

Climate Change and National Security

American Security Project

Briefing Note

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Andrew Holland

Top Line:

Last night, a number of Senators talked throughout the night about climate change.

The American Security Project, as a national security-focused think tank, believes that concern about climate change should be a non-partisan issue. While we know that the argument about solutions will be partisan, both sides should start with a common understanding that climate change poses real threats to national security.

Climate change is a national security threat that America's military, and militaries around the world are taking seriously.

We know that the world's armed forces have not suddenly determined that they want to save the environment – they foresee that climate change will harm their country's national security. Our political leaders need to work on solutions, not argue about the existence of a clear threat.

Find out more: www.NationalSecurityandClimateChange.org

Following, you will find ***Five Key Points about Climate Security*** along with links to ASP reports, papers, and articles to support them. These points demonstrate the risks of climate change to the U.S. homeland and to American interests around the world.



CLIMATE SECURITY

ASP's Five Key Points about Climate Security

- 1) **The effects of climate change pose clear threats to U.S. Homeland Security:** America's infrastructure, food production, and American lives are at risk.

ASP Resources:

- i) [Climate Security Report: Climate Change & the Homeland](#)
- ii) [Protecting the Homeland – The Rising Costs of Inaction on Climate Change](#)
- iii) [Climate Change's Threats to the United States – Lessons from the Netherlands](#)
- iv) [Pay Now, Pay Later: A State-by-State Assessment of the Costs of Climate Change](#)

- 2) **Globally**, how climate change interacts with society will determine the extent of security threats and the need for military involvement. Global threats include: **migration, conflict over scarce resources, reduced food production, water insecurity, and others.**

ASP Resources:

- i) [Climate Security Report: Climate Change & Global Security](#)
- ii) [Climate Change, The Arab Spring and Food Prices](#)
- iii) [The Global Security Defense Index on Climate Change](#)

- 3) Climate change alone will not cause war, but it serves as an “**accelerant of instability**” or a “**Threat Multiplier**” that makes already existing threats worse.

ASP Resources:

- i) [National Security, Climate, and the Philippine Typhoon](#)
- ii) [Global Warming Makes Solving the 21st Century's Problems Much Harder](#)
- iii) [Bay of Bengal – A Hotspot for Climate Insecurity](#)
- iv) [Climate Change: The Missing Link in Tackling the Mali Crisis](#)
- v) [A Clear and Present Danger: The Security Council and Climate Change](#)

4) **The science is definitive enough for action.** The military is good at **Risk Management:** in battle, you cannot wait until you have 100% certainty before acting.

ASP Resources:

- i) [IPCC Report Shows Climate Change Risk is Real and Urgent](#)
- ii) [Linking Climate Change and Conflict – New Report Stirs Old Debate](#)

5) **The U.S. Military is preparing for Climate Change** by working with allies, studying potential threats, ensuring resilience to extreme weather, and preparing to deploy when needed. Militaries around the world are likewise preparing for the threats of climate change: over 70% of the countries in the world have identified climate change as a security threat, according to ASP's Global Security Defense Index on Climate Change

ASP Resources:

- i) [The Global Security Defense Index on Climate Change: Preliminary Results](#)
- ii) [QDR – The National Security Challenge of Climate Change](#)
- iii) [The Arctic – Five Critical Security Challenges](#)

Key Experts:



[Andrew Holland](#), Senior Fellow for Energy and Climate

[@theandyholland](#)



[BGen Stephen A. Cheney USMC \(Ret\)](#)

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Outside Resources

US Government (Defense and Intelligence)

[2014 Quadrennial Defense Review](#), U.S. Department of Defense

[Department of Defense FY 2012 Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap](#): Department of Defense

[The National Military Strategy of the United States of America: Redefining America's Military Leadership](#): Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

[National Intelligence Council Report: "Natural Resources in 2020, 2030, and 2040: Implications for the United States."](#)

[National Intelligence Council: The Impact of Climate Change to 2030. Commissioned Research and Conference Reports](#)

[National Intelligence Assessment \(NIA\) on the National Security Implications of Climate Change to 2030](#)

Allied Governments

[Organization for Security Co-operation in Europe \(OSCE\): Program Details, "Security Implications of Climate Change" \(2014\)](#)

[Australian Government: Strong and Secure – A Strategy for Australia's National Security](#)

[UK Strategic Defense and Security Review: Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty](#)

Scientific Documents

[Climate Change Evidence & Causes](#), An overview from the Royal Society and the US National Academy of Sciences

[Abrupt Impacts of Climate Change: Anticipating Surprises](#), US National Academy of Sciences

[IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, The Physical Science Basis](#)

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Senator Hart served the State of Colorado in the U.S. Senate and was a member of the Committee on Armed Services during his tenure.



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Admiral Fallon has led U.S. and Allied forces and played a leadership role in military and diplomatic matters at the highest levels of the U.S. government.



Norman R. Augustine

Mr. Augustine was Chairman and Principal Officer of the American Red Cross for nine years and Chairman of the Council of the National Academy of Engineering.



Raj Fernando

Raj Fernando is CEO and founder of Chopper Trading, a technology based trading firm headquartered in Chicago.



The Hon. Donald Beyer

The Hon. Donald Beyer is the former United States Ambassador to to Switzerland and Liechtenstein, as well as a former Lieutenant Governor and President of the Senate of Virginia.



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John Castellaw is President of the Crockett Policy Institute (CPI), a non-partisan policy and research organization headquartered in Tennessee.



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Brigadier General Cheney is the Chief Executive Officer of ASP.



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General Lyles retired from the United States Air Force after a distinguished 35 year career. He is presently Chairman of USAA, a member of the Defense Science Board, and a member of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board.



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Robert B. Crowe

Robert B. Crowe is a Partner of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough in its Boston and Washington, DC offices. He is co-chair of the firm's Government Relations practice.



Stuart Piltch

Stuart Piltch is the Co-Founder and Managing Director of Cambridge Advisory Group, an actuarial and benefits consulting firm based in Philadelphia.



Lee Cullum

Lee Cullum, at one time a commentator on the PBS NewsHour and "All Things Considered" on NPR, currently contributes to the Dallas Morning News and hosts "CEO."



Ed Reilly

Edward Reilly is CEO of Americas of FD International Limited, a leading global communications consultancy that is part of FTI Consulting, Inc.



Nelson W. Cunningham

Nelson Cunningham is President of McLarty Associates.



Governor Christine Todd Whitman

Christine Todd Whitman is the President of the Whitman Strategy Group, a consulting firm that specializes in energy and environmental issues.

The American Security Project (ASP) is a nonpartisan organization created to educate the American public and the world about the changing nature of national security in the 21st Century.

Gone are the days when a nation's security could be measured by bombers and battleships. Security in this new era requires harnessing all of America's strengths: the force of our diplomacy; the might of our military; the vigor and competitiveness of our economy; and the power of our ideals.

We believe that America must lead in the pursuit of our common goals and shared security. We must confront international challenges with our partners and with all the tools at our disposal and address emerging problems before they become security crises. And to do this we must forge a bipartisan consensus here at home.

ASP brings together prominent American business leaders, former members of Congress, retired military flag officers, and prominent former government officials. ASP conducts research on a broad range of issues and engages and empowers the American public by taking its findings directly to them via events, traditional & new media, meetings, and publications.

We live in a time when the threats to our security are as complex and diverse as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, energy challenges, and our economic wellbeing. Partisan bickering and age old solutions simply won't solve our problems. America – and the world - needs an honest dialogue about security that is as robust as it is realistic.

ASP exists to promote that dialogue, to forge that consensus, and to spur constructive action so that America meets the challenges to its security while seizing the opportunities that abound.



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www.americansecurityproject.org