



Berlin Climate and Security Conference 2024 Event Summary German Federal Foreign Office October 2024

The sixth Berlin Climate and Security Conference (BCSC) 2024 explored **how to secure a climate for peace** and highlighted the importance of **integrating climate into the entire conflict cycle** from prevention, to peacemaking, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

On 8 October, the climate security community of practice met in Berlin to discuss the most urgent and **cutting-edge issue in climate and security today**, to elaborate on integrating climate considerations into peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction, building capacity for climate security risk analysis, addressing climate-induced insecurity and ensuring sustainable peace outcomes.

To enable **broad and global participation**, the conference's plenary sessions and several breakout sessions were livestreamed. The full programme is available [here](#). To re-watch the conference sessions, access the session recordings [here](#).

The conference highlights

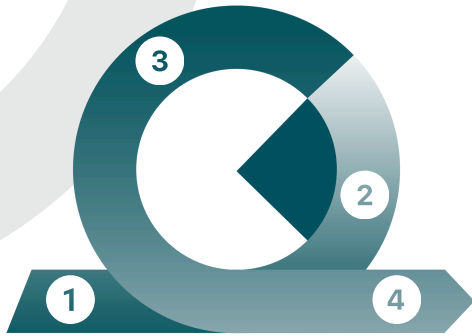
1. Linking national security, intelligence and human security interests is vital to building climate resilience and mitigating risks.
2. While we have a lot of knowledge that is imperative for action, there is still a need for more nuanced and local analysis.
3. There are still geographic blind spots in our knowledge, analysis and discourse. There needs to be a greater spotlight on regions like Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific and Asia moving forward.

-  More than 280 in person participants
-  2000+ participants joined via the livestream
-  59 speakers from around the world
-  60% women speakers
-  21 partner organizations
-  16 sessions
-  6 official side events

With 16 sessions, the conference brought together a diverse range of high-level political actors, climate security experts, international organisations and practitioners at the German Federal Foreign Office in Berlin.

The BCSC 2024 programme aimed to focus on new and emerging issues and debates, with the three linked goals of:

- Linking climate risks and security objectives and identifying how **the role of the security and defence sector** can address this nexus;
- Building awareness and capacity to conduct and use **climate security risk analysis and foresight assessments** to enable holistic peace-building and stabilization action;
- Examining climate change impacts and the **entire conflict cycle from peacemaking to post-conflict reconstruction**.



The plenary sessions at BCSC 2024 took participants through four stages of the conflict cycle: (1) **preventing instability**, (2) **mediation and peacemaking**, (3) **stabilisation and peacebuilding** and (4) **post-conflict reconstruction**.

Leading thinkers from across the globe discussed key climate security issues, including addressing **the root causes of conflicts**, the need for **robust data collection, sharing and analysis**, increasing **climate risk finance for adaptation in fragile areas** and the **inclusion of local communities**, in particular the more vulnerable and marginalised groups, to **develop comprehensive and sustainable solutions** and ensure that specific needs are met.

Capitalising on the value of convening world-class climate and security expertise in person, BCSC 2024 also featured partner-led events. **Interactive breakout sessions and workshops** offered deep dives into various aspects of the Climate, Peace and Security agenda, spanning from **climate-induced migration and urban risks, food (in)security**, the peace and conflict potential of the **green transition, climate in reintegration and peacebuilding efforts**, various **regional approaches** to climate security as well as **civil-military cooperation in natural disaster response**. Additionally, partners showcased different initiatives, organisations, and projects at the **BCSC marketplace**.

Official side events, including an opening reception, took place both the day before and the day after the BCSC 2024. They addressed key topics such as **youth inclusion** and the contributions of international and regional organisations in **advancing the Climate, Peace and Security agenda** in crisis management and peace operations. Two of the side events focused on specific regions, one spotlighting **African leadership** on climate, peace and security ahead of COP29, and the other on the intersection of climate security and geopolitical dynamics in **Asia and the Pacific**.

Keynote by H.E. Annalena Baerbock

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, in her keynote speech, emphasised the **climate crisis as the foremost security challenge of our time**, pointing out its devastating impact on countries like Grenada and Haiti. The consequences of extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, **exacerbate pre-existing issues**, like political instability, displacement, and resource scarcity, particularly in countries already struggling.

Minister Baerbock underscored the importance of **collective action**, noting the commitments made at COP28 **to end the fossil fuel era**. These commitments were reached through the collaboration of various countries, beyond traditional blocs like the G7, particularly by those countries where security and climate protection are intertwined.

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*The climate crisis is the biggest security
policy challenge of our times*

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Annalena Baerbock
German Foreign Minister

Germany has restructured its foreign policy to integrate climate action as a critical component of its global security outlook. This approach spans various sectors, including humanitarian aid, democracy promotion, and political dialogue, aiming for a comprehensive solution. At the same time, resources are limited and the way they are allocated need to be efficient and effective. **Climate security policy should be preemptive.**

There is an urgent need for **comprehensive analysis** (exemplified through initiatives like Weathering Risk) to determine where climate and conflict risks intersect, enabling risk-informed planning and enhancing the capacity for action. A comprehensive approach ensures that **policies are context-specific and responsive to the needs of local communities**, ultimately promoting climate resilience and sustainable peace.



Climate security requires **long-term, integrated policies** that go beyond traditional approaches, linking foreign, security, and humanitarian aid policies.

International cooperation is needed to address these risks, suggesting that even small, preemptive actions can prevent conflicts from worsening. Germany cannot tackle this alone but continues to work within international frameworks, such as the G7 and OSCE, to enhance climate action and regional stability.

Ambitious goals at COP29 and beyond are needed, to mitigate the looming threat of a 4°C global temperature rise, which could endanger the livelihoods of 1.8 billion people.

Key takeaways

While BCSC brought together a highly diverse group, consensus on what is needed to address interconnected global crises urgently, coherently and within limited resources was clear on six fronts:

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Climate change is this generation's atomic bomb. We are trying to reframe the notion of climate change – the human race has always been fighting between one another, but this is the first time in humanity that the world faces a common enemy.

Amb. Dr. Dino Patti Djalal
Founder, Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia

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1. Climate needs to be integrated into the entire peace cycle from prevention, to peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

- Prevention: **Participatory and inclusive approaches** are crucial at the **transboundary level**. **Identifying key agents of change** and involving communities and institutions at various levels is essential for effective cooperation and peacebuilding. Examples from the **Bay of Bengal Weathering Risk Peace Pillar** project highlighted the importance of transboundary dialogue and informal and science diplomacy to prevent conflicts over marine resources.
- Peacekeeping: The integration of climate security considerations into peacekeeping operations was discussed, with examples drawn from the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). This includes **disaster risk response, environmental sustainability and incorporating climate considerations into peace dialogues and local governance**.
- Peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction: Environmental and peacebuilding organisations should collaborate to form a **community focused on peace, climate, and the environment**. For instance, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) experts have shared how climate change impacts drive recruitment through pathways like livelihood replacement and migration. **Climate action can create co-benefits for peacebuilding and livelihoods**, supporting the reintegration of soldiers and restorative justice for victims, and therefore **provide the basis for a sustainable post-conflict reconstruction**.

“ *When we come together we are so much stronger, we cannot do this alone, there are so many parts moving and coming together* ”

Anne Witkowsky
Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations of the
United States Department of State

2. Climate change creates borderless challenges and therefore requires multilateral cooperation.

- Climate change and conflicts are two of the most pressing global issues, and they share a crucial characteristic: **they do not respect national borders**. This means that the impacts of climate change, as well as conflicts, can and do **spill over from one country to another**. These transboundary challenges require **solutions that go beyond the capabilities of any single state**.
- Similarly, challenges such as **climate-induced migration, land use, and the green energy transition** have a global nature, and therefore, **multilateral cooperation becomes quintessential**.
- Organisations and experts worldwide, spanning from IGAD to OSCE and the Asia-Pacific region, are increasingly emphasising the **importance of regional collaboration** to address climate-related issues.
 - **IGAD** (Intergovernmental Authority on Development): The East and Horn of Africa's heightened vulnerability to both climate change and conflicts, makes it **one of the most at-risk regions in the world**. Because both climate change and conflicts know no borders, IGAD focuses on convincing member states of the seriousness and urgency of climate and security threats. IGAD emphasises that no single country can address these threats alone, but rather they represent an opportunity to work together, **ensuring multilateral cooperation under IGAD guidance**, as demonstrated for instance by the Drought Resilience Initiative.
 - **OSCE** (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) promotes **transboundary cooperation and dialogue** between local communities, civil society organisations, governmental bodies and academia in order to tackle the security implications of climate change and ensuring that all agents of change are included and actively involved in the consultation processes.
 - **Asia and the Pacific**: In this diverse region, countries are increasingly recognising the need for regional cooperation to combat climate change. However, this cooperation requires involving and **listening to local voices** by, for example, engaging with **religious leaders** who are widely trusted by the local population in the Pacific islands states. Similarly, **respecting local and individual identity and culture, and their perception of climate and nature**, is essential for multilateral cooperation to be successful in the region.

“ *The recognition and understanding that if you don't address climate change, your job will be harder, no matter what you are doing. If you bring climate change in, the other priorities that you have will be better understood and easier to do.* ”

Erin Sikorsky
Director
The Center for Climate and Security



3. Necessity of improved coordination and information sharing between various political institutions is needed to tackle the global security threat of climate change.

- Prioritising climate security requires acknowledging its **interconnectedness with other global challenges** and fostering collaboration between governments, intelligence communities, and civil society. Therefore, to effectively address climate-related security risks, **enhanced coordination and information sharing between military and civilian actors** are crucial, leveraging the unique capabilities of both sectors to bolster disaster response and build resilience.
- Intelligence agencies and national security institutions must evolve to address the complexities of climate change, incorporating it into their assessments and strategies. For example, **integrating local solutions and knowledge into national and international climate security strategies** is crucial for effective and sustainable risk mitigation.
- It is crucial to emphasise the shift in **energy security geopolitics**, urging a focus on **transformative change** and the need for alternative energy solutions to mitigate climate risks while highlighting the importance of **balancing resource extraction with sustainable practices to ensure long-term stability and security**.

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“ A lot of solution exists already at the local level, they need to be scaled-up.

Amb. Dr. Dino Patti Djala
Founder, Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia



4. Local solutions are important for global impact: investing in community-driven and inclusive climate security approaches is crucial.

- Indigenous and local communities possess **unique knowledge, insights and practices** that are crucial for effective climate adaptation and resilience. Their traditional knowledge can complement scientific approaches to create **holistic solutions**.
- Emphasising the importance of **decolonising climate solutions by centering indigenous knowledge** is fundamental to address the intertwined issues of environmental degradation, social inequality and neo-colonial practices.
- **Involving women, young people, and marginalised groups in both the design as well as the implementation phase of climate action projects** ensures that solutions are inclusive and address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of all community members. By actively engaging and empowering these diverse groups during the planning stages, projects can benefit from a wide range of perspectives and experiences, **leading to innovative strategies that are more likely to be accepted and supported by the entire community**. This inclusive and participatory approach enhances the resilience of climate initiatives, **ensuring that no group is left behind** and that their unique challenges are considered and mitigated.



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The climate crisis is not only a threat multiplier, but also an inequality multiplier.

David Miliband
President and CEO, International Rescue Committee (IRC)

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5. Effective climate action requires substantial and targeted financial investments to support adaptation and resilience, particularly for vulnerable communities.

- **Engaging the private sector** alongside public funding can enhance the scale and impact of climate finance. **Public-private partnerships can drive innovation, mobilise additional resources**, and support sustainable development in vulnerable regions.
- Organisations such as the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) emphasise the importance of **funding local, small organisations** in conflict-affected settings, particularly those led by young women, highlighting the transformative potential of local solutions in addressing both climate justice and security. **Ensuring that funding priorities are demand-driven** is key in order to guarantee that funding is aligned with the specific needs of local communities. Special attention should be redirected towards **the voices of the most marginalised and vulnerable communities**.
- **Addressing the barriers that local organisations face** in accessing large-scale funding due to their inability to absorb multimillion-dollar projects remains a challenge. Progress is therefore still needed in the **simplification of funding processes to reduce access challenges**, such as providing grants that are small enough for local organisations to manage and **making calls available in local languages**.
- Similarly, **implementing feedback mechanisms** and **providing continuous guidance** can help local organisations navigate the funding application process, recognising the limited knowledge that some local organisations may have regarding complex funding processes. Guidance and support from funders can help bridge this gap.



Climate change is believed to intensify and works as a driver of climate shock which can lead to food shortages. Armed conflicts can lead to food insecurity: the highest levels of food insecurity are in conflict areas where war can also induce biodiversity loss. How can we claim that climate change is not for the UNSC, the primary body for the maintenance of peace and security?

Amb. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett
Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations



6. Addressing the climate and food security nexus is essential for global stability.

- Climate-induced events such as severe droughts, floods and extreme weather conditions **significantly impact food production and availability**, leading to nutritional needs not being met and **exacerbating competition and conflict over natural resources**. This, in turn, can **escalate food insecurity** and exacerbate conflicts, particularly in regions that are already vulnerable to violence and/or political instability. Addressing climate change is thus critical for preventing food crises and maintaining peace.
- **Inclusivity and equity** must be at the heart of such interventions. This includes promoting **climate-smart agriculture, improving access to resources, and ensuring active participation in decision-making processes**.
- The urgency of addressing the climate crisis and its impacts on food systems is intensifying. Practical solutions to address food insecurity must be both **locally focused and globally coordinated**. This includes **better coordination between the UNSC and peacebuilding commissions**, promoting climate finance for agriculture, strengthen early warning systems, and establishing platforms for Climate, Peace and Security (CPS) initiatives.
- Recognising the strategic importance of food security in peace and conflict dynamics is essential for developing robust international policies and cooperation to **prevent the use of food as a weapon and ensure equitable food distribution**.

Conclusions: Committing to climate and conflict sensitivity for COP and beyond

The sixth edition of BCSC explored **how to secure a climate for peace** by examining the critical integration of climate considerations into the entire conflict cycle. The conference underscored the necessity of **addressing climate change at every stage—from preventing instability to engaging in post-conflict reconstruction**. By taking stock of best practice examples, leading thinkers, institutional figures and practitioners from around the world discussed and advanced concrete climate security approaches and initiatives.

Last year's COP28 saw the adoption of the 'Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace Declaration', which underscored the urgent need for **enhanced support for vulnerable countries** facing climate impacts, particularly those affected by conflict or severe humanitarian needs. The declaration pledged to scale up financial resources and improve access to climate adaptation and resilience funding. It emphasised the importance of **local ownership, conflict-sensitive approaches, and strengthening technical and institutional capacities**. The declaration also called for **enhanced coordination and partnerships** across various sectors to deliver effective and sustainable climate action.

Looking ahead, the upcoming COPs promises to integrate climate security further into global agendas. COP29 will continue the tradition of a Peace, Relief, and Recovery Day established at COP28. The Biodiversity COP16, themed 'Peace with Nature,' has, for the first time, examine the **intersections between peace, security, and nature**. Similarly, the UNCCD COP16 addresses **land degradation and desertification**, building resilience in vulnerable communities and ensuring sustainable land management practices.

The BCSC 2024 has laid a strong foundation for these future conferences, highlighting the critical need for **integrated, multi-sectoral approaches** to tackle the intertwined challenges of climate change and security.

Next Steps:

The conclusion of BCSC 2024 does not mark the end of the conversation on climate, peace and security for another year. On October 24, **the first Latin American edition of BCSC was held in Cali, Colombia.** [BCSC-Cali](#) gathered key Latin-American and Caribbean perspectives to coordinate the climate and biodiversity agendas through a peace lens. It built on the concept of **'Peace with nature'** developed within the Biodiversity COP16 held at the same time in Cali and fed into the debate on what a dedicated 'Peace Day' at COP29 and COP30 could entail. Stay tuned for key takeaways from BCSC-Cali.

Over the coming year, we will actively monitor the implementation of the principles outlined in the Climate, Environment, Peace and Security declaration, while assessing substantive actions related to Climate for Peace Initiative. Stay tuned for updates on BCSC 2025 via our [website](#).

Thank you to all of our partner organisations and participants who kept the conversation going. For more insights, explore the hashtag [#BCSC2024](#) on [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and view additional articles, news coverage and takeaways [here](#).

Our partners:



8 October

- Conference Welcome
- **Plenary 1:** Climate security risk informed national planning
- Keynote
- **Plenary 2:** Climate change impacts on crisis management and mediation
- Urban solutions for urban futures, climate and migration
- Climate, Conflict and Community: Strategies for addressing climate in prevention, reintegration and peacebuilding efforts
- The peace and conflict potential of the green transition
- Regional approaches to climate security: Africa and the EU
- Climate change and security: Civil-military cooperation in natural disaster response
- **Plenary 3:** Climate security in humanitarian, peacekeeping and stabilisation responses
- **Spotlight conversation:** From COP28 Declaration to COP29: Bridging a Climate for Peace to Baku
- **Spotlight conversation:** What can the UNSC do on climate food insecurity and conflict
- Leveraging transboundary climate, environmental and land action for cooperation and peace
- Local solutions, global impact: Investing in community-driven and inclusive climate security approaches
- Feeding resilience: Managing the nexus of climate change, food systems and security
- Operationalising climate security in UN peace operations: Experience sharing from the UN mission in South Sudan
- **Plenary 4:** Climate for Peace: Climate proofing post-conflict reconstruction
- Conference closing

7 October

- Impact through partnerships: How international and regional organisations can advance the Climate, Peace and Security agenda
- From advocated to experts: An inter-generational exchange on the Climate, Peace and Security agenda
- Measuring impact in climate and peace programming
- Speaker Reception

9 October

- Navigating climate security and geopolitical dynamics in Asia-Pacific: Challenges, knowledge gaps, and future trajectories
- African leadership on climate peace and security ahead of COP29