

Amani Africa statement on the climate and security nexus in preparation of COP27

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One of the issues that receives inadequate attention in COP negotiations is the climate-security nexus. While the causal links between climate and conflict remains a subject of increasing interest and debate, there is mounting consensus and evidence that the climate crisis carries adverse consequences for political stability and peace and security. Indications are that there is perhaps no other part of the world that stands to suffer from the security consequences of climate change more than Africa. The latest UN report released early this year, which gave the starkest warning yet that any further delay in effective climate action will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future, confirmed once again that the climate crisis will have particularly dire consequences in Africa. In an intervention that attests to this, last year, the Foreign Minister of Niger told the UN Security Council in September 2021 that 'climate change has intensified competition for land, fodder and water resources. That has led to the resurgence of community-level conflicts between herders and farmers, thereby hampering peacebuilding and development efforts in the (Sahel) region.'

Amani Africa in its research identified that there are at least four aspects to this peace and security dimensions of the climate crisis in Africa. The first is where climate induced scarcity of natural resources on which vast majority of people on the continent depend for their livelihood and survival leads to violent competition over control and access

to such ever depleting resources in the face of climate change. A case in point in Africa is the growing inter-communal violence that has become more ferocious and deadly over the years in the Sahel and Horn of Africa. In the Lake Chad basin region, shrinking water resources and the impact of the decline in the lake's ecosystem on the livelihood of people in the basin have sparked resource-based conflicts.

Second, climate change induced extreme weather events also operate as multipliers of conflict factors, through their interaction with existing national and local political, social and environmental stresses. An example is Somalia. Here, more frequent and intense droughts and floods are undermining food security, increasing competition over scarce resources and exacerbating existing community tensions, from which Al-Shabaab continues to take advantage of.

Third, climate related disaster interferes with and undermines peace processes and transitions. A case in point is South Sudan, where the devastating flooding it experienced in 2021 has added a layer to various political and security factors that are delaying the implementation of the 2018 revitalized peace agreement.

Fourth, climate change in causing disasters and humanitarian emergencies leads to not only displacements that could undermine social cohesion but also impedes development efforts and resilience of societies for averting and managing political tensions and conflicts. It has thus become abundantly clear that climate change is a fast growing security challenge that requires urgent and sustained policy attention.

Against the background of the foregoing, Amani Africa proposes that the AU adopts the following measures to address the security dimension of the climate crisis in Africa:

- **Establishment of a thematic focus and a dedicated expert**

group on climate and security in the COP negotiations:

Security has not featured in COP negotiations and while the upcoming COP27 presents an opportunity to take the first step, the effort has to be strengthened through deliberate policy intervention that lay the foundation for the formulation and refinement of a Common Position on climate and security and to also amplify a continental voice globally. The systematic incorporation of security issues in the COP processes in a form of a standing expert group would enable a continuous and robust policy engagement and consultation on climate and security that can that will make COP processes agile and responsive to the various major policy issues of the climate crisis. The institutionalization of this theme would be beneficial to make the global climate negotiations grounded and fully cognizant of the various consequences of climate change, particularly for countries most at risk of severe consequences of climate change and its interaction with existing conditions of fragilities, thereby threatening international peace and security.

- **Fast tracking climate finance in fragile settings:** it is high time that the continent approaches the global pledges made by developed nations to finance adaptation efforts in a strategic and pragmatic manner. Developed nations are far from meeting their commitment of providing 100 billion for developing nations adaptation cost. A very small amount is trickled down to affected countries and communities. The climate finance gap in Africa is staggering. Over a period of three years African countries collectively received only 18 billion USD in climate finance. On the other hand, the climate finance gap amounts to 1288 billion annually from 2020-2030. According to the UNDP report on Climate Finance for Sustaining Peace, this situation is even more complex for countries in fragile contexts where they encounter more challenges in accessing climate

finance compared to non-fragile contexts. Recent reports also demonstrate the severity of financing gap noting that countries in fragile settings only receive 1/80th of per capita climate financing in comparison to non-fragile contexts. This also relates to the structural challenges of the global financial system. Grants that come as a form of a loan have intensified debt burden for developing nations. While it is important for the continent to operate within the broader bloc of the global south in negotiations, efforts should also be geared towards addressing specific needs and challenges of the continent by particularly paying attention to countries in fragile contexts and finding ways of making the financing framework responsive to these urgent needs in a way that also helps meet the climate commitments given that conflicts exacerbated by climate change further aggravate climate change both by increasing greenhouse gas emissions and hampering climate sensitive interventions.

- **Africa centered research data collection on climate and security:** currently the nexus between climate and security is more anecdotal. A more robust documentation on the how climate factors interact with socio-economic and political factors and their effects on peace security is critical in designing policies. At the moment there is an imbalance in which knowledge is being produced in the overall climate related issue. A lot of data is being produced from outside the continent including on matters concerning Africa. It is important for policies to be informed by knowledge produced within the continent and for Africa's ownership of its own data, analysis and policy response. Africa has experienced severe climate data limitation and inequities in research funding. As noted in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report of 2021, from 1990 to 2019 research on Africa received only 3.8% of climate-related research funding globally, and

78% of this funding for Africa went to European Union- and North America-based institutions and only 14.5% to African institutions. This will have a direct impact on the way in which conflict sensitive climate adaptation policies are designed and implemented in Africa. It is critical for Africa not only to produce the necessary data but to also formulate its policies in line with homegrown and context specific data and analysis to effectively respond to the compounded effects of insecurity and climate change.

- **Making the African Peace and Security Architecture responsive and fully adapted to climate change risks of conflicts** – there is also the need to revisit our continental peace and security architecture and our intervention instruments within the context of the risks and threats associated to climate change. There is a need to review and adapt existing peace and security tools and architecture so that they can take in consideration and respond to emerging security situations more effectively. **Retooling the African Peace and Security Architecture** would require adopting a broader approach to security, one that is anchored in human security. This can be done by streamlining and integrating climate risks in all AU peace and security intervention through various mechanisms including the deployment of climate experts in peace support operations, integrating climate change analysis in AU country/region reports presented to the Council and for the PSC to allocate adequate time to consider the nexus between climate and security in the continent's conflict hotspots, conducting field visits to natural disaster affected countries and integrate climate risk analysis in conflict early warning.