

Call for Papers: Workshop on 19 October 2026

The Future of International Peace and Security: Conceptualizing the Securitization of Climate Change

The *securitization of climate change* has become a rapidly evolving field at the intersection of political science, international relations, environmental studies, security studies, and, not least, international law. This is owed to the growing recognition that the effects of climate change may aggravate instability, intensify existing conflicts, and generate new risks for the maintenance of peace and security. Drought, desertification, sea-level rise, extreme weather events, food insecurity, displacement, and resource scarcity increasingly interact with social, political, and economic vulnerabilities in ways that undermine political order and civilian protection. Nevertheless, the framing of climate change as a “security threat” remains controversial. Critics point not only to the risks of militarized responses, but also the marginalization of justice and equity concerns and tensions with the cooperative logic of international climate law. Supporters, by contrast, argue that recognizing climate-related effects as security risks is necessary to mobilize attention, resources, and institutional capacity within international and regional security frameworks.

Within international law, attention has nevertheless predominantly focused on climate change as an environmental and developmental challenge, emphasizing regulatory frameworks such as the international climate regime, questions of mitigation and adaptation, and issues of state responsibility. In contrast, its increasing framing in security terms – ranging from national security strategies to discussions within international and regional organizations – raises several legal and normative questions that have so far received less scrutiny: These include, inter alia, the interaction of the *securitization of climate change* with the UNFCCC regime and its principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, equity and cooperation, its impact on the interpretation of mandates of international and regional security organizations, the construction and development of peace agreements, the potential emergence of new customary norms and climate security-related interventions, and more generally, the risks of a shift from mitigation and adaptation towards security-driven threat management, and from a relocation of governance from environmental to security institutions.

This workshop invites participants that wish to engage with the conceptual, legal and normative dimensions of the *securitization of climate change* within international law. We particularly encourage submissions that adopt doctrinal, theoretical or interdisciplinary legal approaches to examine how the emerging climate–security nexus reshapes existing legal frameworks, principles and institutional practices (including, but not limited to, the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union).

Relevant questions include, but are not limited to:

- How can the *securitization of climate change* be conceptualized within the framework of international law? To what extent can existing legal categories accommodate climate-related risks?

- What are the risks and opportunities of the *securitization of climate change* from an international law perspective? Under what conditions can climate change be conceptualized as a threat to peace and security? How does the climate-security nexus challenge traditional understandings of international peace and security?
- How do international and regional organizations differ in their approaches to climate-related security risks? What role should the UN Security Council (still) play in addressing climate change-related threats?
- What institutional adaptations are required to address climate-related security risks effectively?
- Should or can military actors be tasked with addressing climate related harms or be subject to climate related obligations?
- How does a climate-security framing affect the mandates and practice of peace operations?
- In what ways can climate-related security governance be reconciled with principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, equity and cooperation? How might climate (due diligence) obligations evolve where climate impacts foreseeably contribute to instability or conflict?
- What are the risks associated with a shift from mitigation and adaptation to security-driven threat management, and with the transfer of governance from environmental to security institutions?
- Does the *securitization of climate change* risk privileging militarized or state-centric responses over human security and climate justice? How can equity, human rights and climate justice be safeguarded within a security-oriented framework?

Submission Guidelines

The organisers encourage applications from post-graduate and early-career researchers, as well as from established scholars.

The workshop will take place on 19 October 2026 at the *University of the Bundeswehr Munich* (Werner-Heisenberg-Weg 39, 85579 Neubiberg).

Abstracts of no more than 500 words should be submitted to peace-clacc@unibw.de and jane.hofbauer@unibw.de by 20 April and should be accompanied by a brief biographical statement not to exceed 100 words. Successful applicants will be notified latest by 10 May.

Successful applicants are expected to submit a working paper of approximately 5000 words by 30 September 2026. A selection of papers will be considered for publication in a special issue or special focus section of a renowned public international law journal, subject to double-blind peer review.

Accommodation (two nights), lunch and dinner will be provided for the Workshop participants. Successful applicants will, however, be expected to cover the cost of their own travel. Limited funding may be available to partially offset these expenses. Applicants wishing to request financial support should indicate this in their application and specify the amount sought.

For further information, please visit <https://www.unibw.de/recht-en/peaceclacc>