



Tana High-Level Forum
on Security in Africa



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Tana -ICRC-OIF Pre-Tana Multi Stakeholders Dialogue
'Climate and Security in Africa: Focus on the Sahel'
8 September 2022 |Hybrid Forum| Addis Ababa, Hyatt Regency Hotel/Zoom

Concept Note

I. Introduction

The 10th edition of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa will take place in 2022 in Bahir Dar in hybrid format under the theme, “Managing Security Threats: Building Resilience for the Africa We Want”. In line with this, the secretariat holds regional multi-stakeholders dialogue on a selected theme that resonates with the main forum to reach more constituencies across the continent and to further contribute to the creation of a platform where ideas and synergies on African-centered solutions in peace and security can converge with wider objectives to inform decision-making, policy formulation and implementation at the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) levels. As such, the Tana Forum Secretariat in partnership with Organization internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will organize this regional multi-stakeholders dialogue in the lead up to the Tana Forum 2022 on the theme “Climate and Security in Africa: Focus on the Sahel”. This regional multi-stakeholders dialogue will be held on 8 September 2022 in Addis Ababa in hybrid format. This concept note is developed to guide this pre-Tana Forum.

II. Background

Many data converge towards the observation that Africa emits only 3% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. However, the African ecosystem is disproportionately affected by climate change, given the virulence of the phenomena to which it is subjected. We can mention without exhaustiveness: long periods of drought, strong pluviometric changes, temperature variations, or atmospheric pollution, which in turn feed threats of a migratory, conflictual (breeders/fishermen/farmers), sanitary, food, economic, ecological, and to a lesser extent terrorist nature. As a result, 57 per cent of the countries in Africa carry the highest burden of climate change impacts and political fragility risks that are found in sub-Saharan Africa. Climate risks are most pronounced in fragile countries and the consequences of which transcend boundaries. Conflicts weaken the capacity of people and institutions to deal with shocks; people affected by them are also particularly vulnerable to climate shocks and disasters. This is why communities living on the frontlines of war, violence and devastation are more frequently – and more urgently – citing climate shocks as a key issue of concern.

We note that Climate change is having a growing impact on the African continent, hitting the most vulnerable hardest, and contributing to food insecurity, population displacement and stress on water resources. In recent months we have seen devastating floods, an invasion of desert locusts, looming drought and threats of famine. The human and economic toll has been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic and a compounding food and fertilizer shortage as a result of the recent Russia-Ukraine war affecting Africa the most.

Therefore, the process initiated by the African Union (AU) and contained in its Agenda 2063 for the achievement of the continental objectives of peace, security and prosperity, confirms on the one hand the importance given by the AU to the implementation of inclusive climate and environmental policies at all levels (national, regional, continental and international), and, on the other hand, justifies the existence of specific financial instruments with which the continent has been equipped, such as the Clim-Dev Africa special fund or the fund for climate change in Africa.

Although concrete actions have already been identified, such as the fight against deforestation, the acceleration of the energy transition (solar-electric-wind, biomass, etc.), waste recycling, or the



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development of an early warning and rapid response system, specialists agree that the main challenge today remains the mobilization of financial, material and human resources.

However, the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) conducted a substantive dialogue, in 2020, with nearly 10,000 young people aged 15 to 35 years and from 83 countries, to collect the priorities of youth in the form of consultation, and this, on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary. The results show that young people (51% of whom are women) have a major interest in environmental and climate issues and want to be more involved in defining and implementing sustainable development policies. Consequently, raising awareness, educating and empowering women and civil society as a whole to climate and environmental issues is imperative for the preservation of the planet for future generations. The preservation of the environment in Africa is a matter of survival for many communities.

In addition, climate change and environmental degradation not only fuel existing conflicts and security problems in Africa but may prolong or contribute towards new conflicts that wedge heavily on the most vulnerable groups. While poverty coupled with climate change impacts (i.e drought, floods or disease) drive millions into the brink of hunger and conflicts, it also exasperates and puts a strain on the humanitarian needs and responses on the ground. Destruction on infrastructures such as roads, hospitals, schools, industries and houses disrupt lives and livelihoods. All of which put a strain on populations that are already struggling to earn a living and feed their families. The erosion of livelihoods leads to displacement, rural-urban migration, increased demand for resources and thus competition for water and all other necessities which later may fuel social tensions and violent conflicts which may uproot people from their homes and result in increased displacement. Consequently, humanitarian responses and resilience building initiatives are continuously at risk.

The natural environment, as we know it, is seldom spared in armed conflict. Attacks can lead to water, soil and land contamination, or release pollutants into the air. Environmental degradation threatens the health and survival of conflict-affected populations and can result in large-scale population displacement and can also limit people's resilience to climate change and shocks. While a certain amount of environmental damage may be inherent to war, it cannot be unlimited. International humanitarian law does not address all environmental impacts of war, but it does contain rules that protect the natural environment and that seek to limit the damage caused to it by armed conflict. In response to a request by the United Nations General Assembly and following consultations with international experts, the ICRC issued guidelines to assist the instruction and training of armed forces on IHL protecting the natural environment in 1994. In 2020, the ICRC released its updated Guidelines on the Protection of the Natural Environment in Armed Conflict, setting out 32 existing rules and recommendations relating to the protection of the environment under IHL. They reflect developments in international law since 1994, on areas from weapons law, to how rules governing the conduct of hostilities apply to the natural environment. While we are still working with people whose lives have been derailed by conflict-related environmental damage, we also witness that, today, their hardships are compounded by the rapidly intensifying climate crisis.

In view of the above, and in the context of the multiform insecurity prevailing in the Sahel, and the warning given on August 9, 2021 by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and the UN following the delay in compliance with the commitments related to the Paris Agreement on climate (2015), our reflection is focused on Africa in general and on the Sahelian region in particular, which is more strongly impacted by the existing negative causal relationship between climate and security. Indeed, this area is part of a long-term climatic crisis; the great famines of the 1970's have forever marked this space by pushing the survivors to the West African coast. The direct consequence remains a double fragility of the hinterland and the maritime side.

According to Niger's Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management, the high level of rainfall that hit the country in August 2021 caused the death of 57 people and more than 11,000 households were affected.

Also in August 2021, Chad had to receive a large influx of nearly 11,000 refugees from the far north of Cameroon in the town of Oundouma, following community clashes between herders and fishermen over the



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use of the waters of Lake Chad (Logone River), whose level has dropped by 95% in the last 60 years, according to the UNHCR. In both situations, the risk of disease (malaria, cholera, and covid-19), school dropout, and vulnerability, particularly for girls and women, will increase. The scarcity of resources, combined with the collapse of governance, creates a climate of uncertainty in this area.

It is in this critical context that the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) World Conservation Congress was held in September 2021 in Marseille (France), and that the COP 26 on climate change, scheduled for November 2021 in Glasgow, and the COP 15 on biodiversity, scheduled for April 2022 in China, will be held in the coming months. These major meetings for the world in general, but especially for Africa and the Sahel, an arid zone with fragile biodiversity, serve first as a forum for advocacy and awareness of the fragility of this space and then as a place to collect the necessary funding for the various projects to be carried out.

In this regard, it is important to emphasize the proactivity shown by the African Union in supporting the Sahelian States to deal with this situation. This support has materialized through the construction of the Great Green Wall of the Sahel (GGW) and led in June 2010 to the creation of the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, an agency for which the January 2021 Investment Forum in Paris facilitated the establishment of its "accelerator initiative" over the period 2021-2025. This large-scale project, which directly concerns 11 countries from Djibouti to Senegal, crosses Africa from West to East with the short-term goal of re-greening a strip of 8,000 km, and in the long term to create 10 million green jobs, fight against desertification, food insecurity, rural exodus, terrorism, illegal immigration or any other kind of transnational crime, while preserving threatened species.

III. General and Specific Objectives:

Generally, the conference aims to share ideas, experiences and practices to:

- Promote deeper understanding on the challenges spawned by climate change,
- Strengthen efforts to ensure the security of all and consolidate efforts for peace, stability and sustainable development in the Sahel,
- This conference is also a framework for highlighting the various initiatives carried out and are being carried out by States, regional organizations and the African Union as well as the expertise of the « Institut de la Francophonie pour le Développement Durable » (IFDD), ICRC and other stakeholders.

Specifically, the conference aims to:

Provide a prospective approach to climate and security issues in the Sahel region;
Encourage the involvement of youth, women and civil society organizations in local, national and international efforts to address the multiple security challenges accentuated by climate change ;
Influence climate actors ahead of COP 27 to support Africa in its adaptation and mitigation efforts that will reduce compounding problems of climate and security including food security, drought, famine and or flooding and environmental degradation while at the same time creating awareness and promoting IHL guidelines on the protection of the natural environment during armed conflict

Formulate proposals, recommendations and solutions to address the humanitarian, security, political and socio-cultural emergencies that climate change is accelerating in the Sahel region.

IV. Expected Results

At the end of the conference, participants, actors and other stakeholders in the peace and security process in Africa will have acquired:

- A better understanding of the Peace and Security/Development/Humanitarian Nexus as well as a better appreciation of the interdependencies between governance, resilience and security in the context of climate change.



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- Possible solutions to meet the immediate needs of communities while capitalizing on the long-term resilience of populations.
- Enhanced the knowledge and understanding around the intrinsic impact climate and conflicts has on the environment, and the need to find inclusive solutions to conflict affected areas resilience and adaptation needs and calling for African member states to make use of IHL rules protecting the environment during armed conflict.
- A conviction of the relevance of the involvement of youth and women in the perspective of peace and security consolidation in the Sahel region.

V. Expected Outputs

The followings are expected outputs of the forum

- Fresh, candid and in-depth face to face dialogue on pressing peace and security issues to produce innovative ideas, in addition to opening new windows of opportunities for solutions.
- Production of video clips of the conference
- Dissemination of the conference discussions and video clips on social networks
- Edition of an electronic publication (e-book) displaying outcomes of the forum.