of resources had taken part in peace agreement. By mobilising around common interests or challenges, natural resources can contribute to dialogue between antagonists.

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In conclusion, Haavisto emphasised the need to understand the dynamics of environmental resources throughout the conflict cycle, from prevention (e.g. sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation, and peaceful ways of solving conflicts) to post-conflict peacebuilding efforts.

2.2.3. Conflict and Climate Change

Dan Smith, Secretary General, International Alert, started by stressing that security issues is at the heart of the challenge of climate change. It is part of making the case for far-reaching measures of response to climate change, both concerning mitigation and adaptation, but it is also, perhaps paradoxically, within the security issues we can find grounds for optimism. The security threats can be that issue around which countries can unite in order to face. Smith emphasised that it is important to neither simplify the link nor exaggerate the effects. The natural consequences of climate change will interact with other features of the social, economic and political landscape; the result will be to multiply the stress on some developing countries and increase the risk of conflict. Keywords are thus ‘stress multiplier’, i.e. that climate change will multiply existing problems in society, sharpening conflicts and making them harder to manage, and ‘interaction’, which addresses the linkages between climate change with features such as poverty, lack of infrastructure, weak institutions, poor governance, and social diversity. The main body for handling the challenges of climate change is the government; enhancing the capacity for governments to respond to climate change is vital.

Shaping the response to the security risks connected to climate change, the focus needs to be on increasing the capability of peaceful adaptation in fragile states. Nevertheless, adaptation always takes its starting point in the local community and the international community needs to strengthen these processes. Non-local adaptation does not exist. Early warning systems play an important role to mobilise for adaptation. However, these systems require trust and conviction: institutional systems which enable participation are thus crucial. To summarise, Smith pointed out the importance of international assistance to developing countries, national supportive institutions, and local implementation of adaptation.

2.2.4. Ministerial Address

Sten Tolgfors, Minister for Defence of Sweden, opened by pointing out that the EU and the rest of the world need to consider and respond to the new security threats. Issues of e.g. environment or energy are no longer national, but cross borders and are global. He continued by giving a few examples where the linkage between climate change and security is seen; Sudan/Darfur, Small Island Developing States and the Arctic. Some examples of plausible global consequences were also mentioned such as; large-scale migration, competition for remaining renewable natural resources and widened tensions in vulnerable parts of the world due to food insecurity.

The need for more knowledge was stressed and he tasked FOI to study the linkage between climate change and security. FOI shall provide with policy recommendations on for instance:

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- how to improve the watch list of potential hot spots (functional and geographic) to improve our preparedness
- how civilian and military missions can be planned and executed in ways that reduce the negative link between climate change and security
- how to best create transparency, awareness and preparedness through the linking of monitoring systems
- how the search and rescue functions can be improved if disaster strikes in e.g. the Arctic
- how military resources can assist civilian agencies in case of natural or human catastrophes

Tolgfors concluded by pointing out that the EU is taking on the challenge and that the Swedish Presidency has initiated a report which will be presented to the Council. The report will give recommendations for the EU's future work on climate change.

2.2.5. Climate Change and Disaster Capability

Genoveva Ruiz Calavera, Head of Crisis, Response and Peace Building Unit, the European Commission DG RELEX, underlined that climate change ought to be seen as a threat multiplier. The respond must be by threat minimizing actions. Natural disasters are increasing risks for global stability and are undermining a sustainable development for fragile states. She emphasised that the EU – as the biggest provider of external development aid – are well equipped to respond to crises in e.g. third countries and can assist in preventing crises.

Ruiz Calavera furthermore stressed that prevention is more cost-effective than response. Therefore the EU supports early-warning systems and risk analysis tools as well as technology transfer and research projects. Some important tools and systems for early warning were exemplified like; the Humanitarian Aid-ECHO, Monitoring an Information Centre (MIC), Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS) and flood alerts or fire forecasting maps from e.g. the EU Satellite Centre.

2.2.6. Discussions Panel – Part I

The link between climate change and security was raised and Smith pointed out that this link is rather unexplored and relatively new. Accordingly, there is little research on this, but the field is growing fast and empirical investigations are on the road. Ruiz Calavera emphasised the holistic approach to missions that are essential for addressing the complexity of climate change and will be even more self-evident in the future. Mixing military and civil missions will be a matter of fact in the future and the EU is going in that directions. Military interventions thus get a wider agenda than before and the role is changing. On this theme, Smith emphasised the importance of strengthening the capability in countries in the region to help them, and reduce the dependence from rich countries far away. Capacity building must be in core. Consequently, the local community is fundamental and as Schaar underlined, the solutions are lying inside the society. A military intervention can never solve the problem, but can take part in the solution if it becomes part in the local society's capacity building and as such enhance the ability to respond to the challenges faced.

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2.3. Part II: 'Addressing the Challenges'

The aim of this session was to share knowledge from different parts in the world of the effects from climate change and how societies are meeting those. The common theme was water and the speakers came from the UN Economic Commission for Africa; the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, the Global Water Partnership and the Government of the Netherlands.

2.3.1. Facing the Challenges to African Countries

Abdoulie Janneh, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, stressed the importance of seeing climate change as a threat multiplier and that the vulnerability in Africa is higher than elsewhere due to an already warm climate. Water stress, food insecurity and a strong dependency on agriculture together with the fragility of state structures and institutions put Africa at a higher risk of climate change induced conflicts. Janneh emphasised the ethical concern regarding the fact that countries hardest affected by the climate change are the least contributors to greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Besides describing the climate change already seen and those that are foreseen for African countries, Janneh highlighted the expectations in Africa for COP15. Key interests are related to mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing and Africa is looking for ambitious global targets. Africa recognises the urgency of adaptation, but is concerned it will incur massive additional costs for African countries; for this the continent will need support with technology and funding. Concluding words addressed the view that climate changes pose common challenges and common responsibilities. Reinforcing and strengthening the developing efforts is thus of utter importance for tackling these challenges.

2.3.2. Adapting to Flooding Threats on Two Fronts

Dr. Atiq Raman, Executive Director of the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, began with giving examples from the Bangladesh context on how climate change already is affecting the country with sea level rise leading to salination in ground water, more frequent and intense cyclones and flooding, erratic rainfall, erosions, but also drought. He gave a viable picture of the challenges for Bangladesh, which comprehends both the sea coast and sea level rise, but also the melting glaciers in Himalaya. Raman focused on water issues and pointed out that the challenges concern both too much water and too little water, but also wrong kind of water and wrong timing of water. He furthermore emphasised how the crisis on water and food issues are interrelated and interconnected, and that we are facing four interlinked crises: a financial crisis, a food crisis, a health crisis, and an environmental crisis. He also pointed to the fact that the negative effects of climate change strike first and hardest towards the poor and that climate change is an unjust phenomenon. Raman emphasised the importance of climate justice and warned for the consequences from injustice: the history of human civilisation shows that lack of justice evidently leads to conflicts. Increasing global justice must therefore be of central concern besides dealing with both mitigation and adaptation. Within this, the security dimensions of food, water, energy, livelihood, and social/human security need to be raised.

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2.3.3. Adapting to Climate Change through Building Water Security

Dr. Ania Grobicki, Executive Secretary, the Global Water Partnership, GWP, stressed the pivotal role water security plays in the other dimensions of human security such as food security and health security, but also for energy security and economic security. She pointed out that even though the earth is a world of water, most of it is unusable due to that it is saltwater. Of the few percent freshwater that exists, most is bound in glaciers. Besides having a lack of quantity of usable freshwater, the lack of quality is of critical concern: the groundwater reserves are easily becoming unusable through pollution or saline intrusion.

Grobicki emphasised that most rivers are shared and that shared river basins provide a basis for transboundary cooperation. Nevertheless, water could also play a crucial role in conflicts, not least in relation to its importance for energy security, but also regarding the economic aspects related to water management. The climate change challenges on water are severe and will intensify the existing challenges to water security. Accordingly, water resource management must be an early focus in adaptation work. Better climate information and exchange of information is critical besides innovative and cross-sectoral approaches.

2.3.4. Climate Change, Flood Risk and Critical Infrastructure: The Dutch Approach

Dr. Jos van Alphen from the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water in the Netherlands, presented the challenges for the Netherlands and the present policy on flood risk management. As the Netherlands has been exposed to severe flooding during its history, policies on protecting the river delta have been an issue dealt with long before the climate change scenarios became a critical concern. The country has worked with different risk scenarios in long time frames, year 2100 and 2200, but also with high end scenarios as giving better knowledge of possible future challenges. The policy approved in 2008 is a three layered approach seeking to avoid damages, to reduce the probability of damages and to reduce the consequences of damages. The starting point is safety for all citizens in society. Minimising casualties and reducing damages thus come first.

The preventive work, i.e. the probability reduction, is focused on building and maintaining flood defences through for instance sea walls, dikes and retention basins. Spatial planning is of central concern regarding the pro-active work seeking to avoid flooding. Disaster management guides the work for preparing and responding to critical events. Pivotal in disaster management is creating synergy between different ministries and between local/regional governments, public organisations and the private sector. The institutional system is thus considered a precondition for adaptation and for crisis management.

2.3.5. Discussions Panel - Part II

Main focus lied on the great differences between different countries' possibilities on facing the challenges of climate change. The political will, the coherent approach, and the institutional system in the Netherlands evidently showed the possibility for a

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country adapting to climate change. Raman underlined that these issues are of greater importance than money. The involvement of people in the adaptation process is essential and trust between the government and its citizen is fundamental. The huge differences between countries in the South and the North thus became apparent and concerned the negative effects foreseen as well as the possibilities of preparing and responding to these effects. Funding, technical support and supporting institutional capacity were of central concern.

2.4. Other Security Aspects and Closing Remarks

The final session of the conference addressed additional issues of concern for the conference theme. The issue of diplomacy and global governance was raised by Ambassador Elbling while Mr Granholm from FOI gave a speech on Security aspects on the opening of the Arctic. The Danish Ambassador Tom Risdahl Jensen gave insights views from the Danish preparation work for COP15, and closing remarks were given by the State Secretary Joakim Stymne from the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

2.4.1. Climate Change, Conflict Prevention and Global Governance

Viktor Elbling, Ambassador and Commissioner for International Energy Policy, Globalisation and Sustainable Development, the Federal Foreign Office in Germany, gave a speech where he emphasised the role of foreign policy in the context of climate change. Two major issues were asked: Are Foreign Ministries best suited to deal with the consequences of climate change and following insecurities? Which policy elements should be included in our strategy to counter threats coming from climate change?

Foreign Ministries' prime task is to contribute to peace and security. Elbling stressed that among the actors on the international cooperation scene – for instance the Ministries of the Environment or the Ministries of Economic Cooperation – the Foreign Ministries are best capable of addressing the complexity regarding relations between states and have a task of mainstreaming climate protection policy into all different fields of foreign relations. There is thus a need for a preventive foreign policy using the traditional means of international diplomacy. On the EU level, Elbling emphasised the need of developing a future-oriented common foreign and security policy which encompasses the consequences of climate change. The Foreign Ministries moreover need to anticipate new evolving crises and development mechanisms to prevent them. One important aspect for this is supporting adaptation and all instruments of Foreign Ministries' are needed; regional cooperation, development cooperation, institution and capacity building, confidence building mechanisms and dispute settlement mechanisms. The Foreign Ministries are moreover needed for addressing mitigation and Elbling pleaded for them to use their full force of diplomatic efforts so that bold actions are taken on mitigation during COP15. As conclusion, Elbling emphasised that the security challenge posed by climate change must draw on the full range of policy tools and diplomatic efforts and that he saw a political danger in offering military solutions to climate change problems. Crisis prevention is a classical task for civilian action, which gives a foundation for a fruitful cooperation between all kinds of actors.

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2.4.2. Security Aspects on the Opening of the Arctic

In Mr Granholm's speech, senior analyst at the Swedish Defence Research Agency, the focus lied on which new Arctic that is to be foreseen. The effects of climate change are happening fast in the Arctic and the second-order effects of these changes have implications on international relations. Of major interest are the potential sources of oil, gas and mineral in the Arctic and the possible future sea route changes for global shipping. Considering that several countries with an interest in the Arctic or counted as the Arctic countries lack fully developed policies on the Arctic, but also that the territorial borders are not settled in international regimes, there is potential of various geopolitical effects of the opening of the Arctic. The Arctic has been a low-priority area for some time, but as Granholm emphasised, the possible future access of natural resources and future shipping routes are leading to significant security aspects which need proactive work. He concluded by stressing the need for the EU member states to be proactive and initiate a process on developing an Arctic policy which takes into consideration the various security factors and how they interact, but also to set up a view on which role the European Union would like to play in an emerging new Arctic.

2.4.3. The Road to Copenhagen and Beyond

Tom Riesdahl Jensen, Ambassador at the Royal Danish Embassy in Stockholm, gave an inside view on the forthcoming COP15 agreement. The goal in Copenhagen is an agreement that is ambitious, binding and provides a legal framework for future commitments. Five areas are prioritised in the Danish work: Reducing the emission of greenhouse gases for industrialised countries; Making sure that developing countries implement their domestic action plans; Ensuring public financing, which includes financing overseas in developing countries; establishing a carbon market; and finally, developing credible systems for measurement (Measurable Reliable Indicators). Riesdahl confirmed how the security dimensions of climate change has risen to prominence during the negotiations, and Denmark has initiated two seminars on this topic and is organising another one in relation to COP15. He commented on the negotiations held so far and underlined the need of having negotiations between the top political levels for reaching agreements. We ought thus not to put too much attention on the pre-meetings held so far, which are characterised as inert and fruitless; the major findings' results cannot be delivered until the real negotiation in December.

2.4.4. Closing Remarks

In the closing remarks given by Joakim Stymne, State Secretary at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, three themes were addressed. Firstly, the impacts of climate change are universal and a global challenge. Secondly, our response must be global and the challenges must be responded with a comprehensive approach. Thirdly, urgent action is needed. Stymne further elaborated on the security risks of climate change and emphasised that they are real and that climate change already are impacting on peoples' lives. As a conclusion, he emphasised the need of focusing our efforts and identifying the 'threat minimisers', besides identifying and strengthening the interlinkages between climate change and development, climate change and security and between adaptation and mitigation. He furthermore underlined the need of paying attention to the most

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vulnerable and to take determined actions on reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Finally he pointed out the crucial role politics will plays.

3. Conclusions

The aim of this conference was to address the linkage between climate change and security and let experts from various backgrounds give their point of view and share their experiences and knowledge on climate change. Even though the speeches addressed a variety of topics, it became evident that there is a unite understanding of how to comprehend climate change in relation to security issues, i.e. as a threat multiplier. Conflicts never have one single cause, and among those conflict drivers scarce natural resources and climate change take part. Threat minimisers were thus a second approach repeatedly mentioned: that we need approaches that minimise the risk of threats due to climate change. Pivotal for this is reinforcing the development efforts and strengthening justice globally. Accordingly, climate change cannot be dealt with in isolation, but needs to be addressed together with development, poverty reduction, education, human security issues such as water, food and health security, and must be driven according to a bottom up process taking its starting point in the local context. A common understanding was also at hand regarding the essential role the institutional system plays in managing and adapting to climate change and the need for increasing the capability of cross-sectoral approaches.

Considering that the effects from climate change strikes first and hardest towards the poor, it also became evident that wealthy nations have a special responsibility sharing their knowledge and technologies to support weak and poor countries. A joint understanding that became evident was that even though climate change can lead to security threats, the problem in the first run must be addressed by policy means, and not through military strategies. This will require a greater level of policy coherence, whereby the full spectrum of the challenges posed by climate change, including security aspects, is taken into consideration by all relevant actors. A binding and comprehensive agreement in Copenhagen is thus of great importance for managing climate change and must concern both mitigation and adaptation.