

PEACE-BUILDING APPROACHES TO
THE TWIN CHALLENGE OF
CLIMATE CHANGE AND ARMED CONFLICT

The Dialogue Imperative By Way of Introduction

*(Conducted at different levels:
international, regional, national,
local, bringing together different
stakeholders, sectors,
disciplines.)*

- Waging Peace '07: *People's Participation*
- December '07 Dialogue with the GRP
(Negotiating Panel and Congress):
*Right to a Healthful Environment and
Governance*
- April '08 Dialogue with the NDF in Utrecht
on Climate Change and Conflict:
Revolutionary Critique and Alternative Paths

International Alert.



A CLIMATE OF CONFLICT

The links between climate change, peace and war

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Understanding conflict. Building peace.

Relevant Insights from Recent
EU Report on Climate Change,
by Javier Solana and Benita Ferrero-Waldner,
EU's top two foreign policy officials, March '08

- “Climate change impacts will fuel the politics of resentment between those most responsible for climate change and those most affected by it...and drive political tension nationally and internationally.”

- “Climate change is best viewed as a threat multiplier which exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability...Core challenge is that it threatens to overburden states and regions which are already fragile and conflict prone.”

Forms of Conflict Likely to be Driven by Climate Change

- Fuel existing conflicts over depleting resources; intensifying conflicts over energy sources;
- Coastal zones (where 20% of world's population live) threatened by rising sea levels and natural disasters;

- Vicious circle of degradation, migration, and conflicts over territory and borders causing instability;
- In failing states, frustration can breed ethnic and religious strife and political radicalisation;

Climate Change Impact Relevant to Conflict Realities from Alert Study/Lessons Learnt

Hardest hit are people made vulnerable

- in situations of poverty/inequality that disempower;
- in underdeveloped and unstable states; many of them already affected by conflict and instability; with *strategic deficits* in responsive governance and inclusive political economies;
- hindering their capacity to adapt and their ability to handle renewed conflicts;

- *Critical Elements of Risk, Compounding C3 Challenge:*
 - food (rice) and water, and energy insecurity,
 - economic fragility,
 - political instability,
 - large-scale migration leading to intensification of conflict;

- *Countries at Risk:*

- high risk (46 countries with 2.7 billion people); including the Philippines, Indonesia and Burma.
- potential risk (56 countries with 1.2 billion people); including Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Timor-Leste

THE DOUBLE-HEADED RISK

The consequences of consequences of climate change include a high risk of armed conflict in 46 countries with a total population of 2.7 billion people, and a high risk of political instability in a further 56 countries with a total population of 1.2 billion.

Map key:

- A: States facing a high risk of armed conflict as a knock-on consequence of climate change
- B: States facing a high risk of political instability as a knock-on consequence of climate change
- C: Other states

Technical note

The IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report of 2007 shows that global warming will have global effects, varying in both kind and degree.

Research for this report identified 102 countries^A as being at risk of significant negative knock-on socio-political effects, using three criteria for selection:

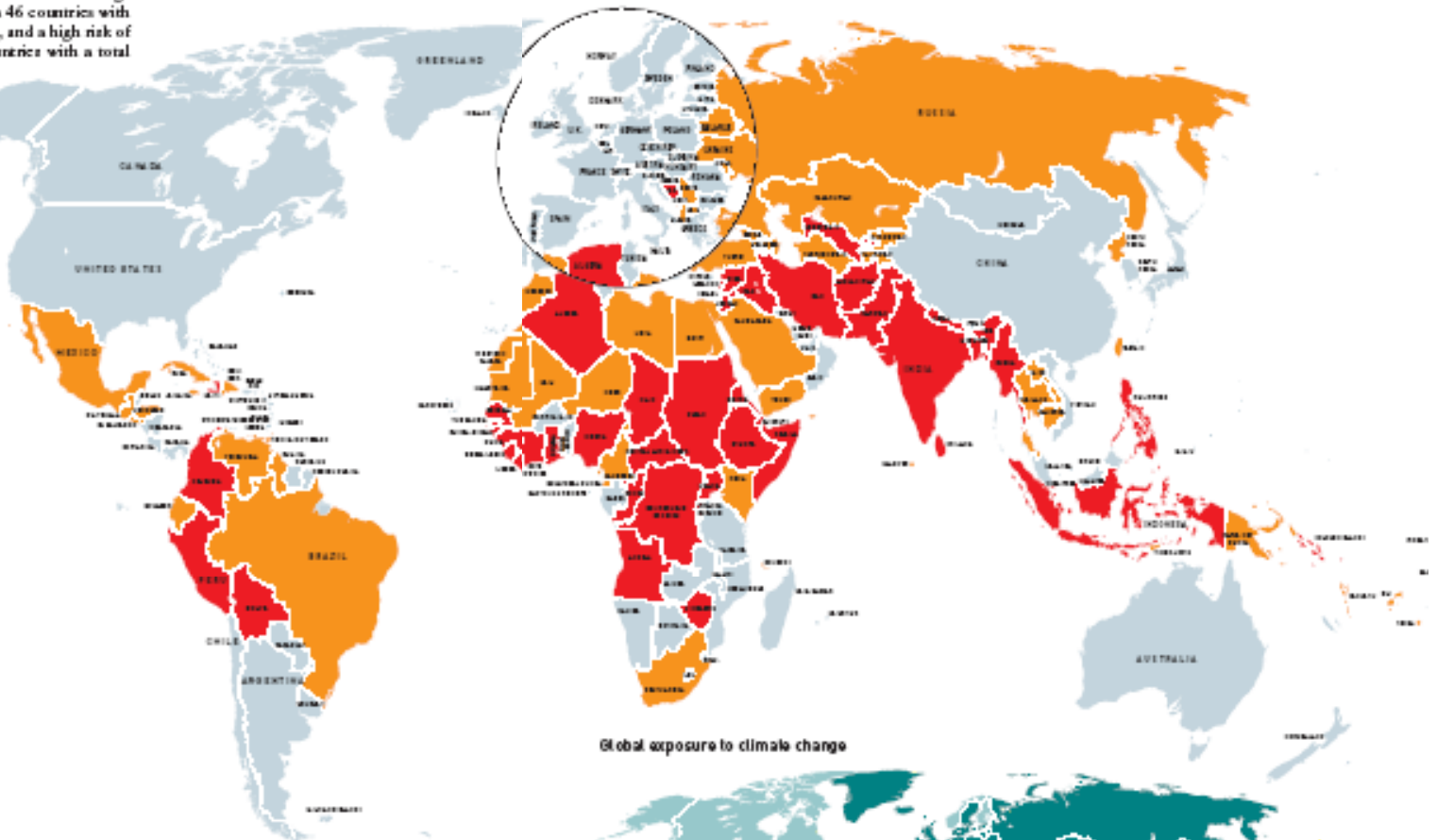
1. Their presence on a variety of international watch lists: the UN Department for International Development's 'priority list' of Fragile States, the Global Peace Index ranking of 121 states (bottom 10 positions), the International Crisis Group 'crisiswatch' list, the World Bank's list of Low Income Countries Under Stress;
2. The presence of an operational UN peacekeeping force;
3. The prospect of, or their engagement in, economic or political transition (e.g., from autocracy towards democracy or leadership succession).

Within this group of 102, 46 countries were identified as facing a high risk of armed conflict. Primarily these are countries with current or recent experience of armed conflict, because this is a reliable indicator of propensity to further violence. In addition, particularly weak institutions of government and very poor economic performance were used as guides to the selection.

The larger map does not make predictions but indicates risk. It should be borne in mind that armed conflict may widely vary in its levels of lethality and in whether it occurs at a local, national or regional level.

The smaller map shows countries' exposure to climate change, based on the A1 scenario (approximately 'business as usual') used by the IPCC.

^AA full listing of these countries can be found at the end of the references on page 44.



Global exposure to climate change



Map key:

- Serious-extreme
- Moderate-significant

Source: *A Climate of Conflict*, pp. 18-19

*Unified Solution to Twin Challenge:
Adaptation to Climate Change
Requires Peace-building Approaches
that Help Create Resilient Societies
(C3 Initiative)*

Convergence of Conflict Experiences/Climate Change Impacts leading to recognition of interplay of three factors which undermine peace processes and efforts to adapt:

- *Policies: flawed*
- *Institutions: inadequate*
- *Actors: weak.*

Requiring Responses that are Appropriate:

- *Knowledge-Based: hard science and local knowledge*
- *People-Centred: inclusive approaches to catalyze resilient communities*
- *Conflict-Sensitive: consultative methods and respectful of diverse perspectives and roles.*

*Nature of Response
(Transforming Adaptation from
Purely Policy Prescriptive
to Consultative-led;
from Top Down to
Community-based)*

- *Context-Specific* (cluster of factors which give rise to violent situations are different in diverse situations, countries or regions)
- *Networks of Dialogue/Social Engagement*
- *Demands from Government: accountability, transparency, responsibility*

- *Contributions from Civil Society*: identifying concerns, possible initiatives, human resources and potential for sustaining efforts
- *Visioning Resilient Societies* (where adaptation becomes part of peace processes; where healing the environment takes into account redressing historical injustices)

*Towards Possible
Next Steps
Requiring Your
Collective/Individual
Involvement*

- *Dialogue Process*: led by local organisations/institutions including environmental, peace-building and relevant groups/sectors; able to deal with appropriate government agencies and inter-governmental institutions/international bodies, conducive to the creation of an enabling environment;
- *Series of Workshops/Gatherings*: to catalyze separate and inter-dependent tracks (for example, a proposed international workshop for August '08);

- *Research/Publication: undertaking required research into identified themes and areas to deepen/disseminate understanding of C3 linkage, underscoring common purpose/stewardship*
- *Shared/Updated Analysis: to encourage crafting of Strategies/Plans of Action and Priorities*
- *Ways of Collaboration: promoting more effective ways of working together to create synergy and sustainability in the work to build more peaceful and resilient societies.*

By way of conclusion:
An Appeal to Save Lake Lanao!
Priority Biodiverse Lake and
Opportunity for Peace-building in
Mindanao.

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