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On my honour as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.

Alexander Klas

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Abstract

With climate change quickly emerging as perhaps the greatest existential threat of our time, efforts are currently underway to identify and address its potential implications for international peace and security. The United Nations is placing itself at the centre of the controversial political and scientific debate regarding the existence and severity of climate-related security risks. This thesis applies key elements of the Copenhagen School's theory of securitisation to three interlinked focus areas: (1) how the UN Security Council has contributed to the securitisation of climate change; (2) the extent to which the securitisation of climate change in the Security Council has impacted the work agendas of key selected UN entities; and (3) the extent to which the scientific agendas of these entities have contributed to securitisation moves. By examining the language used in Security Council debates, presidential statements, and resolutions, it is found that certain members of the Council have so far played a significant role in the securitisation of climate change by effectively portraying it as an existential threat and overcoming some political barriers. Furthermore, there is an examination of the impact of securitisation on the work agendas of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Environment Programme (UNEP), and Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO). The findings indicate that each of these entities has been impacted – although to varying extents – through prioritisation of relevant existing instruments and the establishment of new partnership initiatives such as the Climate Security Mechanism. Finally, as their mandates for assessing and addressing climate-related security risks expand, it is concluded that these entities will likely play an increasingly substantial role in shaping the scientific agenda of securitisation debates in the Security Council.

Keywords: Climate change; securitisation; climate-related security risks; United Nations; Security Council

Angeichts der Tatsache, dass sich der Klimawandel rasch zu einer der größten existenziellen Bedrohungen unserer Zeit herauskristallisiert, wird auch zunehmend versucht seine potentiellen Auswirkungen auf den internationalen Frieden und Sicherheit zu erforschen. Die Vereinten Nationen stellen sich dabei selbst in den Mittelpunkt der kontroversiellen politischen und wissenschaftlichen Debatte über die Existenz und den Schweregrad von klimabedingten Sicherheitsrisiken. Die vorliegende Arbeit wendet die Theorie der Versicherheitlichung der Kopenhagener Schule auf drei miteinander verknüpfte Punkte an: (1) wie der UN-Sicherheitsrat zur Versicherheitlichung des Klimawandels beitrug; (2) in welchem Ausmaß die Versicherheitlichung des Klimawandels im Sicherheitsrat die Arbeitsagenden ausgewählter UN-Organisationen beeinflusste; und (3) in welchem Ausmaß die wissenschaftlichen Agenden dieser UN-Organisationen zu Versicherheitlichung beitrugen. Durch die nähere Analyse von Debatten, Statements von Präsidenten und Resolutionen im Sicherheitsrat in Bezug auf ihren Sprachgebrauch wird aufgezeigt, dass bestimmte Mitglieder des Sicherheitsrates bisher eine wichtige Rolle bei der Versicherheitlichung des Klimawandels spielten indem sie den

Klimawandel effektiv als eine existentielle Bedrohung darstellten. Dadurch gelang es ihnen zahlreiche politische Barrieren zu überwinden. Darüber hinaus werden die Auswirkungen der Versicherheitlichung auf die Arbeitsagenden des Entwicklungsprogramms der Vereinten Nationen (UNDP), des Umweltprogramms der Vereinten Nationen (UNEP) und der Abteilungen für politische und friedensschaffende Angelegenheiten und Friedensoperationen (DPPA-DPO) untersucht. Die Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass jede dieser Organisationen - wenn auch in unterschiedlichem Ausmaß - durch die Priorisierung relevanter bestehender Instrumente und die Einrichtung neuer Partnerschaftsinitiativen wie dem Climate Security Mechanism beeinflusst wurden. Letztlich werden diese drei Organisationen durch die Erweiterung ihrer Mandate bezüglich der Bewertung und Bewältigung klimabezogener Sicherheitsrisiken wahrscheinlich eine zunehmend wichtige Rolle im Sicherheitsrat bei der Gestaltung der wissenschaftlichen Agenda der Debatte um die Versicherheitlichung spielen.

Schlagwörter: Klimawandel; Versicherheitlichung; klimabezogene Sicherheitsrisiken; Vereinte Nationen; Sicherheitsrat

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List of abbreviations

ASG	Assistant Secretary-General
CSM	Climate Security Mechanism
DPO	United Nations Department of Peace Operations
DPPA	United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DPPA-DPO	Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations shared structure – United Nations peace and security pillar
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
P5	Permanent members of the United Nations Security Council
PBF	United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund
PKO	Peacekeeping operation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPM	Special political mission
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNITAMS	United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
UNOWAS	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
USG	Under-Secretary-General

Introduction

Data accumulated over recent decades has, with an overwhelming consensus, pointed to evidence that climate change may in the near future become humanity's greatest existential threat. In the face of such a potential reality, research on the effects of climate change is experiencing a rapid expansion in scope, far beyond its initial categorisation as largely an environmental concern, to encompass previously unthought of negative impacts on all aspects of life. One such expansion is an emerging field of study which aims to identify the links between climate change and international peace and security. Although the vocabulary is still being developed, this concept is coming to be commonly known as "climate-related security risks". While evidence currently suggests that climate change does not directly cause conflict, it is thought to act as a "risk multiplier", in that it exacerbates already existing and emerging factors that lead to conflict. As researchers and experts work to properly identify the magnitude of climate-related security risks, International Organisations and some states are in the early stages of developing policy agendas to address these risks.

The United Nations, historically acting as an effective forum and leading institution in pushing for a global agenda to address climate change, is placing itself at the forefront of the debate on climate-related security risks. While there is generally no argument against the UN taking on such a role, disagreement is arising with regard to the particular form this role should take. One central theme around which this disagreement revolves is the concept of "securitisation", concerned with the process by which a particular issue previously considered unrelated to security comes to be seen through a security lens. Proponents of the Copenhagen School warn against excessive securitisation, while others consider it a useful process that allows for important issues to gain the priority needed to properly address them. Taking this into consideration in the context of the UN system, this thesis addresses the following key research questions:

RQ1: How has the UN Security Council contributed to the securitisation of climate change?

RQ2: To what extent has the securitisation of climate change in the UN Security Council impacted the work agendas of key selected UN entities?

RQ3: To what extent have the scientific agendas of these key selected entities contributed to securitisation moves?

The first research question will be answered through an analysis of "speech acts" in the Security Council; namely, statements given by Member States and UN entities during debates, and the language used in presidential statements and resolutions. Furthermore, the work of UN entities will be assessed in terms of the extent to which they are contributing to the securitising moves in the Security Council. The second research question will be answered through an analysis of key UN entities involved in addressing climate-related security risks. This will include brief

discussions on the largely scientific contributions of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Environment Programme (UNEP), followed by a more detailed examination of how the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Peace Operations (DPO) have been more directly impacted by the securitisation of climate change. Finally, the third question will be answered by analysing how these scientific contributions of the selected entities impact securitisation moves in the Security Council. This will also involve some analysis of speech acts that these entities have contributed to Security Council debates in their advisory capacities. UNDP and UNEP have been selected because they are leading entities in the implementation of the UN's development agenda, and as such have contributed their knowledge and expertise to climate-related security debates in the Security Council. DPPA-DPO has been selected as it represents the UN's peace and security pillar, which is directly responsible for implementing the Security Council's agenda, including its securitisation moves on emerging security issues such as climate change.

To begin, the research questions will be contextualised within the current literature on the topic. The literature review will define what exactly is meant by the term "climate-related security risks" by exploring the idea of climate change as a risk multiplier and briefly providing examples of these risks, including impacts on competition over natural resources, extreme weather events, migration and forced displacement, exacerbation of social grievances and poor governance, and the exposure of ineffective environmental and security policy. There will also be an examination of key literature in securitisation theory, which will later be used to form the theoretical framework of the thesis. Furthermore, there will be an assessment of the literature related specifically to the role of the UN and its entities in the securitisation of climate change thus far.

Next, the conceptual framework of this thesis will be developed. This will involve an examination of relevant elements of securitisation theory. The framework will allow for a systematic analysis of how climate-related security risks are being addressed in the UN system. Particular ideas to be explored include: the idea of politicisation as an element of the securitisation process; the centrality of the "speech act" and the challenge this presents to the idea that environmental debates are characterised by the presence of a scientific agenda; the role of the audience or subject of securitisation; and finally, the observation by the Copenhagen School that environmental debates involve multiple actors.

The first analytical section of the thesis will be concerned primarily with answering the question as to how the UN Security Council is contributing to the securitisation of climate change. This will be done by drawing on the established theoretical framework in order to analyse sources of securitisation. These sources, as stated earlier, include statements given by the representatives of Member States, as well as presidential statements and resolutions adopted by the Security Council. The securitisation process will be examined chronologically, beginning with the Council's first debate on climate change in 2007, and ending with an assessment of the current situation. The objective of this chronological structure will be to demonstrate that debates initially involved heated argument and weak or no agreed outcomes, while later debates have been characterised by more agreement over the linkages between

climate change and security, finally resulting in the adoption of resolutions; thus illustrating an example of securitisation.

The second analytical section will be concerned with analysing how the securitisation of climate has impacted the work agendas of UN entities, as well as how the work of these entities may be contributing to securitisation process in the Security Council. Before being able to address these two issues, however, there will be a brief assessment of past efforts toward securitising environmental issues. The purpose of this will be to determine whether the involvement of the Security Council is essential for successful securitisation. Subsequently, there will be a relatively brief overview of the various decision-making bodies and entities of the UN system currently involved in addressing climate change and, specifically, climate-related security risks. It will be shown here that the presence of many potential securitising actors within the UN system may provide both advantages and disadvantages to the eventual securitisation of climate change. Following this, there will be a discussion on the work of UNEP and UNDP. There will be an attempt to determine the extent to which their work is influenced by the securitisation of climate change, and, furthermore, how their commitment to driving the scientific agenda may contribute to the success of securitisation debates in the Security Council. Next, there will be a discussion on how the work of the UN peace and security pillar, made up of DPPA and DPO, is more directly affected by the resolutions passed in the Security Council. Consequently, these entities may play an increasingly crucial role in further securitisation efforts. Finally, there will be a discussion on the importance of UN partnerships in fostering collaboration between entities in order to utilise the advantages of multiple securitising actors while minimising the potential disadvantages. There will then finally be an assessment made as to whether the UN is moving toward a comprehensive and cohesive system-wide climate security agenda.

To conclude, there will be an attempt to tie together the findings of the analytical sections in order to answer the stated research questions. Furthermore, a determination will be made as to whether these research questions are inherently linked due to the currently apparent positive feedback loop between securitisation moves in the Security Council expanding the work of UN entities, and this expansion of work resulting in the acceleration of debates in the Council by contributing empirical evidence to scientific agenda on which many of these debates focus. Ultimately, the success of this securitisation process may come down to a measure of symbiosis between politics and science.

Literature review

This literature review will attempt to provide an overview of the current body of work relevant to the stated research questions. It will be separated into three sections. The first section will define what is meant by the term “climate-related security risks”, exploring some of these potential risks and clarifying the terminology of climate change as a “threat multiplier”. The second section of this literature review will look at some important works related to securitisation theory. As the theoretical framework of this thesis is based on securitisation, it will be necessary to explore some of the literature which has defined the concept. Finally, the

third section of this literature review will examine current research related to the role of the United Nations in the securitisation of climate change, including work that explores how the Security Council has contributed to securitisation. Some literature related to the role of UN entities will also be explored; although, it should be noted that literature on these is limited.

Defining climate-related security risks

It is firstly necessary to establish the scientific background on the linkages between climate change and security. This section will analyse academic peer-reviewed work, as well as some reports produced by think tanks and UN entities. Given the numerous identified potential security risks of climate change, this literature review will not be able to explore them all; instead, it will provide some examples in order to produce an assessment as to whether these risks do in fact exist, and what may still need to be done to better identify the extent of their impacts. Among the ideas explored will be the identification of climate change as a “threat multiplier”, whereby it does not directly cause conflict but rather indirectly exacerbates the factors leading to conflict.

Climate-related security is a highly controversial topic of debate in scientific and political science circles, as there is not yet a consensus on how exactly the causal chain works, firstly between climate change and its environmental impacts, and secondly between these environmental impacts and conflict. Smith and Krampe (2019) explore this in the context of the Middle East, one of a handful of regions which have been at the centre of research and debate on climate-related security risks. This chapter specifically looks at the impact of water insecurity on conflicts in Egypt, Syria and Yemen following the 2011 Arab Spring. It is suggested that water scarcity and drought may have exacerbated conflict drivers such as competition over resources, higher food prices, and rapid rural to urban migration; however, Smith and Krampe (2019) warn against studying climate change and conflict in isolation. First, it must be understood that the impacts of climate change are wide-ranging, with many economic, political, and social ramifications. Second, conflicts never have a single cause, so climate change can only be assessed as one of many contributing factors. Smith and Krampe (2019: 208) provide the following advice: “Don’t leave nature out of it but don’t overload it either.”

Selby and Hoffman (2014) also explore the potential links between water scarcity and violent conflict, using Sudan and South Sudan as examples. Once again, this article struggles to form a solid causal link between climate change and conflict. It is suggested that conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan are influenced more by competition over abundant, rather than scarce, water resources. The article interestingly notes that increases in water scarcity should be attributed more to political infrastructure activities (such as the building of new water canals) rather than to climate change (Selby and Hoffman 2014: 369). This clarifies that it will be important to note whether environmentally-driven violent conflict in certain cases may be more a result of direct human activity, rather than the indirect consequences of climate change. This reflects a sentiment among some researchers that focusing on climate change as a threat multiplier could distract from addressing the actual threats, such as poor infrastructure or environmental management laws.

Once again, similarly to the literature already discussed, Mertz et al. (2016) refers to the environmental conditions that lead to conflict, such as competition over land and water resources, but does not cite climate change as the most crucial factor in addressing the issue. The article states that while weather events influence short-term problems, the greatest priority should be more effective governance, particularly in addressing zoning of land and unequal power relation between stakeholders. The authors do admit the limitations to the study, being based on a small survey of stakeholders and otherwise on a review of literature. This study once again demonstrates that while climate change does play an indirect role in exacerbating conflict, there is a lack of scientific consensus on how much of an impact it has.

Daoudny (2020) echoes this scepticism in a study of the potential role of climate change in sparking the 2011 popular revolt in Syria. Here it is again argued that, while climate change is a substantial threat requiring urgent action, there is little evidence pointing toward it being the cause of the 2011 uprising. Although admitting that climate change worsened the drought in Syria, it is suggested that the drought became a national crisis as a result of government policies. From a human security perspective, however, Daoudny (2020) does recognise the risks of climate change, suggesting that it endangers lives and wellbeing by causing lower agricultural output, higher food prices, and other issues. This implies that perceptions of climate-related security risks may depend on one's definition of "security".

Gemenne et al. (2014) provide an analysis of the theoretical approach and methodologies used in various studies that have evaluated the potential linkages between climate change. It was found that while the natural sciences have established consistent methods of assessing physical climate impacts, across the social sciences there are many competing theories and approaches to assessing the human impacts of climate change. While this study is six years old, this characterisation seems almost equally applicable today. However, with growing interest among international institutions and certain governments, the linkages between climate change and conflict may soon be better understood. Gemenne et al. (2014) insists that this understanding must be developed so that climate mitigation and adaptation policies do not do more harm than good.

Despite significant scepticism, substantial research suggests that the potential linkages between climate change and security deserve attention. This sentiment prevails particularly in research conducted by UN entities such as UNDP and UNEP, as well as think tanks associated with these entities. In a study funded by UNDP and the governments of Germany and the Netherlands, Vivekananda et al. (2019) provide a detailed analysis of the nexus between climate change and conflict in the Lake Chad Basin region. While the majority of research focuses on climate change as a threat multiplier, this study takes a related but somewhat alternate approach, suggesting that climate change in the region – characterised by high and unpredictable rainfall and rising temperatures – and ongoing conflicts are two separate crises, but occurring simultaneously they create a feedback loop. Protracted conflicts and human rights violations sever social bonds between communities and ethnic groups, while climate change exacerbates the economic and political conditions which led to the conflict in the first place.

Given that data appears to show that the impacts of climate change will become more severe, it will likely be even more important for climate change adaptation and mitigation

strategies to be implemented carefully upon clear scientific and methodological bases. A report by Nagarajan (2020), which focuses on climate-related security risks in Mali, suggests that conflicts over natural resources are likely to worsen. The report uses specific examples of this, such as growing conflicts between farmers and pastoralists as a result of limited food and water resources in parts of Mali which are experiencing protracted drought. These farmer-pastoralist conflicts in Mali and throughout the Sahel are commonly cited as examples of the potential linkages between climate change and conflict. Once again, however, Nagarajan (2020) acknowledges the lack of a direct causal link between climate change and conflict over natural resources. Consequently, it is suggested that strategies dedicated to addressing climate-related security risks should largely focus on building more accountable and responsive state institutions in order to improve governance over natural resources.

Based on the reviewed literature, it could be concluded that the lack of scientific consensus on climate-related security risks stems from two factors. First, disagreement occurs as a result of one's definition of "security". Those who are inclined to apply a human security approach are likely to identify more direct linkages between climate change and security, which by their definition focuses on the wellbeing of individuals. Contrastingly, one who applies a more traditional conception of security – where the state is the referent object and insecurity is defined as threats to the state such as unstable governance, conflict, or war – will likely find less of these linkages. Second, while there is a consensus regarding the devastating impacts of climate change, there is substantial disagreement as to whether focusing on this issue is at all a useful method to ensure peace and security. In other words, some argue that since climate change exacerbates factors that lead to conflict, it must also be factored into analyses, while others argue it is more beneficial to dedicate resources to addressing the more clearly identifiable root causes of conflict.

Securitisation theory

This section will provide an overview of the most important literature related to securitisation theory. Analysis of these texts will focus particularly on their insights pertaining to environmental securitisation debates, which will have practical applications to the securitisation of climate change to be discussed throughout this thesis.

Any work involving the application of securitisation theory begins with Buzan et al.'s (1998) *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Although the concept was initially launched in Wæver et al.'s (1993) *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, Buzan et al. (1998) is considered the seminal work of the Copenhagen School of Security Studies, and its authors, Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde are its most prominent theorists. The book lays out the elements of securitisation theory, which explains how issues not originally thought to be related to security come to be viewed as such by reframing them as existential threats. The theory as stated in this book suggests that successful securitisation depends largely on effective discourse, or "speech acts", which fulfil certain criteria, such as the speech act being consistent with conventional security language, being delivered by an authoritative securitising actor, and, again, the security issue being framed as an existential threat. Securitisation theory is applied to five different security "sectors": societal, political,

environmental, military, and economic security. This environmental sector is of particular relevance to this research topic, as it is characterised by several unique features which are consistent with current climate change debates, such as over-politicisation, the presence of a scientific agenda, and the presence of a multiplicity of actors. Interestingly, despite the book being over 20 years old, these unique characteristics still apply to some extent today. Consequently, while the book has received harsh criticism for many reasons, it still provides a useful framework for analysis of current securitisation trends.

One of the most prominent critics of the Copenhagen School's portrayal of securitisation is Thierry Balzacq (2005). He argues that the Copenhagen School focuses too intently on the importance of the speech act while ignoring the application of security practices to real situations. He further states that successful securitisation depends more on an audience-centred approach, rather than focusing only on the speech act of the securitising actor. While recognising that Buzan et al. (1998) provides a useful starting point for analysis, critiques such as Balzacq's provide important counterarguments that may fill certain gaps in the Copenhagen School's conception of securitisation. In particular, this assessment of the importance of the audience is useful when analysing the effectiveness of speech acts in UN decision-making bodies not only by the actor fulfilling certain criteria, but also the receptiveness of the audience. In relation to the topic of this thesis, the delegations of other Member States of these decision-making bodies who also possess decision-making authority could be considered the audience to the speech acts discussed.

Another important text in explaining securitisation theory is Buzan and Hansen's (2009) *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. A particularly interesting element of this book is that it is authored by Barry Buzan, one of the most prominent scholars of the Copenhagen School, and Lene Hansen, one of its most prominent critics. Their diverging views are evident throughout the book, as it applies securitisation theory along with other dissenting theories in order to provide a rather objective overview of the history of international security studies. The work is especially useful to this research topic for two reasons. First, as with Buzan et al. (1998), it provides insights into the evolution of environmental security which can be applied to the securitisation of climate change. Second, it goes into some detail regarding the institutionalising role of the United Nations for various securitisation debates.

Trombetta's (2010) chapter 'Rethinking the securitization of the environment' in Balzacq's book *Securitization Theory* provides a solid interpretation of the Copenhagen School's explanation of the unique characteristics of securitisation debates in the environmental sector, explained earlier. The chapter also usefully applies these characteristics to two real situations – the securitisation of the depletion of the ozone layer, and the growing debate over "environmental conflicts". In both of these situations Trombetta analyses the roles of different UN entities in the securitisation process, providing relevant examples of how securitisation theory can be applied to other debates in the environmental sector such as the current debate over climate-related security risks in the UN Security Council.

Hansen (2000) expresses a critique of the Copenhagen School, suggesting that it does not adequately account for the role of gender in securitisation processes. She coins the term "silent security dilemma", by which the victims of insecurity are unable to communicate their

insecurity. The article explores a case study of honour killings in Pakistan to suggest that, by the criteria of the Copenhagen School, this would not constitute a security threat as the victims are unable to carry out the speech acts necessary for successful securitisation. Although the application of gender theory to other issues should be done carefully, some similarities can be seen in current securitisation debates around climate change, wherein the voices of the victims of insecurity – poorer regions and states more vulnerable to climate impacts and conflict - are not as audible as more powerful actors who are not necessarily suffering as greatly from climate change. This should be a consideration when analysing different securitising actors in UN decision-making bodies such as the General Assembly and Security Council.

These texts provide the primary theoretical foundation for this thesis, which will draw upon key elements of securitisation theory as described by the Copenhagen School, as well as alternative interpretations, in order to effectively evaluate the impact of speech acts.

Securitisation of climate change and the United Nations

This section will provide an overview of some of the literature related to the application of securitisation concepts to climate change and to the United Nations – either the UN as a whole or individual UN entities or decision-making bodies. It should be noted, however, that literature on this particular topic is limited, and the work that does apply securitisation concepts does so superficially, with very little empirical analysis of speech acts. Nonetheless, the literature discussed here provides valuable insights for further research.

Conca et al. (2017) explores whether or not the Security Council should deal with the issue of climate change, suggesting that it may be overly political, lacks the necessary expertise, and risks institutional gridlock. While engaging with securitisation theory to some extent, this article is concerned more with the outcome of securitisation rather than the process. It does so by exploring six potential roles for the Security Council if it were to engage more deeply with climate-related security risks. These include: incorporating climate understanding into current operations; developing climate early warning systems; engaging in preventive diplomacy; addressing the threat to Small-island developing states; addressing climate refugees; and developing a climate-related “Responsibility to Protect”. Conca et al. (2017) acknowledges that securitisation may create a needed sense of urgency in addressing climate issues but also alludes to Buzan et al.’s (1998) assertion that over-politicisation may outweigh the potential positive outcomes.

Webersik (2012), while not explicitly engaging with the scholarly work of the Copenhagen School, applies the concepts of securitisation perhaps more effectively into his analysis than Conca et al. (2017). This is because he is concerned specifically with the roles of securitising actors in Security Council debates on climate change. The article deals with the 2011 Security Council debate on the implications of climate change for security, which was initiated by the German presidency. It focuses largely on Germany’s motivation and political strategy in bringing the debate to the Council. Webersik (2012) discusses some speech acts of Germany and other Council members; although, this is done more so to indicate the progression of the debate rather than to analyse in detail the speech acts themselves.

In a peer-reviewed think tank policy paper, Dröge (2020) also explores the potential advantages and disadvantages of the Security Council engaging with climate policy. As would be expected in a policy paper, Dröge takes a future-oriented approach, explaining that successful mitigation of climate-related security risks, if dealt with in the Security Council, would require far greater cooperation among Member States. There is particular emphasis on the need for permanent members of the Security Council to demonstrate a greater commitment. Despite not directly dealing with securitisation concepts, this paper does provide useful insights into the potential outcomes of securitisation.

Another policy paper by Eklöw and Krampe (2019) deals specifically with climate-related security risks in Somalia, and particularly how the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) is dealing with the issue. Once again, this paper is concerned with the practical applications of a securitised framing of climate change. It explains that climate change not only poses risks to vulnerable populations, but also inhibits the successful implementation of UNSOM's mandate, further exacerbating the situation for the communities it is trying to assist. Eklöw and Krampe (2019) suggest that climate-related security risks can only be addressed through the development of cooperative mechanisms to share knowledge and best practices. Thus, while Dröge (2020) expresses the need for cooperation at the decision-making level, Eklöw and Krampe (2019) focus on the need for cooperation at the implementation level. Together, these texts provide valuable insights into the roles of the Security Council and of UN entities in dealing with the issue.

Mason (2014) examines how UNDP, UNEP, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) are working to address climate-related security risks. Specifically, the article evaluates UNDP's efforts in climate change adaptation, UNEP's post-conflict environmental assessments, and OCHA's disaster risk management strategies. This disambiguation of the different roles of UN entities is a useful strategy to demonstrate the variety of actors operating within the UN system. The article aims to show the advantages and disadvantages of the relatively apolitical, technical, and human security-oriented approach which these entities have historically employed when dealing with climate-related security risks and other challenges. Although the article does not discuss this, it provides an effective counternarrative to those who support a more political approach to the issue through Security Council debates. A particular limitation on this article's usefulness, however, is that it was published six years ago. As the work agendas of UN entities in dealing with climate-related security risks continue to evolve, more recent literature would provide more valuable insights.

Maertens (2019) emphasises a need for UN peacekeeping operations to environmentalise their practices. She furthermore states that this environmentalisation may contribute to more successful securitisation of the environment. The article interestingly points out that unintentional environmentally harmful practices of peacekeeping operations may exacerbate conflict risks related to environmental concerns. Unlike much of the other literature examined, Maertens (2019) responds directly to some securitisation concepts of the Copenhagen School, but only briefly to challenge their validity. This then gives way to a simplified interpretation of securitisation theory, without applying its key concepts to the selected case study of peacekeeping operations. Despite this lack of theoretical depth, the

article provides an insightful perspective of UN entities as not only external securitising actors, but also potentially participants in contributing to climate-related security risks as a result of harmful environmental practices.

While literature dealing with the contribution of UN actors to the securitisation of climate change is limited, the body of work appears to be growing. As demonstrated by these texts, much of the focus is currently on the potential role of the Security Council in addressing this issue. As the Security Council continues to engage with the issue, it will be necessary for scholars to engage more with the impacts of this securitisation on the work of UN entities and other securitising actors.

Summary of literature review

The first part of this literature review analysed the scientific and theoretical arguments surrounding the potential linkages between climate change and security. While there is still no distinct scientific consensus on the issue, the following sections of this thesis will demonstrate that there has been an increasing commitment among UN entities and some Member States to better understand climate-related security risks. The literature review also briefly illustrated the controversies surrounding the Copenhagen School theory of securitisation. The works analysed here will help to form the theoretical framework on which this thesis is based. Furthermore, it was indicated that while there is some literature on the securitisation of climate change in the context of the UN Security Council and UN entities, engagement with the concepts of the Copenhagen School – and competing schools of thought – has not been overly rigorous. In light of this, more thorough application of securitisation concepts may allow for greater insights into the growing debate over the implications of climate change for international peace and security.

Securitisation theory and climate-related security risks

Securitisation is the process of presenting an issue previously thought unrelated to security through a security lens, meaning it is characterised as an existential threat:

The way to study securitization is to study discourse and political constellations: When does an argument with this particular rhetorical and semiotic structure achieve sufficient effect to make an audience tolerate violations of rules that would otherwise have to be obeyed? If by means of an argument about the priority and urgency of an existential threat the securitizing actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by, we are witnessing a case of securitization.

(Buzan et al. 1998: 25)

This section will be dedicated to the construction of the theoretical framework of this thesis upon which later analyses will be built. Specifically, there will be an examination of relevant elements of securitisation theory, a school of academic thought most prominently espoused by the Copenhagen School. This framework will aim to link securitisation theory to how climate-

related security risks are being addressed in the UN system in order to answer the two research questions. First, the idea of politicisation in the securitisation process, which, according to the Copenhagen School, is a common feature of environmental security debates, will be explored in relation to the political complexities of the Security Council. Second, there will be a discussion on the role of discourse as a central aspect of securitisation and how this presents challenges to the idea that environmental debates are also characterised by a scientific agenda. This potential role of UN entities in addressing both the discourse and the scientific agenda will be established. Following this will be short analyses of the importance of the audience as well as the challenge of the “silent security dilemma”. Finally, this section will explore how the various actors of the UN support the idea of the Copenhagen School that securitisation debates in the environmental sector are uniquely characterised by a multiplicity of actors.

Securitisation versus politicisation

According to the Copenhagen School, an excessive expansion of security should be discouraged. Buzan et al. (1998: 29) state that “when considering securitizing moves such as ‘environmental security’ ... one has to weigh the always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security against the possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization.” Critical Security Studies provides an alternate perspective, criticising the Copenhagen School for not moving far enough in the direction of “real people in real places” (Booth 2005: 271). This is in line with the human security approach espoused by the UN, which places people rather than states as the referent object in international security. With certain theorists such as those of the Copenhagen School discouraging over-securitisation, the important question to answer is why climate change, of all things, deserves to be viewed as a security issue.

Trombetta (2010: 136) points out that the alternative to securitisation may lead to environmental threats such as climate change being continually marginalised despite its increasingly existential threat. Climate-related security is still marginalised in comparison to other security issues and other focuses of climate action; however, the growing body of evidence being accumulated by UN entities and other institutions, coupled with increased attention in the Security Council, demonstrates that the issue is currently enjoying greater prioritisation than in recent years. Regarding the “always problematic side effects” of securitisation as stated by Buzan, such as deprioritising and shifting resources away from other important issues, the extent of this is yet to be determined. However, with data suggesting that climate change will become a far greater threat in the near future, it seems appropriate that this issue should gain higher priority in the policy agendas of the UN and its Member States.

According to Buzan et al. (1998: 23), an issue may be non-politicised, politicised or securitised. If an issue is politicised, it is part of public policy and requires government decisions and resource allocation. When an issue moves along the spectrum to securitisation, it is “no longer debated as a political question, but dealt with at an accelerated pace and in ways that may violate normal legal and social rule” (Buzan et al. 1998: 23). By this definition alone, one could not say that climate change has been securitised in the context of the UN system. While it is perceived by many as an existential threat, it is still well within the realm of political debate. One may safely assume that current scientific data almost certainly proves that climate

change is a real and harmful process, but it does not yet with certainty define the role of climate change as a threat to peace and security.

The current politicisation of climate change generally and in the UN system is in line with one of the peculiarities of securitisation in the environmental sector outlined by Buzan et al. (1998); namely, that when there is a move to securitise environmental concerns, it counterproductively results in politicisation rather than securitisation. Considering this, it is necessary to admit that while the partial shift of climate-related security risks from the General Assembly into the agenda of the Security Council may represent a move toward securitisation, it does not automatically indicate successful securitisation. It is clear that the Council is a heavily politicised body even in comparison to other UN entities, particularly in the case of climate change, which remains a controversial issue that many members of the Council are reluctant to address in a securitised context.

Consequently, it will be useful to explore how different members of the Council – both permanent and temporary – have engaged with the issue. As well as drawing on the growing body of literature on the role of the Council in addressing climate-related security risks, this will be done by analysing the outcomes of Council debates and presidential statements, allowing for an empirical assessment of the extent to which the topic is currently politicised in the UN system. Secondly, there will be an analysis of the results of General Assembly debates, as this is also a central decision-making body playing a role in the securitisation of climate change.

Discursive power and the scientific agenda

Another important theme of securitisation theory is the distinction between discourse and action. Discursive power is considered an important factor of securitisation as it brings together different actors. Securitising actors are defined as “actors who securitize issues by declaring something – a referent object – existentially threatened”, with referent objects defined as “things that are seen to be existentially threatened and that have a legitimate claim to survival” (Buzan et al. 1998: 36). As the Copenhagen School points out, securitisation is largely a result of growing discourse around an issue. As Wæver (1995: 55) states, “security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance itself is the act. By saying it, something is done”. In other words, as Trombetta (2010: 137) points out, the Copenhagen School focuses more on the “truth effect” rather than real, empirical truth.

According to Buzan et al. (1998: 33), a successful securitising speech act is characterised by three facilitating conditions: (1) it must be consistent with conventionally accepted language of security; (2) it must be delivered by an actor in a position of authority; and (3) the securitising objects are preferably framed as constituting an existential threat. It could indeed be argued that the topic of climate-related security is currently dominated by a focus on the truth effect built through discourse, rather than action. As an example to be discussed in more detail later, the UN Security Council held 19 sessions on climate-related security between 2007 and 2019; however, so far, efforts to promote action only led to the inclusion of the issue in five Security Council resolutions and two presidential statements during that time.

While the Copenhagen School considers the speech act to be of most consequence for successful securitisation, it identifies a peculiarity in the environmental sector whereby securitisation is characterised by two different agendas – a political and a scientific one (Buzan et al. 1998: 71). As explained by Trombetta (2010: 141), this scientific agenda is generally apolitical, referring mainly to natural sciences and non-governmental activities. According to Buzan et al. (1998: 72), it “is about the authoritative assessment of threat”, furthermore arguing that “the extent to which scientific argument structures environmental security debates strikes us as exceptional”. It is indeed clear that debates over the existence and effects of climate change have been largely dominated by science, and this is also true regarding the emerging concept of climate-related security risks both in the UN system and more broadly. This scientific agenda, however, as pointed out by Balzacq (2005), challenges the “truth effect” or “self-referentiality” of the speech act in the securitisation process. In other words, the current emphasis on scientific data suggests that the securitisation of climate change is at least equally reliant on truth as it is on the truth effect communicated through discourse.

Given such a scenario, it will be necessary to examine how UN entities utilise their discursive power to contribute to the “truth effect”, as well as how they are impacting the progress of the scientific agenda helping to drive the issue of climate-related security risks toward securitisation. In this regard, subsequent sections will explore whether the speech act and the scientific agenda are contradictory or, alternatively, complementary. First, the speech acts of the Security Council will be examined to determine how and to what extent they are contributing to the securitisation of climate change. This will involve analysing the language used in statements given by Member States, and presidential statements adopted by the Security Council. Second, the impacts of Security Council speech acts on the work of UNDP, UNEP, and DPPA-DPO will be determined through an analysis of relevant resolutions. Furthermore, the work of these UN entities will be analysed to determine how their scientific roles may be contributing to securitisation moves in the Security Council. This will be done through analysis of their recommendations given to the Security Council, as well as to some extent their published reports. The success of each of these statements will depend upon the extent to which they fulfil the aforementioned facilitating conditions according to the Copenhagen School; namely, the use of conventionally accepted security language, the authority of the securitising actor, and the framing of climate-related security risks as posing an existential threat.

The securitising actor and the subject

While the speech act is vital to the securitisation of an issue, equally important is the audience. As Buzan et al. (1998: 31) state, security “ultimately rests neither with the objects nor with the subjects but among the subjects.” In other words, securitisation reflects the interests of the political community (Trombetta 2010: 137). Balzacq furthermore argues that the Copenhagen School’s analysis of the importance of the audience is lacking, stating that “although the CS appeals to an audience, its framework ignores that audience” (Balzacq 2005: 177). Consequently, regardless of the minutiae of different arguments as to the exact role of the audience in securitisation, it will be assumed that the receptiveness of the audience is indeed a necessary factor in analysing the success of a securitising speech act. The United Nations has

the privilege of a substantial global audience, so its policy positions can arguably have a significant real and symbolic influence. This is particularly the case with issues related to security. Security Council debates, for example, often gain mainstream media attention. While this has not been the case yet for debates on the topic of climate-related security risks, there is potential for this in the future. One problem is that, despite its global nature, the UN does not have a uniform level of influence in all parts of the world.

The emergence of climate-related security risks in the political discourse of developing countries has been slow or non-existent in comparison to leaders in the field such as Germany and Sweden. For many Small Island Developing States (SIDS), climate change is arguably the most important issue to the public due to its immediate existential threat as a result of rising sea levels; however, in other regions also extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as the Sahel, the issue has yet to gain the political attention it needs to be successfully securitised at a local and regional level.

In the context of the securitisation of climate change in the UN system, one could consider that the governments and delegations of Member States are as much the audience of speech acts as the general public. Consequently, subsequent sections will discuss to some extent how the discourse among UN decision-making bodies and the work and mandates of UN entities influence and represent public opinion and the interests of Member States, and what may need to be done for the issue to gain greater attention. This, once again, will be done through an analysis of speeches, statements and other official documentation released by the UN. An important factor to consider throughout this analysis will be the authoritative capacity of the UN's decision-making bodies and specifically how the issue of climate-related security risks partially shifting from the General Assembly to the Security Council may represent a securitising move given the relative authority of the Council, especially on security issues.

Related to this issue, a criticism of securitisation is its inability to identify the “silent security dilemma”, as described by Lene Hansen (2000). This occurs when “the potential subject of (in)security has no, or limited, possibility of speaking its security problems” (Buzan and Hansen 2009: 216). Hansen deals with this issue in relation to the absence of gender in the Copenhagen School, but in the context of the securitisation of climate change, this could speak to the idea that the countries most vulnerable to climate-related security risks have very limited capacity to address them, as well as a limited capacity to contribute to the global discourse on the issue.

A significant manifestation of the “silent security dilemma” within the UN system is the undemocratic power structure of the Security Council, which can be problematic in providing a voice to the countries and regions most affected by climate-related security risks. Since the five permanent members of the Security Council have been reluctant to actively prioritise the issue, it has largely been up to non-permanent members, who hold less influence, to push for this agenda. Of the 13 consultations (including open debates, Arria-formula meetings and briefings) held in the Security Council on the topic of climate change or climate-related security issues between 2007 and 2019, only four have been initiated or co-initiated by any of the permanent members (climate-security-expert-network.org). Given the uneven distribution of power in the Security Council and in the UN system more broadly, it will be useful to examine

the extent to which permanent members of the Council have worked to address climate-related security risks in comparison to non-permanent members through analysis of the content and outcomes of these consultations. This will be a pertinent factor in determining the extent to which various Member States in the Security Council possess the necessary authority to carry out a successful speech act, which, according to Buzan et al. (1998: 33), is one of the three crucial factors for securitisation.

Identifying the threat

Another key element of securitisation as defined by the Copenhagen School is the issue of security as an identifiable threat, or enemy, to be overcome. As already stated, Buzan et al. (1998: 33) consider this to be one of three facilitating conditions for successful securitisation. In contrast to terrorism, another securitised issue where the perceived enemy is clear and visible, climate change is a largely invisible and delayed threat, in that without a strong belief in science, one may not perceive climate change as an existential security threat until years or decades later, when it may be too late; and, as already stated, those that are already experiencing the harmful effects of climate change may not have the capacity to enact or influence meaningful change. The creation of this “friend-enemy grouping”, as Schmitt (1996: 29) calls it, in the context of securitisation, would be less clear-cut and perhaps counterproductive, as the key to successfully combatting climate change is arguably global unity.

Whether the threat of climate change can actually create a sense of global unity is yet to be determined, however. As Beck (2000: 38) suggests, “threats create society and global threats create global society.” The Copenhagen School, on the other hand, is sceptical that security encompassing all humankind is possible. At this stage, climate-related security has certainly not created any sense of global unity; however, while research continues to point toward the linkages between climate change and international peace and security, it will be useful to evaluate how the multilateral nature and wide-ranging work of UN entities may play a role in establishing this sense of global unity. As well as examining the extent to which the Security Council is framing climate-related security risks as an existential threat, it is important to determine how UN entities such as UNDP, UNEP and DPPA-DPO are contributing to this framing through their emphasis on pushing the scientific agenda. This will again require analysis of the aforementioned speech acts of the Security Council, as well as the language used by UN entities in addressing climate-related security risks.

The multiplicity of actors

Finally, another peculiarity of securitisation in the environmental sector as identified by Buzan et al. (1998) is the broad range of actors involved. This challenges Wæver’s (1995: 57) suggestion that “security is articulated only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites.” Buzan et al. (1998: 71) point to the UN system as being one such institutional voice. Admittedly, this thesis will not do much to discount the idea that the UN is playing a central role in the securitisation of climate change; however, it will be demonstrated that the UN itself does not necessarily speak with a single voice. Understanding whether securitisation is or is

not instigated primarily by elite institutions such as the UN may be important; but equally as important is an understanding of what is being said and done by the many different voices that make up these elite institutions.

When Barry Buzan and his colleagues published their book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* more than 20 years ago, they wrote: “it is as yet undetermined what kinds of political structures environmental concerns will generate” (Buzan et al. 1998: 71). Today, despite the ratification of several milestone international environmental treaties since then, this statement is still true in the case of climate-related security risks. While more voices within the UN and among Member States showing an interest in addressing the issue may have a positive impact on its prioritisation, it can also lead to overlapping objectives and incoherent messaging. Consequently, this multiplicity of actors within the UN system should be dealt with if the securitisation of climate change is to be successful.

Consequently, the final analytical portion of this thesis will be dedicated to analysing how the UN is currently addressing this challenge. This will particularly involve an examination of the current work and objectives of the Climate Security Mechanism – an initiative established by UNDP, UNEP and DPPA in 2018 – and other UN partnerships with international, regional and local stakeholders. This discussion will be particularly concerned with determining the extent to which these partnerships have been established, and furthermore, the extent to which they represent a shift in the work agendas of the selected UN entities. As well as addressing both the benefits and challenges of a multiplicity of actors, these partnerships will be evaluated by their potential to contribute to the fulfilment of other elements of securitisation mentioned earlier, such as the “truth effect” and scientific agenda.

Operationalization of theoretical concepts

The theoretical framework established here will be built upon in subsequent sections to ultimately answer the three stated research questions. Securitisation moves in the Security Council – including debate contributions, presidential statements and resolution – will be evaluated by the extent to which they fulfil the three facilitating conditions for a successful speech act according to the Copenhagen School: (1) consistency with conventionally accepted language of security; (2) the authority of the securitising actor; and (3) the framing of security as constituting an existential threat. They will also be assessed in relation to how they represent the political and asymmetric nature of the Security Council, considering the advantages and disadvantages of politicisation in the securitisation process. Also, the analysis of these sources will involve a determination of the extent to which they represent the presence of both a political and scientific agenda.

To assess how the securitisation of climate change has impacted the work agendas of UNDP, UNEP and DPPA-DPO, three criteria will be addressed: (1) the extent to which Security Council resolutions have reshaped or expanded the mandates of these entities to engage with climate-related security risks; (2) the extent to which a focus on climate-related security risks has been incorporated into existing work agendas; and (3) the extent to which new instruments and mechanisms of cooperation represent a shift in work agendas and perhaps an alignment of objectives within the UN system.

Finally, evaluations will be made as to how the shifting and expanding work agendas of these selected entities in addressing climate-related security risks may be impacting the securitisation discourse in the Security Council by enabling progress in the scientific agenda through their research capacities and expansive expertise in supporting climate and conflict-affected regions and communities. This will to some extent involve analysis of the speech acts of leaders of these entities delivered in their advisory capacity to the Security Council, which will again be done through the application of the aforementioned facilitating conditions. It should be noted, however, that the second facilitating condition (the authority of the security actor) will not be central to this. UNDP, UNEP and DPPA-DPO were selected precisely because they each possess significantly more authority than other UN entities when it comes to securitisation moves, given their advisory role in the Security Council. Consequently, the second facilitating condition will be applied more so to the authority of Member States in the first analytical section, rather than the authority of each UN entity.

Methodology

The first analytical section of this thesis involved an empirical analysis of language used in various sources from the General Assembly and Security Council. This provided the most direct information regarding securitisation moves in each of these organs. Apart from an analysis of one resolution adopted by the General Assembly, the majority of analyses were conducted on sources from the Security Council. These sources included resolutions, presidential statements, and Member State interventions in open debates and Arria-formula meetings. Analysis of these sources allowed for the application of securitisation concepts – as established in the theoretical framework – to be used as criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of speech acts in the Security Council. Language in debates was used as it most accurately demonstrates the views of individual Member States, and so allows for a more comprehensive application of securitisation theory to each of these actors. Presidential statements were considered both as speech acts and as outcomes of securitisation moves, as they require agreement by consensus in the Council, unlike resolutions. This means that they provide perhaps the best indication of the average position of Council members on the securitisation of climate change. Resolutions, on the other hand, are adopted by at least nine affirmative votes out of 15, in the event that none of the five permanent members of the Security Council exercise their veto. Consequently, the language used may not be demonstrative of the views of all Member States. Nonetheless, resolutions provide the most concrete evidence of the outcomes of securitisation moves in the Security Council, as they are – in most cases – binding by international law. As a result, resolutions were the main focus of this section, as they provided the most accurate indication of the progress of securitisation over time. Beyond analysis of resolutions, presidential statements, and debates, this section drew on some scholarly literature related to the role of the Security Council.

The second analytical section was concerned with the impact of securitisation on the work agendas of UN entities and, inversely, their impact on the securitisation process. Wherever possible, there was an attempt to engage with scholarly work such as peer-reviewed

journal articles and books. It should be noted, however, that academic literature on the specific functions of different UN entities is quite limited, as there is a tendency for the UN to be treated to some extent as a single actor, rather than an amalgamation of many actors, which this thesis is attempting to highlight. The best source of information on different UN entities is mostly published by the entities themselves. Consequently, there was necessary engagement with various UN resources, including published reports, strategy papers, guidance notes, and websites. Furthermore, there was some engagement with policy papers produced by think tanks, most of which work in collaboration with UN entities. Currently, published research on climate-related security risks appears to be largely dominated by these think tanks. While these sources may raise some questions of bias, they accurately portray the priorities of UN actors, and so are useful in this analysis. Finally, this section also involved some analysis of Security Council resolutions, as they accurately portray the impact of securitisation on UN entities.

Furthermore, there is a need to address the scope and limitations of this thesis and the methodology used. First, it is necessary to point out that a complete analysis of the role of the UN in addressing climate-related security risks would involve an examination of all relevant entities; however, in the interest of allowing for more thorough analysis, this thesis focuses only on a few of the most prominent entities. Second, while there has been substantial research on the effects of climate change generally, the topic of climate-related security risks is relatively new. Consequently, current research cannot yet determine the exact impacts of climate change on conflict, meaning that conclusions are admittedly based on likely, rather than certain, outcomes. Third, it is rare for UN entities to work alone in addressing anything related to climate change or climate-related security risks; hence, there is a substantial amount of complexity and subjectivity in defining the roles of individual entities. Lastly, it is important to clarify that as this is an emerging field, data on climate-related security risks is developing rapidly and policy positions are evolving relatively frequently and irregularly. Correspondingly, UN entities are currently in the process of a vast restructuring of work agendas and priorities in dealing with climate-related security risks as a result of the Security Council's increasing engagement with the issue. This will likely result in a quicker depreciation in the value of the findings of this thesis over time, particularly in relation to the second analytical section.

Securitisation in the Security Council

When analysing the securitisation process, it is crucial to analyse which actors are involved. In the context of the UN system, we can initially assume that the securitising actors are primarily those with the power to shape policy agendas. Consequently, this section will examine how the Security Council in particular is contributing to the securitisation of climate change. This will involve examining literary discourse on the role of this decision-making body in addressing climate-related security risks, and, as a more empirical approach, analyses of how its “speech acts” are contributing to securitisation. A key consideration in this section will be the debate over what role the Security Council should be playing in addressing climate change. The significance of the Security Council in securitisation is certainly not a new concept in literature. This has been explored in relation to a range of securitised issues, such as HIV/AIDS,

migration, and terrorism. Such a focus on the Council is unsurprising, given its centrality in shaping multilateral peace and security agendas.

This section will be structured chronologically in order to clearly demonstrate the process of securitisation from the time that climate change was first debated in the Security Council in 2007, to when it passed its first resolution on the issue in 2017, until the present day. There will be an evaluation of sources of securitisation throughout this timeline based on the theoretical framework established previously. These sources include statements of Member States given during Security Council debates, as well as language used in presidential statements and resolutions adopted by the Council. Ultimately, this section will answer the question as to how the UN Security Council has contributed to the securitisation of climate change. The following section will then analyse the impact that this securitisation has on the work agendas of UN entities, and, furthermore, how the work of these entities impacts debates in the Security Council.

Laying the groundwork for securitisation

The current transition of climate change into the jurisdiction of the UN Security Council over the past decade has been marked with controversy. Until 2007, the issue had been generally dealt with as a development concern under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly and ECOSOC. Since 1994, the UN's climate agenda has been developed through the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), through which the landmark adoption of the Paris Agreement took place in 2015.

While climate change is still mostly dealt with by other organs, the issue of climate-related security risks continues to gain traction in the Security Council, despite consistent opposition by some members. The issue was first brought to the Security Council in April 2007 with a debate initiated by the United Kingdom. At the time, the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) had been a leading voice in the securitisation of climate change (Warner and Boas 2019: 1476). This debate was chaired by Margaret Beckett, the UK's Foreign Secretary. Her opening statement to the Council on 17 April 2007 included the following remarks:

Our responsibility in the Council is to maintain international peace and security, including the prevention of conflict. An unstable climate will exacerbate some of the core drivers of conflict, such as migratory pressures and competition for resources. The recent Stern Report on the Economics of Climate Change speaks of the potential economic disruption on the scale of the two world wars and of the great depression. That alone will inevitably have an impact on the security of all of us – developed and developing countries alike.

(S/PV.5663 2007: 2)

Drawing on the ideas of the Copenhagen School, this statement demonstrates an obvious securitising move by fulfilling the three facilitating conditions for a successful speech act (Buzan et al. 1998: 33). First, it is consistent with conventional security language, referring directly to the maintenance of international peace and security and the prevention of conflict.

Second, given that the statement was delivered by the foremost foreign policy authority of a permanent member of the Security Council, it fulfils the criteria of being delivered by an authoritative actor. Third, the issue is clearly portrayed as an existential threat, particularly considering the parallels drawn with the two world wars, which are clearly more conventional security-related events.

The motivation for the UK to bring the issue of climate change to the Security Council was clear. John Ashton, the UK's Special Representative on Climate Change from 2006 to 2012 said that "if you wanted to push up ambition and urgency in responding to climate change, then it would be a good idea to make the climate security discourse more prominent in the broad debate" (Warner and Boas 2019: 1476). The UK Government's chief scientific advisor had stated that climate change was "a far greater threat to the world's stability than international terrorism" (BBC 2004). Given the authoritative position of the Security Council, it could be considered a rational move to bring to this forum an issue out of a desire for it to be prioritised. However, this securitising move was largely unsuccessful at the time. Recalling Buzan et al.'s (1998: 29) warning of the "always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security" and Balzacq's (2005) emphasis on the importance of the audience for successful securitisation, the UK's efforts were met with significant resistance. While the Foreign Secretary in her statement acknowledged the supremacy of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the UNFCCC in dealing with climate issues (S/PV.5663 2007: 2), this was not enough for most other members of the Security Council.

The overwhelming sentiment of the Council was most accurately captured by India, stating that: "The Security Council does not have the expertise and may not have the mandate: to make an uncertain long-term prospect a security threat amounts to an informal amendment of the [UN] Charter" (S/PV.5663 Resumption 1 2007: 23). Beyond this questioning of the capability of the Council in dealing with climate-related threats, members exhibited mistrust of the Council's hierarchical membership, as well as concerns about potentially undermining the mandate of the General Assembly and the UNFCCC (Conca et al. 2017: 2). Furthermore, this statement represents Buzan et al.'s (1998: 71) suggestion that securitisation of environmental issue is generally characterised by both a political and a scientific agenda. By referring to climate change as an "uncertain long-term prospect", the representative of India appears to demonstrate scepticism about the scientific data behind not only the security implications of climate change, but climate change itself. As we will see, the importance of this scientific agenda has remained a consistent theme of Security Council debates over the linkages between climate change and international peace and security. A substantial number of Member States – 55 in total – participated in this debate, but many of them were there to express their views that climate change did not have a place in Security Council debates and should continue to be treated as a matter of sustainable development (Conca et al. 2017: 3), and so the session ended with no formal outcome. Consequently, despite the UK's efforts and its arguable fulfilment of the three facilitating conditions of a successful securitising speech act according to the Copenhagen School, this statement was unable to stand up against a largely unreceptive audience.

While many Member States were of the view that climate change should be dealt with by the General Assembly and other relevant organs and subsidiary entities, it was in fact negotiations in the General Assembly that were responsible for expanding the mandate of the Security Council in this area. The Pacific island states – which had been on the losing side in believing that the Security Council should deal with climate change – instead brought the issue back to the General Assembly and were able to reach a compromise (Conca et al. 2017: 4). General Assembly Resolution 63/281, adopted on 3 June 2009, reads as follows:

Deeply concerned that the adverse impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise, could have possible security implications,

1. *Invites* the relevant organs of the United Nations, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications;
2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly ... on the possible security implications of climate change, based on the views of the Member States and relevant regional and international organizations.

(A/RES/63/281 2009: 2)

Both these paragraphs represent a significant step in the securitisation of climate change in the UN system. First, by encouraging other organs of the UN to engage in the debate, the General Assembly essentially undercut the reservations that Member States had previously expressed about the involvement of the Security Council. As such, while it did not explicitly state a mandate, it ensured that the issue was destined to once again reach the floor of the Council. Second, the request for a report of the Secretary-General indicated that Member States were open to further exploring the potential security implications of climate change, but only with the assurance that there was scientific data to back up the idea. As can be seen by the lack of an outcome of the first Security Council debate in 2007, the General Assembly's speech act alone was not successful in portraying climate change as an existential threat. A potential reason for this is that the language used in the resolution is cautious and vague. Recalling the facilitating conditions of a successful securitising speech act as stipulated by the Copenhagen School, such weak language does not necessarily portray climate change as an existential threat, and thus is unlikely to mobilise substantial action. At this stage of the debate, however, observers would likely not have expected or recommended more explicit or urgent language. This is firstly because of the political disinterest among some Member States, and secondly because there was little empirical evidence at the time to justify the framing of climate change through a security lens. This section and the next will demonstrate the extent to which the political and scientific agendas have, since the beginning, been inextricably linked during the securitisation process of climate change in the UN.

Mirroring sentiment in the academic world, the report that was produced and released in September 2009 did not indicate a consensus on the linkages between climate change and security. Nonetheless, it came to act as the initial scientific basis for subsequent shifts toward

securitisation in the UN. The report introduced the terminology of climate change as a “threat multiplier”, indicating its potential to exacerbate existing threats. Having garnered significant interest, the report compiled contributions from 35 Member States, 4 Member State groups, and 17 regional and international organizations, including agencies and programmes of the United Nations (A/64/350 2009: 4). Based on these contributions, the report identified many channels through which climate change might affect security, including: food security, human exposure to extreme events, slowed development, undermining state stability, migration, competition over natural resources and other coping responses, loss of statehood, and international conflict as a result of shared or undemarcated international resources.

Securitisation debate intensifies

Despite continued questions over the scientific justification for the Security Council to directly address climate-related issues, this report laid the groundwork for a more successful Security Council debate on the issue initiated by the presidency of Germany in July 2011. Since before this time, Germany had established itself as a leading global voice for climate action, so its decision to prioritise this issue during its presidency of the Council was not surprising. More limited in scope than the debate of 2007, Germany’s strategy was to focus the debate mostly around food security and rising sea levels. While its rationale in doing so is speculative, it is likely that it was in part out of a desire to discuss the security implications of climate change in the context of particular topics which would be less politically sensitive (Webersik 2012: 552). Such a strategy may have been wise, given the Copenhagen School’s assumption that securitisation debates are particularly vulnerable to over-politicisation. By focusing on issues that are more effectively backed up by science and also present a more easily identifiable threat, this approach may have been more likely to achieve support. Indeed, this time around, a majority of sitting members of the Council supported a presidential statement which would call for a broader definition of peace and security. Still, however, political tensions were high. Brazil reiterated that climate change should be dealt with under the UNFCCC, pointing to the fact that violence cannot be attributed to climate change alone. China stated that a debate on the security implications of climate change would not address the root of the problem. Argentina, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, reiterated the view of many developing countries that climate change should be addressed in the General Assembly and ECOSOC. The United States, represented by Secretary of State Susan Rice, offered a stunning rebuke that deserves particular attention:

In the Council, we have discussed and addressed many emerging security issues, from the links between development and security to HIV/AIDS. Yet, this week we have been unable to reach consensus on even a simple draft presidential statement that climate change has the potential to impact peace and security in the face of the manifest evidence that it does. We have dozens of countries represented in this body and in this very chamber whose very existence is threatened. They have asked the Council to demonstrate our understanding that their security is profoundly threatened. Instead, because of the refusal of a few to accept

our responsibility, by its silence the Council is saying in effect “tough luck”. That is more than disappointing; it is pathetic, short-sighted and, frankly, a dereliction of duty.

(S/PV.6587 2011: 7)

While this statement alone could admittedly form the basis of an entire paper on securitisation theory, some brief points will be expressed here. First, Secretary Rice interestingly points to previous securitisation efforts, such as HIV/AIDS and development, a justification for the securitisation of climate change. The Council’s 2000 session on HIV/AIDS is commonly invoked as an example of the positive impacts of securitisation, however, as Conca et al. (2017: 5) point out, scholarly debate has demonstrated a substantial degree of scepticism as to whether this securitisation move did in fact mobilise positive action toward addressing the problem (Rushton 2010).

Second, Rice’s statement once again indicates a clear contradiction between the political and scientific agenda. As stated by Buzan et al. (1998: 72), this scientific focus, which is suggested to be a common characteristic of environmental securitisation debates, “is about the authoritative assessment of threat”. By speaking of “manifest evidence”, Rice is invoking this supposed authoritative assessment as a valid reason to overcome political disagreement. In reality, however, given that there is not yet a definitive scientific consensus regarding the linkages between climate change and security, the power of this scientific argument is limited by the fact that it is not yet “authoritative”. Regarding this particular debate, which is focused on the vulnerability of island states, the evidence is clear that climate change poses an existential threat to some small island states as a result of rapidly rising sea levels; however, as suggested by Dröge (2020), it is highly debatable as to whether this particular existential threat has ramifications for international security. At the very least, such an assumption would require a heavily human-centred interpretation of international security.

Furthermore, while the statements delivered by reluctant states may have been discouraging for some looking to prioritise climate action, they were not empirically false, as Rice suggests. China’s statement, for example, which suggested that a debate on the security implications of climate change would not address the root problems of conflict, actually aligns with the commonly accepted scientific assessment of climate change as a threat multiplier, in that it exacerbates already existing factors leading to conflict. In this sense, one could argue that China’s assertion is correct. However, considering the lack of scientific consensus on the issue, it would be impossible to hand either China or the US an objective victory in this exchange.

Finally, the vitriolic language used in Rice’s statement appears to be supportive of Buzan et al.’s (1998) assessment that environmental issues tend to be unsuccessfully securitised as a result of their inability to move beyond political debate. The Copenhagen School distinguishes between securitisation as “meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure”, and politicisation as “meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations” (Buzan et al. 1998: 23-24). Hence, it could be said that Rice’s statement was an attempt for the debate to transcend the political realm and to

reach securitisation. As stated by Wæver (1995: 56), “transcending a security problem by politicising it cannot happen through thematization in security terms, only away from such terms.” Based on these definitions, it could be said that speech acts related to environmental concerns fail in the Security Council because they cannot transcend the political nature of the debate or the inherently political nature of the Council. This may even be the case for speech acts which fulfil the three facilitating conditions for successful securitisation, given that this statement was consistent with security language, was delivered by arguably the most authoritative voice in the Security Council, and portrayed the effects of climate change as existentially threatening. A key consideration here, though, is that even if an issue poses a real existential threat to some, it may be of no concern to others. In this particular example, if Rice’s audience had been the small island states which are existentially threatened, the speech act would have been successful in mobilising action; however, it was other members of the Council, not as directly affected by climate change, who needed to be persuaded. Due to this, one might argue that the speech act did not fulfil the third facilitating condition.

While the Copenhagen School’s assessment of the difficulty in securitising environmental issues may be upheld by analysing this speech act alone, it does not stand up to the outcome of this 2011 debate or the subsequent ongoing securitisation of climate change. Rice’s statement represents the difficulty of securitisation, but it may not be considered an entirely failed speech act, as the Council in this case managed to agree on a presidential statement. It reads:

The Security Council expresses its concern that possible adverse effects of climate change may, in the long run, aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security.

... expresses its concern that possible security implications of loss of territory of some States caused by sea-level-rise may arise, in particular in small low-lying island States.

... notes that in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security under its consideration, conflict analysis and contextual information on, inter alia, possible security implications of climate change is important ...

(S/PRST/2011/15 2011: 1-2).

Clearly, the language here does not present a strong or enthusiastic argument, particularly since it in no way portrays climate change as an existential threat. The statement is cautious – noting frequent use of the qualifier “possible” – and, more importantly, by mentioning sea level rise, it only directly refers to one possible security implication of climate change, which, as stated earlier, does not pose a threat to the majority of Member States. Nonetheless, as the first agreed upon presidential statement (which requires consensus in the Security Council) released on this issue, it sets a precedent for further engagement with climate-related security risks in the Council. The Copenhagen School notes that few appeals to environmental security have resulted in the mobilisation of exceptional measures which would constitute securitisation. While this observation may have been true 20 years ago, the Council’s achievement in agreeing on a presidential statement presents an initial challenge to that idea.

A slow shift toward securitisation

Despite this achievement, there was relative stagnation in terms of concrete progress on climate issues in the Security Council between 2011 and 2017. In 2013, the UK along with Pakistan sought to initiate another formal debate in the Council on the issue, but this was blocked by Russia and China, which resulted instead in an informal so-called Arria-formula debate February 2013 (King 2013). A key factor during this time period, however, is that it saw some developing countries shifting toward a favourable view of securitisation of climate change. As well as Pakistan's initiative in 2013, Malaysia also co-initiated an Arria-formula debate in 2015 along with Spain. This indicated increasing disagreement on the issue among leading countries of the G-77 group, who until this time had been relatively united in their scepticism of securitising climate change by expanding the Council's mandate to address it (Warner and Boas 2019: 1478). While this evolving sentiment in favour of climate change being dealt with by the Security Council represented a shift toward securitisation, it also once again highlighted the "always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security" (Buzan et al. 1998: 29).

Related to the problem that the Council is largely dominated by politics, its power structure is clearly undemocratic. Made up of five permanent members (P5) – China, France, Russia, UK and US – all with veto power, and 10 non-permanent who serve only two-year terms, one can see that the majority of the power in deciding on the international peace and security agenda sits with just a few states. Consequently, one could argue that the reluctance of some Member States to allow the Council to deal with climate-related security risks is not so much a "dereliction of duty" – as the US representative stated – as a desire to have a greater say in how to serve that duty. This speaks to a potential limitation of securitisation whereby, according to Buzan and Hansen (2009:216), "the potential subject of (in)security has no, or limited, possibility of speaking its security problem". This presents a fundamental dilemma for the developing states who are most vulnerable to the existential threat of climate change and who, generally, do not hold a great deal of power in debates over international peace and security; while support for the securitisation of climate change in the Security Council may draw greater attention and thus more effectively mobilise the international community, it could limit their ability to help shape an agenda that truly serves their interests.

Faced with this dilemma, we are seeing increasingly favourable views of developing states toward securitisation. As already discussed, the SIDS have been in favour of securitisation from the outset, likely because they are willing to mobilise international action at any cost in order to address what is to them a truly existential threat. As pointed out by Dröge (2020), however, the motive of the SIDS in elevating climate change to the Security Council brings with it potential contradictions. If security is viewed in its traditional sense as being concerned with the potential for violent conflict and destabilised governance, there is little evidence to show that rising sea levels as a result of climate change have implications for security, despite clearly being an existential threat. At the very least, one would need to justify this action through a human security-centred approach, which the Council has indeed applied numerous times since the concept was launched by UNDP in 1994. Regardless, with other and

more powerful developing states after 2011 demonstrating support for securitisation, the issue has gained more traction in the Security Council in recent years.

Results of securitisation

Ultimately, the success of a security speech act should be measured by its outcomes. As viewed by the Copenhagen School, “If by means of an argument about the priority and urgency of an existential threat the securitizing actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by, we are witnessing a case of securitization” (Buzan et al. 1998: 25). In the context of the Security Council, the outcome of a speech act may largely be determined by whether resolutions on the issue are passed, and if so, to what extent. While Security Council resolutions are generally not considered primary sources of international law, they are usually legally binding and largely determine how international peace and security efforts are framed, including by stipulating when and how different actors are able to act in addressing particular issues. As such, by establishing and expanding the mandates of security actors, resolutions allow them to “break free” of the procedures or rules that they had previously been bound by.

Analysis of these resolutions can provide a largely objective assessment of securitisation, though it should be admitted that resolutions do not automatically indicate that an issue has broken through the realm of politicisation into full securitisation. This is because many Security Council resolutions, although binding, must undergo relatively frequent renegotiation and renewal, such as the resolutions stipulating UN mission mandates, meaning that they are still up for political debate. Thus, it may be said that judgements of securitisation derived from analysis of resolutions are slightly limited. Nonetheless, they are perhaps the clearest indication of successful securitisation in the context of multilateral peace and security policy.

Between 2017 and September 2020, the Security Council has discussed the security implications of climate change 13 times in a variety of fora, including five Arria-formula meetings, four formal open debates, two briefings as well as for the official launch of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security by Germany and Nauru in August 2018 and its first meeting in September 2018 on the margins of the UN General Assembly (Dröge 2020: 12; climate-security-expert-network.org). Most recently, on 17 September 2020, Niger held a ministerial-level open debate in the Council on the impact of environmental degradation on peace and security, focusing on the Sahel. The most significant step toward the securitisation of climate change occurred on 31 March 2017 with the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017) on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin (S/RES/2349 (2017)). Despite the security implications of climate change having been a topic of debate over the preceding 10 years, this was the first time that the Council inserted language into a resolution and thus established for itself a mandate to address the issue. The language reads as follows:

26. *Recognises* the adverse effects of climate change and ecological changes among other factors on the stability of the Region, including through water scarcity, drought, desertification, land degradation, and food insecurity, and *emphasises* the need for

adequate risk assessments and risk management strategies by governments and the United Nations relating to these factors.

(S/RES/2349 (2017))

Although this will be covered in the next section, it is important here to briefly revisit Buzan et al.'s (1998) suggestion that security debates in the environmental sector are usually characterised by the presence of a scientific agenda. As can be seen here and in all subsequent resolutions passed by the Security Council that address climate-related security risks, there is a distinct emphasis on the need to accumulate further empirical data through “adequate risk assessments and risk management strategies”. While the wording is relatively vague, it provides a clear mandate to the Security Council’s subsidiary entities to first and foremost gather knowledge to establish potential points of entry in addressing climate-related security risks. Since then, similar language related to the security implications of climate change has been included in several other resolutions and presidential statements. A notable observation in this resolution is that it assumes a level of certainty in the existence of climate-related security risks. This is in contrast to the Security Council’s first presidential statement on climate change in 2011, which only referred to its “possible” security implications. Furthermore, the 2011 presidential statement mainly referred to the implications of sea-level-rise, while this resolution includes reference to a greater variety of security risks. We will see that the relevant language has become slightly stronger and more directed toward the operations of specific UN field missions, indicating that although it is still a contentious topic in the Security Council, it is gaining more traction, largely due to the increasing scientific evidence and political consensus that points toward climate change as posing an existential threat. Thus, with language on climate-related security risks being codified in Security Council resolutions, it can be concluded that the Council has indeed contributed to the securitisation of climate change.

Assessing the contribution of the Security Council to securitisation

In the interest of bringing this issue back to the research questions, it is important to assess the implications of climate change passing into the language of these resolutions based on securitisation theory. First, it should be clarified that the Copenhagen School is more concerned with the process of securitisation, or the “speech act”, rather than the actual outcome. Recalling the words of Ole Wæver (1995: 55), “securitisation is not of interest as a sign that refers to something real; the utterance itself is the act. By saying it, something is done.” Such an assertion is pertinent for securitisation in the context of the Security Council, as the Council acts largely as a forum for debate, and the more an issue is discussed, the more likely it is to lead to tangible outcomes, as we are currently seeing in relation to climate-related security risks. In this sense, one could argue that the Council is already contributing to the securitisation of climate change simply by talking about it more frequently and reaching consensus more frequently.

Furthermore, the success of the speech act according to the Copenhagen School should be measured by the presence of three facilitating conditions: (1) it must be consistent with conventionally accepted language of security; (2) it must be delivered by an actor in a position

of authority; and (3) the securitising objects are preferably framed as constituting an existential threat (Buzan et al. 1998: 33). First, it is evident from the small sample of excerpts discussed earlier that the speech acts of those in support of securitisation have been consistent with conventional security language, as must be expected in such a forum. The second facilitating condition is slightly more difficult to assess. As a decision-making body, the Security Council is certainly the world's most powerful actor in shaping multilateral peace and security agendas. When looking at the structure and membership of the Council, however, the "position of authority" varies. Given the undemocratic nature of the Council, the P5 clearly hold more power in decision-making, and so their speech acts could expectedly be more successful; though, as has been demonstrated, their greater authority still does not ensure the success of the speech act. The third facilitating condition is largely upheld by securitising actors. As shown, strong language portraying climate change as an existential threat has often been adopted as a strategy to draw interest and agreement.

A caveat in assessing this third factor, however, is that the language used often does not frame climate change as an existential threat to all of humanity; instead, it sometimes refers only to those regions most vulnerable to its effects. As such, this third facilitating condition may not be consistently upheld. Furthermore, the second and third facilitating conditions are hampered by the side effect of politicisation. As suggested by Buzan et al. (1998), securitising moves in the environmental sector have a tendency to counterproductively result in politicisation. While this assertion was made based on their assessment of the environmental sector over 20 years ago, it is still largely true in relation to the securitisation process of climate change today. Politicisation, defined by Buzan et al. (1998: 23-24) as "meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations" is a dominating characteristic in the Security Council, particularly for emerging issues. Consequently, the wisdom of the Council addressing climate-related security risks out of a desire for the issue to be further prioritised is certainly up for debate. There are two political obstacles for the securitisation of climate change in the Council. Firstly, the disagreement and general lack of interest among the P5 members – apart from the UK and the US before the Trump administration came to power – inhibits any progress in overcoming political barriers. Secondly, the lack of receptiveness among non-permanent members as a result of their lack of decision-making power in the Council has been equally challenging. Historically, however, with its influence and ability to draw attention, emerging issues previously addressed by the Security Council have reached the forefront of international debate, if not action. This would be an advantage particularly in contrast with the General Assembly and the UNFCCC, which, as a result of being so comprehensive, is potentially incapable of giving so much attention to an issue as particular as climate-related security risks.

Apart from increased attention, Dröge (2020) also identifies the potential advantage of the Security Council being able to utilise its expertise, resources and reach in conflict-affected regions whose situations are likely to be exacerbated as a result of climate change, potentially complementing the work already being done by other UN entities. It will be up to policymakers to determine whether the "always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security"

will be outweighed by the “possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization” (Buzan et al. 1998: 29).

Finally, largely related to the previous point, is the Copenhagen School’s view that securitisation debates in the environmental sector are generally characterised by both a political and a scientific agenda. As has been discussed throughout this section, debates over the securitisation of climate change have indeed been dominated by science-based justifications for both action and inaction. Science is slowly moving in the direction of a general consensus on the existence of climate-related security risks; however, debate on the issue is still intense, largely as a result of the complex causal chain between climate change and conflict, or, in other words, the need to portray climate change as an indirect “risk multiplier”, rather than a direct risk in itself. Consequently, scientific progress will be essential for the successful securitisation of climate change. In the absence of incontrovertible empirical data, debate in the Security Council has nonetheless contributed to the securitisation process. This can be clearly seen by the fact that the Council has adopted several resolutions which include language on addressing climate-related security risks.

Although the vague and brief language used up to now indicates only limited progress, it has established a precedent for the Security Council to engage with the issue on a greater scale. Due to Germany’s consistent dedication during its 2019-20 term on the Council, and Kenya and Norway’s commitment to following this example during their upcoming 2021-22 terms, the issue is unlikely to fade. Furthermore, depending on the outcome of the US election in November 2020, the securitisation of climate change may soon regain its most powerful ally. The implications of increased securitisation in the Security Council on the work of UN entities, as well as their role in contributing to the scientific agenda, will be discussed in the next section.

Securitisation and UN entities

Before the Security Council established for itself a mandate to address climate-related security risks, climate change had been dealt with by UN entities whose main objectives are related to the UN’s development pillar. This pillar consists of a complex array of decision-making bodies such as the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the UNFCCC, and entities such as UNDP, UNEP, and many others. As a starting point, this section will first provide a brief overview of how environmental security has been dealt with in the past, as well as how various entities are involved in the process currently. This will establish the validity of the Copenhagen School’s assumption that securitisation debates in the environmental sector are characterised by the presence of many different actors, which will be analysed in terms of its advantages and potential disadvantages for securitisation of climate change.

Subsequently, there will be an analysis of the work agendas of UNDP and UNEP specifically. As part of this analysis, it will be determined whether these entities have been impacted by securitisation moves in the Security Council. This will be done by looking at their existing mechanisms and expertise, which will later lead into a discussion on how new cooperative mechanisms are also impacting their work agendas. Also, an assessment will be made as to whether UNDP and UNEP – through expanded mandates in addressing climate-

related security risks – are contributing to the scientific agenda of debates in the Security Council. This will be linked to the idea espoused by the Copenhagen School that securitisation in the environmental sector is dominated by both a political and a scientific agenda (Buzan et al. 1998: 71). With the previous section having highlighted that science is certainly a central factor in debates over climate-related security risks in the Security Council and beyond, it will be determined whether these entities have a scientific role to play in contributing to the securitisation process.

Since the Security Council adopted its first resolution with language that includes a need to address climate-related security in April 2017, the entities of the UN peace and security pillar have correspondingly taken up this mandate. The peace and security pillar consists primarily of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Peace Operations (DPO), together referred to as DPPA-DPO. While climate-related security is primarily dealt with under DPPA, there is increased interest in establishing entry points for DPO as well. An analysis of DPPA-DPO will demonstrate the impact of the securitisation of climate change on the mandates and work of UN entities. Furthermore, there will be an exploration of the various ways in which DPPA-DPO is not only a product of securitisation but is also contributing to it.

Finally, this section will explore how an increased dedication to UN partnerships is helping to address the advantages and disadvantages of the multiplicity of actors we currently see dealing with climate-related security risks in the UN system. Specifically, there will be an analysis of the work of the Climate Security Mechanism – a partnership initiative established in October 2018 by UNDP, UNEP, and DPPA – which is dedicated to facilitating collaboration between UN entities and potentially the development of a UN system-wide climate security agenda.

Past limitations of environmental securitisation

The UN Security Council presents an effective example of how the advantages of the need to weigh the disadvantages of securitisation “against the possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization” (Buzan et al. 1998: 29). On the one hand, it certainly does draw more international attention to particular issues; but, on the other, it is a highly politicised and largely undemocratic organ which means that agreements are often difficult to reach and may require harsh compromises. Despite these challenges, however, one could argue that the attention of the Security Council does indeed contribute to securitisation. Consequently, it is useful to assess how securitisation is affected when debates on particular issues do not reach the floors of the Council. Such an example can be found in the limited progress of debates over environmental security in UN fora prior to the Council’s first debate on the potential implications of climate change on security in 2007.

Environmental concerns emerged on the fringes of international security studies in the 1980s, towards the end of the Cold War, when researchers began challenging the narrow military and state dimensions of international security. As stated by Buzan and Hansen (2009: 12), environmental and economic security were two of the earliest issues which emerged as a direct challenge to traditional notions of security. As environmental concerns grew throughout

the 1980s and 1990s, questions increasingly arose as to their potential implications for international security. These questions, however, were largely dismissed. Regarding the issue of environmental degradation, some argued that rather than causing conflict, it in fact provided opportunities for cooperation (Hauge and Ellingsen 2001), while an abundance of resources is more likely to create tension (Berdal and Malone 2000). A key consideration here, which is in contrast with more recent research, is that environmental security was not discussed specifically in the context of climate change. Galtung's structural violence theory, for example, was not directly concerned with harming the environment, but rather with the impacts of exploiting the natural resources of third world countries (Buzan and Hansen 2009: 128-129). It was generally argued that environmental concerns had a low probability of leading to wars or conflicts that posed a significant threat to state security (Deudney 1990).

As previously discussed, the lack of a concrete scientific consensus still today inhibits efforts toward securitisation. Despite this lack of consensus, the UN played a key role in drawing attention to environmental security concerns from the 1980s onward (Buzan and Hansen 2009: 129). As an example, UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) – another specialised agency of the UN – were together largely responsible for identifying CFCs as posing a threat to both human health and the ozone layer (Litfin 1994: 73-75). This led to the signing of the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, and later, once NASA captured images of the depleting ozone layer, the 1987 Montreal Protocol, which former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan once described as “perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date” (Trombetta 2010: 144). While this example is not exactly security-related, it does clearly demonstrate the role that science plays in overcoming political disagreement in the face of a potentially existential environmental threat.

A key turning point for environmental security was the publication of UNDP's 1994 Human Development Report, which introduced the emerging concept of human security to the world. According to the report, human security is “concerned with how people live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to market and social opportunities – and whether they live in conflict or in peace” (UNDP 1994: 23). Human security shifted debates from traditional notions of the state as the referent object in security studies toward people, allowing for a radical widening of international security to encompass new types of threats. The human security approach has withstood significant criticism from both academic and political circles. As Paris (2001: 93) states, “if human security means almost anything, then it effectively means nothing.” Despite these criticisms, however, the concept has endured to this day as a justifying argument for securitisation through the Security Council. As briefly demonstrated here, as well as being impacted by securitisation, UN entities are also capable of shaping securitisation debates. This idea will be explored further throughout this section.

While securitising moves over environmental issues in the UN system have in the past only had limited success, they effectively laid the foundations for the securitisation process that climate change is currently undergoing. In light of the securitisation of climate change that we are currently seeing through debates and resolutions of the Security Council, it could be argued

that an inhibiting factor in previous environmental securitisation efforts is that they did not reach the agenda of the Council.

Overview of the UN system

The Copenhagen School suggests that securitisation debates in the environmental sector are generally characterised by the presence of multiple securitising actors. This is in contrast to the School's general conception that "security is articulated only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites" (Wæver 1995: 57). Buzan et al. (1998: 71) suggest that the UN is one such institutional voice. Here it will be argued that, while the UN certainly could be characterised as "elite" and "institutional", its contributions to securitisation are not entirely articulated from one place. While the Copenhagen School intends for its characterisation of multiple securitising actors in environmental debates to mean actors across the spectrum of government, academia and civil society, it will be argued here that the UN itself is characterised by multiple actors working toward the securitisation of climate change – not only, as previously demonstrated, by its composition as a product of its Member States, but also the many decision-making bodies and entities of which it consists. This discussion will briefly provide some background as to how and by whom climate change and climate-related security risks are currently being dealt with in the UN system.

As stated by Buzan et al. (1998: 71), "It is as yet undetermined what kinds of political structures environmental concerns will generate." This lack of a political structure is identified by the Copenhagen School as the key reason that the environmental sector and other emerging sectors are characterised by multiple securitising actors. The book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, on which the Copenhagen School is largely based, was published over 20 years ago. In the meantime, stronger institutional structures related to environmental concerns have been developed which more clearly define the mandates and objectives of different actors; however, given that the linkages between climate change and security have been largely excluded from these institutional structures, the emerging field of climate-related security is certainly still characterised by a multiplicity of actors.

While academia and the general public often identify the United Nations as a single relatively cohesive actor, the UN system in fact consists of several principal decision-making organs and many dozens of funds and programmes, research institutes, specialised agencies and other related organisations. Over 40 of these entities are involved either directly or indirectly in addressing climate issues and some, more specifically, the links between climate change and security (Dröge 2020: 25-26). Three of these entities provide information on climate change to the Security Council, and have emerged, or are emerging, as leaders in addressing climate-related security risks. These are the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), all of which will be discussed in more detail shortly. As well as the over 40 entities, these issues are dealt with by four of the five currently functional principal organs of the UN, as well as other affiliated decision-making bodies. These four organs are the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Security Council and the UN Secretariat.

UNEP and UNDP

While debate over the implications of climate change on security is relatively new, certain entities have in fact been indirectly dealing with the issue since well before it reached the Security Council. UNEP and UNDP are two of the leading entities working to address climate-related security risks based on their strong expertise in dealing with climate change and humanitarian crises. As such, this discussion will explore how the work of UNEP and UNDP contributes to the securitisation of climate change, largely through their expansive research capacity. There will also be an examination of how their work has been and may in future be impacted by securitisation through the Security Council.

UNEP is the entity primarily responsible for coordinating the UN's environmental activities and, more broadly, shaping the global environmental agenda. It categorises its work into seven thematic areas, one of which is climate change, and another being disasters and conflict. UNEP addresses both these areas through empirical research and support to developing countries and communities. Given its expertise in both these areas, UNEP has in recent years engaged with climate-related security risks, working to expand shared knowledge in the area.

Currently, it is developing an Environmental and Climate Stress Index which will “help to integrate environmental and climate stress into horizon-scanning and early-warning mechanisms, as well as conflict prevention, risk reduction, and resilience-building measures” (open.unep.org 2020). UNEP also conducts extensive regionally focused research, with one of many examples being a comprehensive report titled “Livelihood Security: Climate Change, Migration and Conflict in the Sahel”, which assessed climatic change trends over the past 40 years and identified linkages to conflict risks such as competition over natural resources and food insecurity (UNEP 2011). Furthermore, UNEP specialises in post-conflict recovery, supporting countries to build resilience and strengthen environmental management. Between 2008 and 2016, UNEP's Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding Programme, which brought together key UN entities involved in peace and security efforts, resulted in 12 countries being provided direct field technical assistance to address conflict risks and identify peacebuilding opportunities related to natural resources and the environment (UNEP 2016).

Although brief, this overview demonstrates that UNEP contributes valuable knowledge and expertise to the scientific agenda that is central to the securitisation of climate change. It is likely that UNEP's work has contributed somewhat to the securitisation of climate change in the Security Council, especially since it has contributed to Council debates on the issue. During the previously analysed Security Council debate in 2011, UNEP's Executive Director, Achim Steiner, offered a cautious yet persuasive statement suggesting that science is beginning to identify the extent of the linkages between climate change and conflict. He ended his statement as follows:

If we take into account food insecurity, natural disasters and the potential for conflict and tensions over ever more scarce resources, together with displacement and the potential disappearance of entire nation States from our world map ... within a timespan of 50 to 100 years, we have to recognise that climate change is an issue that needs to be viewed not

just from a scientific and technological perspective of managing carbon emissions, but truly from a geopolitical and security perspective. Our response will either unite us in cooperative action or divide us and lead us into chaos, tension and potential conflict.

(S/PV.6587 2011: 6)

Relating to Buzan et al.'s (1998) assessment of the unique characteristics of securitisation debates in the environmental sector, this statement clearly identifies the presence of both a political and a scientific agenda; even more so, it demonstrates that these two agendas are inherently linked, in that any political progress will depend on greater scientific understanding. Thus, it can be stated that UNEP has both impacted the securitisation of climate change through its commitment to this scientific agenda – or, in the words of Buzan et al. (1998: 72), “the authoritative assessment of threat.” Viewed through the Copenhagen School’s three suggested facilitating conditions, based on this statement, it could be assumed that UNEP is certainly attempting to apply a security lens. It uses conventional security language such as “chaos, tension and potential conflict” and also portrays climate change as an existential threat. Furthermore, a key contrast of this statement in comparison to speech acts analysed earlier is that it frames climate change as an existential threat for all of humanity rather than just for those currently most affected by it. This is arguably a central reason as to why the presence of a scientific agenda is so crucial for successful securitisation – it tends to look beyond the short-sightedness of political debate, concerning itself largely with the very long-term implications of inaction.

Inversely, the role that securitisation moves in the Security Council have played in shifting the work agendas of UNEP is more difficult to quantify at this time. While resolutions adopted by the Council have wide-ranging implications for many actors, they do not – at least so directly – impact the mandates of UN entities such as UNEP and UNDP which come under the purview of other decision-making organs. Some potential indicators of securitisation may be identified, however. First, it seems clear that UNEP’s engagement with climate-related security risks is expanding. This is in line with Buzan et al.’s (1998: 29) assessment that securitisation possesses “the possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization.” Moreover, as will be discussed in more detail later, UNEP is in the process of aligning its work with more security-oriented entities such as DPPA-DPO through the establishment and expansion of new cooperative mechanisms.

UNDP’s overall mandate is to coordinate the development activities of the UN, and it is currently tasked with overseeing and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNDP works across a broad range of issues, which has allowed it to develop valuable expertise in addressing climate-related security risks. Similar to UNEP, the linkages between climate change and security emerged to some extent on the agenda of UNDP well before the Security Council adopted its first resolution related to the matter in 2017. One might in fact argue that it was UNDP which initially enabled the framing of climate change as a security threat by introducing the concept of human security to the UN system in its landmark 1994 Human Development Report. This opened the door for a radical widening of what could be considered a security issue. UNDP,

along with UNEP, has endorsed the validity of applying a human security approach toward assessing the nexus between climate change and conflict (Mason 2014: 808).

One of several areas in which UNDP has addressed climate-related security risks is through the development of climate adaptation strategies. For example, from 2008 to 2010, UNDP funded a climate adaptation programme in collaboration with the Palestinian Authority related to food and water insecurity. The objective was to assess the vulnerability of communities in Gaza and the West Bank by identifying risk conditions and responsive capacities taking into account current and projected climate variability (Mason 2014: 817). More recently, in 2018, UNDP implemented the Community Security and Stabilization Project (C2SP) in Sudan which, inter alia, aims to address emerging risks as a result of climate-related issues such as deforestation and soil degradation. The programme aims to build climate resilience through training and local campaigns to raise awareness and encourage replanting of trees and sustainable agricultural practices (UNDP Sudan 2020). A related area in which UNDP works is disaster risk reduction (DRR), whereby communities are adequately warned of climate-related disaster risks and encouraged to pre-emptively adapt their homes and livelihoods to these potential risks. An example is UNDP's partnership with the Dominican Republic in developing a vulnerability index for climate shocks to measure the vulnerability of households to hurricanes, storms, and other phenomena (S/PV.8451 2019: 5).

In its climate change adaptation and DRR efforts, UNDP has generally taken a human security and development-oriented approach. This can be seen throughout UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner's statement to the January 2019 Security Council open debate on climate and security: "Taken alone, climate-related disasters, conflict and insecurity each threaten human security and development ... But their convergence can lead to catastrophic impacts on people and societies" (S/PV.8451 2019: 4). Through such a human security approach, both UNDP and UNEP have in the past remained mostly dedicated to a technical and scientific focus in order to address climate-related security risks. As Mason (2014) suggests, this scientific focus can have both positive and negative consequences for securitisation. Recalling Buzan et al.'s (1998) assertion that securitisation debates in the environmental sector are characterised by both a political and a scientific agenda, we can thus see that UNDP and UNEP contribute to securitisation more so through this scientific agenda. As stated by Buzan et al. (1998: 72), the scientific agenda "is about the authoritative assessment of threat" and so is largely apolitical. Mason (2014: 821) points out that the apolitical stance taken by UNDP and UNEP generally increases their likelihood of successfully negotiating access to climate and conflict-vulnerable areas. By avoiding political disputes between conflicting parties, UNDP and UNEP are able to more effectively address some of the security risks associated with climate change. This was also evident in the earlier discussion on the 2011 Security Council debate on climate and security, which likely was able to result in a presidential statement by focusing on less politically sensitive climate-related security risks such as sea level rise and food insecurity. This, however, comes at the expense of being unable to properly address other more politically sensitive risks which may require confronting conflicting parties who are either affected by or exploiting climate vulnerability.

It is difficult at this point to quantify the effect of climate securitisation debates in the Security Council on the work agendas of UNDP and UNEP. This is because both entities, among others, were already working to address climate-related security risks when the Security Council was only just slowly beginning to debate the issue. This, however, has been largely done through a human security and development lens. With the establishment of new mechanisms to be discussed later, the work agendas of these entities will likely in future be more heavily affected as a result of closer collaboration with the UN's peace and security pillar. Inversely, it could be concluded that, through their climate change adaptation, DRR, risk assessment, and other related efforts, UNDP and UNEP are contributing to securitisation moves by building on the scientific agenda of Security Council debates. It is yet to be determined whether this increased encroachment of the scientific agenda on the "high politics" of the Security Council will actually have a positive impact on how effectively the UN is able to address climate-related security risks.

The peace and security pillar

Among the UN entities explored in this thesis, it is certainly the peace and security pillar – consisting of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Peace Operations (DPO)¹ – whose work is most directly and significantly impacted by securitisation moves in the Security Council. While UNEP and UNDP have at least to some extent dealt with the linkages between climate change and security for over a decade, DPPA-DPO is new to the game. DPPA-DPO has taken on this mandate as a result of the Security Council's adoption since 2017 of resolutions with language on climate-related security risks. As the operational pillar of the Security Council, DPPA-DPO is responsible for implementing resolutions dealing with the mandates of field missions, known as special political missions (SPM), which are overseen by DPPA, and peacekeeping operations (PKO), which are overseen by DPO². This means that the specific language of resolutions is directly tied to the functions of DPPA-DPO. This discussion will firstly examine how the language used in Security Council resolutions and presidential statements has directly impacted the prioritisation of climate-related security within DPPA-DPO's work agendas. As will be demonstrated, there is a correlation between the strength of the language used in these resolutions and the establishment and expansion of mechanisms to address the issue. Secondly, there will be an attempt to suggest ways in which this new focus of DPPA-DPO may contribute to securitisation debates in the Security Council by serving a scientific agenda. Consequently, DPPA began its mandate for addressing climate-related security risks in 2018.

Since the Security Council adopted Resolution 2349 relating to stability in the Lake Chad Basin region and included language on climate-related security, it has similarly done so

¹ Based on the reform of the peace and security pillar implemented in January 2019, DPPA is the successor entity to what was formerly the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), and also now includes the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), while DPO was formerly the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

² Since the reform of the peace and security pillar, the work of DPPA and DPO has become far more integrated, including at Headquarters and in the field; however, SPMs and PKOs still fall under the oversight of DPPA and DPO respectively. The acronym "DPPA-DPO" refers to this semi-shared structure and will be used interchangeably with the term "peace and security pillar" in this thesis.

with several more resolutions, including in relation to the African Union (S/RES/2457 (2019)) and the mandate extensions of MINUSMA in Mali (S/RES/2423 (2018)), UNSOM in Somalia (S/RES/2408 (2018)), and UNAMID in Darfur (S/RES/2429 (2018)), with language also included in subsequent mandate extensions. Furthermore, perhaps most significantly, the Security Council on 3 June 2020 adopted Resolution 2524 (2020) which established the new SPM known as the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), marking the first time that language on climate-related security was included in the founding document of a SPM or PKO. As the language used in each of these resolutions is largely similar or identical to that which was used in Resolution 2349, it would instead be useful to examine the progression in securitisation by the strength of language used in the 2018 and 2019 presidential statements related to the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). The presidential statement delivered on 10 August 2018 reads as follows:

The Security Council recognizes the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters among other factors on the stability of West Africa and the Sahel region, including through drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity, continues to stress the need for long-term strategies by governments and the United Nations, based on risk assessments, to support stabilization and build resilience, and further requests that such information be taken into consideration by UNOWAS in its activities.

(S/PRST/2018/16 2018: 4)

Although the language in the corresponding paragraph in the presidential statement delivered on 7 August 2019 is similar, there is a notable variation at the end of the paragraph: "... encourages UNOWAS to continue to integrate this information in its activities" (S/PRST/2019/7 2019: 4). Identical wording was then again used in the presidential statement delivered in July 2020 (S/PRST/2020/7 2020: 3). In terms of the facilitating conditions of a successful speech act as according to the Copenhagen School, these examples are not overly useful. While they do portray climate change through a security lens, the language used is not overly strong in its framing of climate change as an existential threat. The purpose of examining these examples, however, is to demonstrate that the Security Council's current approach toward the securitisation of climate change relies on a scientific agenda. By referring to risk assessments, the Council is instructing UNOWAS to gather information on the various security-related risks that climate change poses. Compared to the language of the 2018 presidential statement which requests that UNOWAS take this information into consideration, the 2019 presidential statement more emphatically requests that this information be integrated into its activities. Moreover, recalling the first presidential statement that the Council released on the issue in 2011, one can see a definite progression in the perception of climate change as a risk to security. While in 2011 the Council referred to the "possible adverse effects of climate change" (S/PRST/2011/15 2011: 1), this resolution directly "recognizes the adverse effects of climate change" (S/PRST/2018/16 2018: 4).

Having established that the securitisation of climate change in the Security Council does have an impact on the work of DPPA-DPO through its general focus on the issue as well

as language referring directly to the mandates of SPMs and PKOs in resolutions and presidential statements, it is now necessary to examine exactly what this impact looks like. First, however, it should be pointed out that the adoption of resolutions did not mark the absolute beginning of DPPA-DPO's involvement in addressing climate-related security risks. In 2016, for example, UNSOM collaborated with the Somali government and other UN entities to address the potential occurrence of another drought-related famine expected in 2016 or 2017 (Eklöw and Krampe 2019: 33). This and many other examples demonstrate that the peace and security pillar had been engaging somewhat with the issue already; although, this was done only to the extent of short-term preventive measures in anticipation of clear warning signs. A key progression in DPPA-DPO's current engagement is the emphasis on more proactive long-term prevention, in line with Security Council resolutions and presidential statements which, as in the statement previously examined, refer to "long-term strategies ... based on risk assessments" (S/PRST/2018/16 2018: 4). Furthermore, there is a concerted effort to improve and expand collaborative mechanisms to better address these challenges. Before discussing this, it is useful to examine how the work of DPPA-DPO itself is adapting to the securitisation of climate change.

Of the two entities of the peace and security pillar (DPPA and DPO), DPPA has more substantially taken on the mandate of addressing climate-related security risks. For the first time, DPPA identified climate change as a priority in its Strategic Plan for 2020-22. Mentioned several times throughout the document, the introduction states that "climate change poses an increasing danger to peace. The effects of climate change and environmental degradation can compound other conflict drivers or even become security risks in their own right" (DPPA 2020: 11). This supports the UN's general position of climate change acting as a threat multiplier, and also goes even further to suggest that it may in fact pose a direct threat to peace and security. This indicates that DPPA is committed to framing climate change through a security lens, thus representing a further securitisation move. Furthermore, in its 2020-2024 Strategy document, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) – which falls under DPPA – indicated the need to deal with conflict drivers exacerbated by climate change as one of its key investment priorities (PBF 2020: 7). The PBF is the UN's primary financial instrument to sustain peace, and invests in programmes administered by UN entities, governments, civil society organisations, and other relevant actors.

A particular advantage of DPPA-DPO in addressing climate-related security risks is that its missions are already present in many of the countries and regions most affected by both climate change and conflict. On 24 July 2020, at the Security Council ministerial-level open debate on climate and security, Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Europe, Central Asia and the Americas Miroslav Jenča, representing DPPA, stated: "It is no coincidence that 7 of the 10 countries most vulnerable and least prepared to deal with climate change host a peacekeeping operation or special political mission." DPPA Under-Secretary-General (USG) Rosemary DiCarlo, in her intervention at the Security Council Arria-formula meeting on climate and security risks on 22 April 2020, provided an overview of how the peace and security pillar is working to address climate-related security risks in the field. For example, UNOWAS is leading the UN's efforts to pursue peaceful resolutions to growing tension and

conflict between farmers and pastoralists in the region by collaborating with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to establish good practices for conflict prevention which account for climate trends (DiCarlo 2020). Furthermore, while DPO has not been a central party to discussions at Headquarters on addressing climate-related security risks, options for new points of entry are being explored. For example, DPO could encourage climate resilience by better integrating understanding of climate and conflict dynamics into its quick impact projects, which are small-scale, low-cost, and implemented in a short timeframe (Nagarajan 2020: 23).

While efforts to combat climate-related security risks are quite new to DPPA-DPO, mechanisms to combat climate change itself have been in place for slightly longer. Although not achieving substantial outcomes, an Environment Policy was established in 2009 for field missions. In January 2017, the UN Department of Field Support³ (DFS) implemented its Environment Strategy, which aims for SPMs and PKOs to “achieve maximum efficiency in their use of natural resources” by June 2023 (DFS 2017). In its Strategic Plan 2020-2024, DPPA announced the development of an Intended Climate Action Contribution, which would seek to reduce the carbon emissions at Headquarters and in the field, by moving the Department away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy (DPPA 2020). Admittedly, this is not the focus of this thesis; however, teaching mission personnel best practices in sustainable environmental management, such as ensuring that materials used in operations are ethically sourced, may help to mitigate climate-related security risks. As stated by Maertens (2019: 321), “the environmentalization of security helps to securitize the environment.”

As discussed, the securitisation of climate in the Security Council has had a definite impact on the work of DPPA-DPO. This can be initially seen through the resolutions and presidential statements adopted by the Council which outline general concerns about the adverse effects of climate change on international peace and security, as well as stipulations for SPMs and PKOs to directly address this issue in their work. Through a brief examination of the impact of these securitisation moves, it can be seen that DPPA-DPO is currently in the process of significantly shifting its priorities in order to adequately address the growing attention given to climate-related security risks in the Security Council. While DPPA-DPO – like UNDP and UNEP – does not have any decision-making authority in the Council, it does have an impact on securitisation debates as a result of its contributions to the scientific agenda through mandated risk assessments, development of early warning mechanisms, and other activities.

The Climate Security Mechanism

Finally, in order to examine how securitisation has impacted the work agendas of UN entities, and, inversely, how their work agendas impact securitisation, it is important to discuss the growing role of new partnership mechanisms between the UN entities previously discussed. Recalling Buzan et al.’s (1998) assessment that securitisation debates in the environmental

³ Since the reform of the peace and security pillar, DFS was succeeded by the Department of Operational Support (DOS).

sector are peculiarly characterised by multiple actors, it has been demonstrated throughout this thesis that this observation holds true in relation to the amount of decision-making organs and entities involved in addressing climate-related security risks throughout the UN system. The advantage of such a multiplicity of actors is that different expertise and resources may be utilised to effectively address the issue. This, however, may come with the potential disadvantage of a lack of coherence and consistency. Consequently, UN entities have identified the need for the development of a comprehensive UN system-wide agenda to address climate-related security risks.

The emerging central mechanism in the UN for addressing climate-related security risks is the Climate Security Mechanism (CSM). Hosted by DPPA and established jointly by DPPA, UNDP and UNEP in October 2018 in response to the aforementioned Security Council resolutions, the objective of the CSM is to coordinate and strengthen the UN's capacity to address the linkages between climate change, peace and security. The CSM draws on a community of over 20 different UN entities to exchange knowledge and explore opportunities for collaboration. Furthermore, it engages with think tanks, academic institutions and regional organisations in order to integrate a global evidence base into its agenda (DPPA 2020: 29). Through this comprehensive collaborative effort, the CSM intends to design effective early warning, risk prevention and management strategies, as well as advocate for the importance of addressing climate-related security risks (undp.org). As a starting point, the CSM has developed a "toolbox" for all practitioners containing a briefing note on climate security, a conceptual approach to risk assessment, a list of data sources, and a climate risk checklist for political analysis (dppa.un.org).

While the effectiveness of the CSM in addressing climate-related security risks cannot yet be determined, it appears to be a significant step toward utilising the advantages and addressing the challenges of a multiplicity of actors. It represents a new cooperative mechanism that may eventually lead to the formation of a UN system-wide climate security framework. This, however, will largely depend on continued interest in the topic among Member States in the Security Council. By utilising the expertise of DPPA, UNDP and UNEP – all of whom regularly report to the Security Council – the CSM may play a crucial role in developing an agenda that would more effectively define and institutionalise the issue of climate-related security risks in the UN system. As DPPA-DPO represents the UN's peace and security pillar, and UNDP and UNEP work under the development pillar, collaboration through the CSM will potentially draw these pillars closer together. Given that the development pillar has a largely technical focus, while the Security Council and DPPA-DPO engage more in the political arena, this would essentially result in the alignment of political and scientific agendas in securitisation debates. While this may be beneficial in creating a UN system-wide framework, it is uncertain whether it will be beneficial in helping vulnerable regions to prevent or adapt to climate-related security risks

Assessing the roles of UN entities

This section has attempted to provide a general overview of how the securitisation of climate change has impacted the work agendas of UN entities, and also how these entities may

contribute to securitisation moves in the Security Council by helping to drive the scientific agenda. As initially discussed, environmental security was an area of interest developed in the 1980s and has, since then, endured vigorous scholarly debate and institutionalisation. A key limitation of the securitisation of environmental concerns in the UN system, however, is that the issue was not addressed by the Security Council – the most powerful decision-making organ of the UN which is responsible for setting the global peace and security agenda.

After introducing the large multiplicity of UN actors involved in addressing climate change and climate-related security risks, the section led into a discussion on three key entities – UNEP, UNDP and DPPA-DPO. It was established that UNEP and UNDP play an important role in the securitisation process, as they have developed substantial expertise in climate and conflict-related issues since well before the Security Council adopted its first resolution on the subject in 2017. While it is difficult at this point to determine how the securitisation of climate change has affected their work agendas, it is likely that their participation in the CSM will lead to a significant reshaping of their priorities.

The impact of securitisation is most evident in the shifting work agendas of DPPA-DPO. Constituting the UN's peace and security pillar, DPPA-DPO is responsible for implementing Security Council resolutions related to field missions. In response to multiple resolutions and presidential statements including language on climate-related security risks, DPPA in particular is working to prioritise this growing issue, and DPO is also likely to enter the fray. DPPA-DPO, largely through the CSM and its exposure to climate and conflict-affected settings, will likely further complement the scientific focus of UNDP and UNEP. At this stage, the impact of the securitisation of climate change on UN entities has been characterised by a recognition that more knowledge and scientific data is needed to properly assess and adapt to climate-related security risks. Given the current lack of consensus on how to deal with the issue, this seems like a logical first step.

Conclusion

This thesis attempted to answer three interrelated research questions: (1) how the UN Security Council has contributed to the securitisation of climate change; (2) the extent to which the securitisation of climate change in the Security Council has impacted the work agendas of key selected UN entities; and (3) the extent to which the scientific agendas of these UN entities have contributed to securitisation moves. This was done through a theoretical framework which applied key elements of the Copenhagen School theory of securitisation to the emerging issue of climate-related security risks.

The first question was answered through analyses of Security Council debates, presidential statements and resolutions over the course of the period between 2007 – when the issue of climate and security was first debated in the Council – and 2020. The findings indicated that the language used in these documents for the most part does represent a gradual tendency toward securitisation in the Security Council, in that climate change has been increasingly portrayed as an existential threat in a manner that is consistent with the conventionally accepted grammar of security debates. This has led to an increased desire among Member States to

address the issue; however, the politicised nature of the Security Council has proved challenging.

It was found that securitisation moves have an impact on the work agendas of UNDP, UNEP, and DPPA-DPO, although to varying extents. Considering the fact that UNDP and UNEP had been working to address climate-related security risks at a time when the Security Council was only beginning to debate the issue, the impact of these debates on their work agendas is more limited, although potentially still significant in two ways. First, increased attention in the Security Council is likely to result in increased prioritisation all across the UN system. For this, the already established expertise and capacities of UNDP and UNEP in addressing climate-related security risks will prove useful. Second, as their work is characterised by the human security approach of the UN's development pillar, increased alignment of work with the Security Council and peace and security pillar may result in a significant reframing of how the issue will be approached. The impact of the Security Council's securitisation moves on DPPA-DPO is more easily quantifiable, as its mandates are directly set by the Council's resolutions. Just as the Security Council has begun to insert language on climate-related security risks into its resolutions, DPPA-DPO is correspondingly building its capacities to address the issue, largely through the Climate Security Mechanism established along with UNDP and UNEP.

Finally, it was found that the work of UNDP, UNEP and DPPA-DPO likely does have some impact on securitisation moves in the Security Council. As discussed in relation to the first research question, debates surrounding climate change in the Security Council have been characterised not only by political debate but also a consistent focus on the need for better scientific understanding in order to address the issue. This aligns with the Copenhagen School's assumption that environmental securitisation debates involve both a political and a scientific agenda. Consequently, UN entities such as UNDP, UNEP and DPPA-DPO are well positioned to drive this scientific agenda in coordination with other international, regional and local actors across the public and private sectors, as well as civil society. New instruments such as the Climate Security Mechanism will help to facilitate this.

Moving forward, the findings of this thesis have highlighted potential priority areas for UN entities and avenues for future research in order to better understand the linkages between climate change and security, and the role of the UN system in addressing these. First, progress cannot be made without sustained interest in the Security Council. What we have seen thus far only represents a small step toward the issue of climate change fitting comfortably into the high politics realm of the Council. While certain Member States have shown a strong commitment to the issue, meaningful progress will likely not be made without an equal commitment among the permanent members of the Council. Considering this, future research could focus on the potential roles and capacities of different Member States in addressing climate-related security risks.

Second, overcoming the political barriers that hold back a securitised framing of climate change will largely depend on an improved scientific understanding of its linkages to international peace and security. In light of this, the Security Council, through its debates, presidential statements, and resolutions, has rightly demanded that this scientific understanding

be developed. While this may be interpreted as inaction by some, it is a logical and necessary priority in order for subsequent action to have maximum positive impact. UN entities such as UNDP, UNEP and DPPA-DPO have committed to taking on this scientific endeavour based on their expansive expertise on climate and conflict-related issues. Such an enormous task, however, will require the development of a body of research that stretches far beyond the capacities of UN entities and the think tanks with which they collaborate. Realistically, uncovering the complexities of the scientific causal chain that connects climate change with security risks must be prioritised before any meaningful progress may be made in actually preventing or minimising these risks.

Third, it will be necessary for the UN to develop a coherent, system-wide agenda to tackle the issue by encouraging collaboration among UN entities to maximise their resources and comparative advantages. The Climate Security Mechanism may be an effective tool in achieving this; though, at this stage, still only two years old and with few staff and resources, its success will require a greater funding commitment from Member States. Considering this, future research could delve more deeply into the capacities of different UN entities and the new instruments through which they are collaborating on the issue.

Keeping in mind the warnings of the Copenhagen School regarding the problematic side effects of securitisation, there is indeed a risk that a growing mandate for the Security Council in addressing climate-related security risks could raise political barriers. Nonetheless, there is reason to be cautiously optimistic that increased prioritisation among Security Council members and UN entities will lead to meaningful progress. Although there is much still to understand, this emerging issue is deserving of our attention. As the phenomenon of climate change becomes ever more visible, developing a better understanding of its implications for international peace and security may be imperative in order to save lives and maintain stability.

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