

## **Workshop**

# **“Climate Change and Conflict: international prevention and response strategies”**

**Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

**09.30 h to 16.00 h**

Conference venue  
**Résidence Palace**  
Salle Maalbeek  
155, rue de la Loi  
1000 Bruxelles

*(Conference language: English/Spanish)*

**For more information, please, contact:**

***Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung – “Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy”***

**Andrea E. Ostheimer de Sosa, Programme Director**  
**Elisabeth Sandfuchs, Research Associate**

**Tel +32 (0) 2 743 24 52 - Fax +32 (0) 2 743 07 49**  
**e-mail: [mned.brussels@kas.de](mailto:mned.brussels@kas.de)**

## Concept note

The causal relationship between climate change and conflicts is not only complex it is also not sufficiently documented on a scientific level. The potential types of conflicts are diverse both concerning the cause of the conflict and the effects on directly and indirectly concerned societies. The lack of water, ownership of arable land, access to scarce resources which are economically relevant are only some of the areas of future conflicts which may be aggravated through climate change.

Scarce resources don't necessarily lead to conflicts but can also lead to approximation and development of cooperation, as examples in transnational water management such as the La Plata water basin or the cooperation in the Lake Titicaca Basin in Latin America show.

While existing cooperative mechanisms may reduce the immediate conflict potential, climate change and global warming endanger this cooperation. For instance in the context of the Indus Waters Treaty between Pakistan and India, which regulates the water-sharing of the Indus River, whose river basin lies on Indian territory, increasing water shortages due to global warming, might raise fears in Pakistan that its share of the benefits of the Indus Waters Treaty evaporate, making it less costly to target water projects on the Indian side. Even if a bilateral consultative arrangement is in place, it is possible that an act of sabotage would trigger of events leading to another war between the two countries. Another threat for security in India linked to climate change could be the possible effects of mass migration to India linked to increased flooding in Bangladesh.

On the other hand whether the conflict in Darfur is a conflict which is has been marked by the climatic developments is controversial. Claims by a United Nations (UN) report that "climate change, land degradation and the resulting competition over scarce natural resources are among the root causes" of the Darfur conflict have been met with scepticism by experts on the region. Although these may well be contributing factors, the influence of climate change might be overstated.

While the academic world still cannot provide a clear cut answer on the relationship between climate change and conflicts military strategies already have taken up the issue of climate change. NATO included in its New Strategic Concept the interdependency between climate change and conflicts. Other major players such as the U.S. and China are also taking the issue into account. Creating military partnerships years before a crisis would allow countries to collectively respond when a catastrophe occurs and would offer a reasonable avenue for political and cultural dialogue. This is crucial to avoid inter-state conflict. This is true for a variety of irregular challenges, including the possible risks due to climate change.

The seminar will bring together experts and representatives of academic and military backgrounds and discuss the gap between the need to better understand the causal relationship of climate change and conflict and the necessity of already preparing for their occurrence.

# Programme

09:30 registration and coffee

10:00 Welcome remarks by **Andrea Ostheimer**, Programme Director Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy

10:15 Panel I

**Conceptualizing the connection between Climate Change and Conflict: economic growth, resource scarcity and environmental migration**

**Ole Magnus Theisen**, Centre for the Study of Civil War Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) "Implications of Climate Change for Armed Conflict", Norway

**Debay Tadesse**, Senior Researcher, African Conflict Prevention Programme, Institute for Security Studies, Ethiopia

**Janani Vivekanada**, Climate Change and Conflict Adviser, International Alert, UK

**Todd Graham Smith**, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, Austin, Climate Change and African Political Stability (CCAPS) project at the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law, U.S.

**Dr. Agathe Maupin**, South African Institute of International Affairs

11:45 Discussion

12:15 Lunch

13:30 Panel II

**Is the incorporation of climate change as potential source of conflicts a useful tool for strategic military planning?**

**Michael Rühle**, Head, Energy Security Section, Emerging Security Challenges Division, NATO

**Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (Retd)** President and CEO of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), member of the International Military Advisers Council (IMAC) on Climate Change, Bangladesh

**Prof. Dr. Michael Brzoska**, Director, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, University Hamburg (IFSH)

**Luis B. Olivares Dysli**, Colonel Chilean Army (R), Political Scientist, Teacher of Military Strategy and Environmental Sustainability, Chile

14:30 Discussion

15:00 Concluding remarks by **Andrea Ostheimer**, Programme Director Multinational Dialogue on Development Policy

15:30 end of event