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## Ministerial Open Debate on Climate, Peace, and Security 13 June 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Vanessa Frazier  
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

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Thank you, President

Malta thanks the United Arab Emirates for convening today's important open debate. We remain firm in our belief that climate change is an existential issue that must be tackled in a holistic manner. I also thank His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos, USG Lacroix, and Ms. Kadry for their insightful observations.

President

The climate, peace and security nexus cannot be ignored or under-estimated. As stated by the Secretary-General, climate change is 'an aggravating factor for instability, conflict and terrorism'. This clearly illustrates how the multi-dimensional challenges posed by climate change are evident, multi-fold, and far-reaching.



Strong scientific evidence shows that if climate security-related risks are left unchecked, they could lead to devastating consequences. This evidence requires, therefore, a change in paradigm where we can no longer treat conflict dynamics and climate fragility on separate tracks.

Regions in conflict are often the most climate vulnerable, with instability being further exacerbated by climate shocks. Proof of this is the degradation of agricultural land through flooding and droughts in parts of Africa, and rising sea-levels impacting low-lying communities and small island states. Trends of farmer-herder violence, food insecurity, mass displacement, and more broadly, statehood complications, remain a part of this reality.

Women and children are disproportionately impacted, with inequalities widened when climate-induced mass displacement increases the risk of early and forced marriage, child recruitment, and sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation. Water and energy shortages, further precipitated by environmental hazards from the impacts of chemical weapons and explosive devices, also deepen the burdens among women and girls.



Efforts by UN Missions in carrying out their mandates should scale-up their response to climate and environmental consequences, as these impact their operations on the ground. With half of UN peace operations in Africa, and a quarter in the Middle East, these consequences are unquestionable. For example, roads are often becoming inaccessible due to heavy flooding or droughts, impacting their mobility and operations.

With this in mind, Malta remains supportive of strengthening the mandates of UN Missions through climate-related risk assessment and management, complemented by gender and age-responsive ones.

The deployment of Climate, Peace, and Security Advisors in UNSOM, UNMISS and UNAMI is crucial in understanding the interplay with climate in the country and region they serve. The UN Climate, Peace and Security Mechanism also remains a central tool in our efforts.

President

Malta has kept the climate-peace-security discourse at the heart of its priorities on the Council. Our Open Debate on Sea-Level Rise as held during our Presidency is a testament of the support that many delegations hold towards addressing the security challenges posed by climate change.



These challenges could have devastating consequences on countries' infrastructure, livelihoods, security, and their very own existence.

The recent 'Joint Pledges on Climate, Peace and Security' as spearheaded by the United Arab Emirates, together with my own country Malta, Switzerland, and Mozambique, and recently, Gabon are a reflection of our continued commitment towards focusing on climate implications for peace and security. We trust that these Pledges can serve as guidance to present and future Council Members in ensuring that this discourse continues.

President

To conclude, Malta remains convinced that the nexus between climate change, peace, and security, warrants the attention and action of this Council. Having the Council address these issues is in no manner diverting the attention from the UNFCCC or other relevant bodies, but rather complements them and reinforces their distinguishable roles.

I thank you.