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**STRUGGLE FOR SECURITY:**  
A Discourse Theoretical approach to the construction of security against  
climate change in the United Nations Security Council

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### Tiivistelmä:

Climate change is increasingly being viewed through the lens of security, with expectations that climate impacts will foment instability and conflicts. This thesis investigates how climate change is interpreted as a security problem in the United Nations Security Council, and whether and how the attempts to define climate change as a security issue are challenging and transforming existing security logics. In international relations, the security agenda is traditionally associated with exceptionalism and logic of war, which are feared to spread in non-traditional sectors through 'securitization' of non-traditional security issues such as the environment. The thesis suggests that the securitization of climate change does not only carry a risk of expanding the military logic into the environmental sphere, but also inholds a possibility of a change in security logic itself. Climate security demands a global stance on security policies, which must be based on comprehensive peace building that acknowledges the diversifying needs of societies. Climate change is seen to bring about increase in global instability that is an outcome of both social and environmental disruption resulting from changing climate. Drawing on poststructuralist and discourse theoretical framework the thesis explores the meaning and function of climate security in the process of re-articulation of the security sphere within the United Nations Security Council. Climate change is conceived as a multiplier, root cause and existential threat, which must be secured against through continuous and global process of adaptation that reduces the negative impacts, and works as a precautionary measure.

Avainsanat: Climate security, poststructuralism, Discourse Theory, climate change, Critical Security Studies, United Nations Security Council

### Muita tietoja:

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(vain Lappia koskevat)

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## Abbreviations

COP	Conference of the Parties
ESOCO	United Nations Economic and Social Council
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

## Introduction

“We, the human species, are confronting a planetary emergency – a threat to the survival of our civilization that is gathering ominous and destructive potential even as we gather here. But there is hopeful news as well: we have the ability to solve this crisis and avoid the worst – though not all – of its consequences, if we act boldly, decisively and quickly.” (Al Gore 2007.)

The same year the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and former US Vice president Al Gore for their efforts in obtaining and disseminating information on climate change, the United Nation Security Council held its first formal meeting on climate change. There were clear signs, not only of the growing public and political attention to climate change in general, but to its security implications (Rothe 2016, 17; Scott 2012, 221). Even as the security considerations of environmental change have roots at least to 1970's (Barnett 2001, 3), the considerations of climate change as a security problem on its own terms, is relatively recent (see e.g. Rothe 2016; Trombetta 2008). Since the 2007, when the first meeting on security implications of climate change was held in the United Nations Security Council, the number of international actors framing climate change as a security issue has increased. In 2007, European Commission presented 'Energy and Climate package' that highlighted the energy security impacts of climate change, and adopted the "climate change and international security" process later in 2009 (Trombetta 2008, 398; Rothe 2016, 135). In 2015 the United States Department of Defense released a report entitled the "National Security Implications of Climate-Related Risks and a Changing Climate" (US Department of Defense 2015).

To the agenda of the United Nations Security Council climate change rose again in 2011, with hopes that the Council would bring urgency and political momentum to the matter after world leaders achieving only unambitious climate agreements (Cousins 2013, 196–195). Even as the Security Council's debates did not result a resolution, it is becoming clear that climate change cannot be ignored in security policies. Climate change is estimated to have worldwide effects, not just on environment, but on economy and energy security, provoking large scale human suffering and onset of conflicts (Stern 2009). The acknowledgement of social systems dependency of stable climate, is giving rise to a discourse of climate security (Trombetta 2008, 594).

This thesis examines the construction of a climate security discourse within the United Nations Security Council, and analyses how climate change is conceived as an international security threat. Even more so, the thesis seeks to investigate how the security framing of climate change challenges the traditional military understanding of security. I argue that the more security is conceived in military terms, the more threatening climate change gets. If the social changes caused by climate change are approached through traditional military based understanding of security, the accelerating pace of changes project quite a hopeless view. For this reason, it is important to study the possibilities of changes in the traditional understanding of security.

This thesis approaches security as discursive practice rather than as a value or a state to be achieved, as it is conceived in traditional realist security studies. Building on poststructuralist and post-Marxist theory that has roots in French philosophy, the thesis presents an understanding of what is the security climate change is threatening, and how this understanding is challenging the traditional definition of security. The thesis suggests that climate security is emptied of any particular content and encompasses a chain of multiple demands and meanings that have been brought into an equivalential relation. Climate security is presented as a common good of humanity, demanding change in security thinking. In the contemporary world that is defined as more interdependent, complex and dangerous than ever before, the traditional security establishment is seen insufficient. Changes in the environmental and social structures have brought new demands and articulations to the discourse(s) of security that emphasizes global perspective and multitudinous risks faced by populations.

As a global security governance structure the United Nations Security Council forms an interesting object to study the understanding of security in international politics. It may not be the first forum to reveal the discursive changes, but as highly institutionalized, it offers an important one. During the last couple decades, the Security Council has been under increased demand for reform that would update the Council to better reflect the changed security realities. Global character of non-traditional security threats, such as climate change, that have become increasingly significant in maintaining international peace and security, are seen contradictory with the Security Council exclusive character.

## Research problem

Climate seems to be more politicized today than ever before. In 2000, an atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen suggested that humanity had entered into a new era of the Anthropocene, where the impact of human activity is having a critical effect on the earth's bio-physical system (Swyngedouw 2011, 253–254). Climate change represents one of the symptoms of this impact of human activity (IPCC 2014, 2). It is caused by greenhouse gas emissions that are largely by-products of economic development (*ibid.*, 4–5). Increasingly climate change is approached as a security problem in contemporary global politics. But no danger is an objective condition that exist independently of those who it is threatening (Campbell 1998, 1). Identifying a threat thus always comes with identifying those who are rendered secure. The ways in which climate change is conceptualized as a security problem are linked to the understandings of security (see e.g. Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero 2008). This thesis is an attempt to understand the ways in which the United Nations Security Council is interpreting climate change as a threat and constructing the meaning of security. Rather than defining security as an object of the world, this thesis conceives security through the lenses of critical security studies, as a politically and socially constructed phenomenon.

Over the past few decades critical security studies have occupied a prominent place in International Relations and security studies. Critical security is an umbrella term for many theories of security that are characterized with a fundamental critique of epistemology and ontology of traditional approaches. (Browning & McDonald 2011, 236.) Poststructuralist approach of security, can be conceived belonging to the critical security family (Mutimer 2010, 97). The poststructuralist approach opens up a possibility to study the process of change in the meaning of security. One well-known empirical work in poststructuralist security studies is written by David Campbell (1998), who explores how the identity of the United States is produced through discourses of danger. Campbell shows how the United States as a referent object and as an agent of security, is produced in its own practices.

By using post-Marxian hegemony theory, I will consider how the context of climate change challenges and transforms the meanings associated with security. What I am interested in, is the intratextual characteristics of a single source, namely that of the United Nations Security Council. This thesis is guided by a research question of:

*How is climate change constructed as a threat in the United Nations Security Council, and how does it affect the traditional understanding of security?*

The structure of the thesis includes six parts. It will start with a brief introduction of the context of the United Nations, before presenting the research material. It will then move on to introduce the theoretical framing of this thesis, which consist of three different parts. First part presents the discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, which works as a backbone of the thesis. The second part of the theoretical discussion will consider the methodological side of the theory, and present the use of the methodology within the thesis. Last part of the theory frame will situate the thesis into security studies. Since tracing the genealogical roots of the climate change and security discourse would have expanded the thesis over its purpose, the presented security framework will introduce the debates identified as central genealogical ancestors to the climate security discourse in previous studies (see e.g. Rothe 2016; Oels 2012; McDonald 2013; Trombetta 2008). After theoretical discussion the results of the analysis are presented. The analysis section will first discuss how new meanings of security are established, after which moving to investigate how a hegemonic struggle is taking place. At the end of the analysis section a presidential statement adopted in 2011, is separately discussed. I suggest that the presidential statement indicates the effectiveness of the hegemonic condensation that is taking place within the debates of the United Nations Security Council. The thesis will close with conclusion that argues that there is a minor shift occurring in security thinking from the international framing into a global one.

#### The United Nations

The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945 by signing of the United Nations Charter, which guides the principles and purposes for the work of the organization. The establishment rose around the Declaration of United Nations drafted in 1942 by the Allies of Second World War. Currently the United Nations is made up of 193 member states and facilitates several specialized agencies, funds and programmes. The main organs of the UN established in the Charter are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Trusteeship Council (inactive since 1994), the International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat. The main purpose of the organization is to promote cooperation and peace on a global scale. (The United Nations 2017a.)

The unique structure of the United Nations includes bodies led both by representatives of member states and staff representing the organization. The Secretary-General is a symbol of the United Nations and is described by the Charter as a chief administrative officer. The appointment of Secretary-General is done by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council (Article 97 of the Charter). Since the beginning of the year 2017 the post has been occupied by Portuguese António Guterres. The Secretary-General can bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter he/she sees as a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security (Article 99 of the Charter). The Secretary-General's Report *Climate change and its possible security implications* (A/64/350 2009) conducted by the former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has been enjoying considerable attention within the debates on climate change held in the Security Council. Climate change was called by Ban Ki-moon the world's greatest security threat, with the destructive potential of the Second World War (Rothe 2016, 135).

#### The United Nations and Climate Change

The United Nations has taken active role in addressing climate change. Some of the most notable efforts include the establishment of Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under which the yearly United Nations climate change conferences (COP) have been held since 1995. The COP meetings have resulted an adaptation of two notable agreements, the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and Paris Agreement in 2016. The Kyoto commitment period of emission reduction ended in 2012, which created pressure for a new binding agreement. In the Paris Agreement member states agreed to aim at keeping global temperature rise, during this century, well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels (UNFCCC 2017). The 2 degree rise is often recognized as a level after which the climate system, on which food production and other human activity is dependent, becomes *dangerously* disrupted (United Nations Foundation 2017).

The latest IPCC Assessment Report released in 2014 states that “[t]he precise levels of climate change sufficient to trigger abrupt and irreversible change remain uncertain, but the risk associated with crossing such thresholds increases with rising temperature”(IPCC 2014, 13). Climate change caused by anthropogenic emissions will, according to the report, further erode food security and cause new poverty traps and indirectly increase risks of violent conflicts

(IPCC 2014, 13–16). In 2009, the security implications of climate change were debated within General Assembly, which consist of all the member states of the UN. In this year's World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the Secretary-General addressed that “the best way to prevent crises and conflicts in today's world” is “the enhancement of a new generation of partnerships, partnerships not only with governments, not only with civil society and academia but equally partnerships with the business community in the context of the perspective of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change, creating the conditions for an inclusive and sustainable development” (the United Nations 2017b). In the Security Council climate change has been debated three times after the meeting in 2007. These debates will be introduced in the next section.

#### Research material

The research material is collected from the United Nations Official Document System that is publicly available on the United Nations website. The meeting records are selected by the theme, and conclude all the debates in which climate change forms the main or a major issue. This leaves out the meetings concerning of specific conflict situations where climate change is presented as a factor causing or exacerbating conflict. Concept notes, which are circulated before the meetings to present the agenda in concern, are included in the research material, together with a presidential statement that was adopted at the 6587<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 20 July 2011<sup>1</sup>.

Climate change is debated as the main or a major concern within four meetings. The first of which was held in 2007 under the heading *Energy, Security and Climate*. Next two meetings were held in 2011, of which first under the heading *Impact of climate change* and second *New challenges to international peace and security and conflict prevention*. The fourth meeting in 2015 concerned specifically *Peace and security challenges facing small island developing States*. Besides these meetings the UNSC has held two informal Arria Formula meetings about the security implications of climate change. These informal meetings are restricted from the

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<sup>1</sup> There were no presidential statements or resolutions adopted at the other meetings.

research material as there is no sufficient documentary or participatory list available of the meetings. The overall volume of research material contains 278 pages.

The meetings were participated by all 15 member states of the UNSC, and a great and diversifying number of other representatives, who attend the meeting either for informing the Council for specific matters, or to participate as a specially affected member of the United Nations by the issue in concern<sup>2</sup>. The Security Council consist of 15 member states, of which 10 are circulating in two years pace. In two of the meetings the circulating members were the same, but the debates were held under a different presidency. The presidency of the Council is held by each of the members in turn for one month, during which the member state is in the role of calling the meetings and approving the agendas taken into consideration (The United Nations 1983). The speeches of the representatives in all of the meetings were asked to be restricted to five minutes.

The first meeting in 2007 was held under the presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and was participated by 54 member states of the United Nations. The second meeting was called upon by Germany with composition of 64 representatives. This was the only meeting that resulted adaptation of a presidential statement. What needs to be taken into account, is that the other participants of the meetings beside the members of the Council, can only take part without a right to vote. The Council thus represents a highly exclusive organ of the United Nations. The third meeting held under the presidency of Portugal was the most limited by the number of participants and included only three invited representatives of states. The fourth meeting was participated by a great number of representatives, of which many small island states. The meeting was scheduled by presidency of New Zealand and invited 56 additional member states to take part in discussion.

As a non-inclusive and state-centered organ, the Security Council highly represents the international order prevailing at the time of establishment in 1945. There have been many attempts and pressure to reform the Council, but no significant achievements have been accomplished. Thus the Security Council offers a relevant platform for studying the potential transformation in the understanding of the meaning of security. The council is given the

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<sup>2</sup> Rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure gives right to any member of the United Nations to apply for a participation to debate without a vote. The rule 39 enables the Council to invite other participants it sees competent for the purpose in concern. (Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council 1983.)

primary responsibility in maintenance of international peace and security in the United Nations Charter and is the only organ of which resolutions are binding for all the members of the United Nations, which today is meaning almost all the states in the World<sup>3</sup>. Surely, the Council is not the only forum that can potentially reflect the changes in security thinking on a global scale, but as a highly institutionalized entity, it offers a meaningful one.

## Theoretical Framing

A starting point of this thesis is an understanding of all meanings being discursively constructed. What this means is that, the ways in which we understand climate change, what is included or excluded, what is understood as the causes and effects, or what action, if any, should be taken, are all discursively formed. Rather than climate change as an externally occurring event, it is the meanings and understandings given to it that are making the difference in the actions taken. For example, understanding climate change either as a natural phenomenon or as an outcome of human activity have different kind of effects on the actions that are seen as most convenient in tackling the issue. What this also means, is that security has no universal essence, but only discursively formed meanings that are more or less institutionalized. In following section I will introduce the theoretical and methodological toolbox of this thesis, which builds strongly on the poststructuralist and post-Marxist discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe.

### Discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe

The theory of Laclau and Mouffe is best known from their ground-breaking work published in 1985, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. The aim of the authors was to overcome the explanatory impasse they saw had reached the classical Marxian theorization. The inability of classical Marxism to explain the new social movements and transformations made the authors reject the essentialism they saw as the main problem in classical Marxism. Instead of taking Marxian notions such as 'class' and 'base' for granted, Laclau and Mouffe wanted to see how

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<sup>3</sup> Non-member states recognized by the UN are the State of Palestine and Vatican City (the United Nations website).

the meaning of these notions were established and maintained, and to “revive the preconditions which make their discursive operation possible” (Laclau & Mouffe 1985/2001, viii). Critically drawing on structuralist, poststructuralist and Marxist writers, such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser and especially on Antonio Gramsci, the authors extended discourse theory to cover all social practice and phenomena. Through deconstruction and strict scrutinizing of works of various Marxian theorists, whom themselves had also engaged in overcoming the impasse of which the intellectual tradition had found itself, the authors were able to reveal the plurality of Marxian thinking and the primacy of politics in the social world.

For Laclau and Mouffe, it was not the transcendental class subject, but radical contingency of meaning that offered the explanation for the new social movements, such as new forms of feminism, anti-institutional ecology struggles and protests of sexual minorities on the capitalist periphery, and constituted a new ontological understanding of the social (Laclau & Mouffe 2001). Social, in the theory of Laclau and Mouffe, is a purely discursive space structured by partial fixations of meaning. Any social phenomena is never fully completed or total, but under a constant threat of rearticulation. As a result there is constant social struggle over the definitions of society and identity. For the authors, and against the central idea of classical Marxism, universality can only exist in the form of hegemony, that is, as a political construction where particularity is transformed into the representation of a universality (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 119, 125–127; Laclau 2014, 6).

I will next go bit more in detail with the ontological assumptions, theoretical concepts and methodological precepts prevailing within the discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, and in works inspired by their theory. As it is the poststructuralist critique of structuralist linguistics and critics of classical Marxism that play the constitutive role in the theory of Laclau and Mouffe, I will start by introducing the poststructuralist understanding of discourse as advocated within the theory, and by briefly going through the critics of classical Marxist central for the theory.

### Poststructuralist discourse

[I]n language there are only differences without positive terms (Saussure 1960, 120).

From a poststructuralist perspective discourses are not reducible to the realm of language, but are understood as a relational complex of signifying sequences where language and pragmatic aspect of action have been temporarily woven together to form a totality, namely that of the discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 93; Rothe 2016, 50–51). This means that not only semantic aspects of language but pragmatic aspects of action, by impacting to the relational structures of meaning, constitute the world we are living. Discourse is the primary terrain of the constitution of any objectivity, not in terms of that there is no world external to thought, but in the sense that no meaning pre-exist the relational complex (Laclau 2005, 68; Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 94–95).

This all-encompassing understanding of discourse stem from the linguistic structuralism of Ferninand de Saussure. In his structuralist theory of language Saussure argued that meaning comes into being from the possibility of linguistic signs to be determined by a mutual but *negative relationship*. What this means is, that the object's meaning is not determined by any external factor, but is an outcome of the relationship in a linguistic structure where the sign's meaning comes into being from its difference of other sings, such as 'a dog' not being 'a cat' or 'a mouse' (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 9–10; Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 99). Language is "a closed system of elements and rules that could be described quite independently from the psychological subjectivity of any particular user of that language" (Radford & Radford 2005, 61). According to Saussure, this structure is synchronic, and consist of a combination of two elements, those of signifiers and signified. Signifier refers to the material aspect of a sign and signified to the concept or idea associated with the signifier. These two elements are connected arbitrarily in the frames of prevailing cultural context. (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 10–11.) Put differently, the image of an object we have of any particular sing is an outcome of what social convention has taught us. For Saussure the relationship between signifier and signified, once established, becomes fixed and thus enables collective and common understanding and use of concepts. This is the main point of poststructuralist critic, as for poststructuralists there is not just one general system of meaning, but the meaning can change when moved from one discourse to the other (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 12). Poststructuralists reject the distinction between the two levels of language, *langue* and *parole*, as suggested by Saussure. For Saussure *langue* is the structure of language consisted by the fixed relations of signs and *parole* representing the situated language that can be vitiated by

peoples mistakes (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 10–12; Torfing 1999, 87). For poststructuralists it is exactly the concrete language use and social practices where the structure is created, reproduced and transformed.

What was defined by Saussure as a mistake of a speaker, represents the crucial feature of radical contingency of meaning for poststructuralists. There is no exhaustive, fully constituted context, nor can the performative action to be reduced to the intentions of an articulator, but the meaning must be understood as a pattern of repeated articulations (Rothe 2016, 55–56; Howarth 2000, 39–40). In other words, it is the repetition that forms the meaning.

What follows is, that for poststructuralists there clearly are structures, but these structures are not necessary (in the particular way) or fixed. The signs still acquire their meaning by being relational and different from each other, but how the signs differ can vary depending on the context in which they are used (e.g. Burr 2015, 63; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 10–11; Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 99–100.) Like it is greatly elucidated by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002, 11) with an example of the sign ‘work’:

[T]he word ‘work’ can, in certain situations, be the opposite of ‘leisure’ whereas, in other contexts, its opposite is ‘passivity’ (as in ‘work in the garden’). It does not follow that words are open to all meanings – that would make language and communication impossible – but it does have the consequence that words cannot be fixed with one or more definitive meaning(s).

The absence of transcendental signified and the impossibility of ultimate fixation necessitates a partial fixation resulting that “[a]ny discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a center” (ibid., 98–99). Like it is stated by Laclau and Mouffe (2001, 98) “in order to differ, to subvert meaning, there has to be *a* meaning”.

In the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe these partial fixations of meanings are called ‘nodal points’. (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 91–100.) Nodal points are the created centers that determines the structure of every discourse, and which in the face of absent transcendental signifier, prevents the authors from falling from the problems of foundationalism to the problems of anti-foundationalism. As centers of any particular discourse, it is around these privileged signs that all the other signs acquire their meaning and creates the structure of a discourse. (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 98–100) Like ‘a body’ in medical discourse or ‘democracy’ in political discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 26).

## The primacy of political

The radical contingency of meanings and discourse as the primary terrain of the constitution of objectivity as such, implies that the political has a primacy over the social (Marchart 2007, 151; Laclau 2014, 7). This is because as a temporal totality discourse is always an outcome of exclusions i.e. political struggles. Like it is explained by Laclau (2005/2007, 69–70):

[T]o grasp that totality conceptually, we have to grasp its limits – that is to say, we have to differentiate it from something *other* than itself. This other, however, can only be another difference, and since we are dealing with totality that embraces all differences, this *other* difference – which provides the outside that allows us to constitute the totality – would be internal, not external, to the latter – that is to say, it would be unfit for totalizing job. So [...] the outside is not simply one more, neutral element but an *excluded* one, something that the totality expels from itself in order to constitute itself.

That is to say, that the identity of any given object is constituted through articulated exclusion of what it is not, as for example a society can reach its sense of cohesion by demonization of a section of the population (ibid., 70). It is the practice of articulation that establishes the relation among elements modifying their identity and forming the temporally structured totality of a discourse. But like it is emphasized in the theorization of one the most well-known poststructuralist, Michel Foucault, this articulation does not happen randomly as the subject of the articulation is itself an outcome of discursive practices (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 14). The subjectivity of an agent is “penetrated by the same precariousness and absence of suture apparent at any other point of the discursive totality of which it is part” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 108). The poststructuralist subject is always a *split subject* (Torfing 2005, 17), or in the terms of Foucault ‘*decentered*’ (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 14). The subject may attempt to reconstruct a full identity through the acts of identification, but as a discursive position, can never achieve a fully structured identity.

This understanding of a discourse as primary terrain of social, and of subject as a discursive subject position, have effects on the way poststructuralism approaches the notion of power (see e.g. Marchart 2007, 146–149). Unlike in conventional approaches to power where power is defined as a commodity or a possession of a subject, poststructuralism sees power as productive force behind the constitution of discourses, knowledge(s), bodies and subjectivities:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it does not only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault 1980, 119 cited in Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 13.)

Power works inherently in the field of meaning-making and manifests itself in the structures of discourses. It is around this fundamentally political character of all social systems Laclau and Mouffe evolves their political theory of discourse by introducing the concepts of social antagonism and hegemony.

### Critique of Classical Marxism

The book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* starts with a genealogy of the concept of *hegemony*. Genealogy as a method of study is perhaps best known through the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault. Genealogy builds on poststructuralist premises emphasizing and exposing power-knowledge relations. It focuses on the processes by which meanings are constructed and contested in by and for particular representations of the past, which in turn, are shaping and limiting our contemporary understanding (Devetak 2009, 185). So rather than giving their contribution to the reading of Karl Marx's *Capital*, the authors by following and radicalizing the idea of 'sedimentation' and 'reactivation' presented by Edmund Husserl, deconstructed the Marxist categories and revealed the contingent character of Marxian trait (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, viii–ix). It was the work of Antonio Gramsci that provided a needed arsenal of concept and theorization for Laclau and Mouffe to advance their own theory.

Departing from the classical Marxism's perceivance of ideology as a cloaking of reality, and imposing a false consciousness that covers up the reality of social life, enabling the exploitative social structures, Gramsci sees ideologies being *the* constructing factor behind class consciousness - or in the terms of Gramsci, behind 'collective wills'. For Gramsci, ideologies 'organise' human masses, and create the terrain on which people act and acquire the consciousness of their position and struggle. Ideologies, in terms of Gramsci, can be identified as "commonsensensical conceptions of the world, which are 'implicitly manifest in art, law, in economic activity, and in all manifestations of individual and collective life", that should not

be divorced from social practices as an imaginary mental representation (Howarth 2000, 89). This means that ideologies are bound to social practices, as at the same time social activity is in itself a product of ideology. In short, hegemony for Gramsci represents “the articulation of different forces by the working class, in which the proletariat transcends its corporate interests and represents the universal interests of ‘the people’ or ‘nation’” (Howarth & Stavrakakis 2000, 22). Hegemony is thus more of a general political logic to construct a new 'intellectual, cultural and moral leadership' and to establish a 'historical bloc', than just an instrumental political strategy of political leaders (ibid.). In the Gramsci's concept of hegemony the direction or identity of elements are not seen as dialectically determined like they were in previous versions of Marxism, but the all-exhaustive and essential class subjects are replaced with the idea of the identity of the class subjects being an outcome of various relations that do not themselves have a class character. (Laclau 1988, 252.) That is why Gramsci saw the project of society as a construction of an 'integral state' – which was the process of hegemony – instead of 'withering away' of the state as it was presented in the theory of Marx (Laclau 2014, 6).

It was this replacement of class-reductionist perspective with a dependency on hegemonic articulation what Laclau and Mouffe find most central in the theorization of Gramsci. This replacement opened up the possibility to approach *power* as purely relational and helped to explain the plurality of social struggles that had been problematic from the view point of classical Marxism (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 58-59). In the gramscian approach, people's consciousness gains a degree of autonomy as the power of the ruling class cannot be exhaustively explained by an economically determined ideology, but ideologies – as hegemonic articulations – are sites of meaning-making, and thus, the working class is able to rebel against and change the organization of a society. However, this dependency of hegemonic articulation in the work of Gramsci maintained the ultimate ontological foundation of a class structure, as it argued that there must always be a *single* unifying principle in every hegemonic formation – which can only be a fundamental class – even as the elements now had a merely relational identity (ibid., 59). This was because social struggle could only occur in the necessary structural framework of class character (ibid.).

To that end, Gramsci came close to poststructuralist stance seeing the construction of 'universal' as a political construction, but held on to the privileged position of economy as an

ultimate grounding structure as “the constitutive logic of the economic space is not itself hegemonic” but “a homogeneous space unified by necessary laws” (ibid., 59–60). In overcoming this essentialist character of hegemony, Laclau and Mouffe radicalized the Althusser’s notion of *overdetermination*. For Althusser, every social relation is overdetermined, which means that unlike in classical Marxism, social relations “lack an ultimate literality which would reduce them to necessary moments of an immanent law” and the social “constitutes itself as a symbolic order” (ibid., 84). In other words, society and social agents lack any essence, and form “relative and precarious forms of fixation” that are behind the establishment of a certain social order (ibid., 84). The identity of a social agent or any totality, is an outcome of diverse and contested interpellations or hailings, where ideology recruits us to act as its agents. For example, the social agent can be hailed (interpellated) as the member of family, of social class, of a nation and of a race, forming a complex ensemble of overdetermined (and symbolic) subject positions through which to act (Mouffe 1979, 171-172). As Althusser takes society, due to the process of *overdetermination*, to comprise a complex structured whole, Laclau and Mouffe abandoned the society as a sutured space, and argued that society only exist as an *attempt* to constitute a fixation. (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 83, 100).

Every social order, for Laclau and Mouffe, is the result of hegemony produced through political articulation. Articulation referring to any practice that establishes a relation among elements in such a way that their identity is modified. In order to speak of hegemony, the articulation must take place “through a confrontation with antagonistic articulatory practices”, and presupposes the presence of floating elements of which can be articulated by these opposed political projects (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 122; Howarth & Stavrakakis 2000, 22). Hegemonic formation, is thus, the outcome of hegemonic articulatory practices that institutes nodal points delimited by antagonistic political frontiers, and implying the openness of social.

## The political discourse theory as a methodological tool

Like stated before, in the history of Marxian thinking it was Gramsci who, for Laclau and Mouffe, offered a watershed. By bringing the logic of hegemony into the terrain of

poststructuralism the impasse of explanatory power of Left-wing thinking, in the face of new social movements, could be overcome. These new movements and transformations could not be explained by a universal class identity or by the historically determined antagonistic class struggle, but should be understood as hegemonic struggles that manifest the openness of the social. For Laclau and Mouffe hegemonic struggle is possible precisely because social systems are articulated systems where elements are not determined but can be rearticulated in a different way (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 108). The identity of a political subject, like social antagonism, is always rooted in political discourse that forms a relational system of diverging societal needs and political demands (Rothe 2016, 69). It is when a particular political demand manages through the equivalential chain to assume the representation of a common or universal interest – i.e. particularity is transformed to the representation of a universality – the hegemonic relation is formed. Hegemony thus implies a very specific kind of conditions of possibility that necessitates the existence of antagonistic forces and instability of the dividing political frontiers between them (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 120–131).

*Antagonism* rises as two different identities mutually exclude each other. The inability of a subject to construct a full identity forms the precondition for a antagonism, but the identification with various different subject positions do not necessarily lead into antagonistic relation. This is because antagonism is the interruption or failure of the constitution of a full identity. Like it is illustrated by Laclau with an example of a Spartan mother whose identity as a mother is interrupted by a death of her son in a battlefield. As a result of the death, survival of the son becomes a symbol of an unreachable full identity (mother) and the enemy army can be transformed into a symbol of her non-being, what brings us to the field of social antagonism. (Laclau 2014, 108–114.) Thus antagonism is a relation wherein the limits of any objectivity is shown, representing the threats of the discursive objectivity (Laclau 2014, 110–125). It is between this representation of common or universal good and production of common enemy i.e. antagonism, that the hegemony in the political discourses steams from.

Through the *chain of equivalence* different societal demands can be united under a hegemonic demand — i.e. an empty signifier — that represents them all. Empty signifier represents the attempt to “fill” the unavoidable lack of full closure of the social, or in the words of Laclau (1996, 53), “although the fullness and universality of society is unachievable, its need does not disappear: it will always show itself through the presence of its absence”. It is around this

(impossible) ideal of fullness that society is organized (ibid.). The equivalence of demands is created against their common antagonistic forces that divides the social space into two opposite poles. The equivalence represents the purely negative element, the common threat that is found in all the identities and demands, that establishes the constitutive split (Laclau 1990, 14). As a contrast to the logic of equivalence, there is the *logic of difference* that attempts to break the chains of equivalence by enhancing the differences and by trying to relegate the antagonistic divisions into the margins of society (Howarth 2000, 107; Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 113–120). Hegemony creates a partial totalization that, as well as all social identity, necessarily operates within the tension of these two opposite logics (Laclau 2005, 78).

By following these two logics, two different forms of hegemonic project can be analytically distinguished. These are an offensive and defensive forms of hegemony. In the *offensive form hegemony* political practice follows the logic of equivalence linking together disparate demands to form a ‘discourse coalitions’ by which to overcome the antagonistic enemy. This coalition building creates new discourses whose demands and subject positions needs to be accepted by wide part of political community. The aim of this form of hegemony is to challenge and overcome the existing hegemonic order. On the contrary, the *defensive form of hegemony* tries to maintain and secure the existing hegemonic structures. Based on the logic of difference, the defensive form of hegemony tries to channel the social demands and grievances into forms that do not challenge the existing hegemony through consensual narratives and separation of different demands and grievances. This form of power can also use the means of adopting some of the demands of opposite discourse coalitions which leads to breaking of the chain of equivalence and weakens its power. (Rothe 2016, 71–72.) But as stated before, hegemony is always necessarily operating within the tension of these two logics, as in order to grasp a totality – which is the condition for signification as such – there always needs to be something that is other and excluded from the totality itself. And as all that is excluded share the same equivalence of exclusion, it necessarily prevents the total equivalence as well as total difference (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 113–116, 120; Laclau 1990, 69–70).

Chris Methmann (2010) has used the concept of empty signifier in analyzing how existing forms of hegemony are defended by adapting and separating demands as well as building

consensual narratives, in his study of climate mainstreaming. Methmann argues that through governmentality international organizations – in his study WTO, IMF, WB and OECD – manage to integrate climate protection into prevailing hegemonic order without really changing the basic social structures. The discursive strategies of globalism, scientism, growth ethics and efficiency promote the idea of governmentality in the name of climate protection, allowing organizations to appear as climate protectors without the need of the structure of world economy to be changed but allowed the continuation of ‘business as usual’. (Methmann 2010.) The concept of governmentality Methmann uses in his study comes from the writings of Michel Foucault. Governmentality is often understood as ‘the conduct of conduct’ and ‘art of government’, referring to the process through which government, as a form of power based on the conduct of people, has evolved to work as the modus of political rule.

In bit different vein, Magdalena Kuchler and Johan Hedrén (2016) have studied bioenergy as an empty signifier, reviling how the existing hegemonic formation is defended through chain of equivalence. According to Kuchler and Hedrén the concept of bioenergy is through the chain of equivalence rendered under the hegemonic thread attempting to suture its signification through “the logic of a capitalist market economy fixated on economic growth and capital accumulation” (Kuchler & Hedrén 2016, 245). They studied the conceptualization of bioenergy in central documents of three influential international organizations – the International Energy Agency, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. They approach energy insecurity, climate change, and agricultural stagnation as organic crisis, or in the words of Laclau and Mouffe (2001, 122) as “generalized crisis of social identities” and “proliferation of antagonisms”, that they saw challenging the existing hegemonic order, and argued that bioenergy through chain of equivalence is rendered under the hegemonic thread to offer a “win-win-win solution” to the crisis (ibid., 239–243). The authors also reveal how internal dislocations and contradictions are contesting the coherence and relevance of bioenergy as a solution to all the demands of the crisis, which leads to ‘emptying’ the particular meanings of the concept of bioenergy and producing it as an empty signifier (Kuchler & Hedrén 2016, 243–245). The authors argue that the fixation of hegemonic system on economic growth and accumulation of capital enforces low-cost pressure and contradicts internally with the demands in bioenergy discourse causing

dislocations and constituting bioenergy “a futile solution to the challenges of energy insecurity, climate change, and agricultural crisis” (ibid., 237).

### Discursive struggle

Like shown before, the hegemonic formations behind our knowledge, understanding, and ways of acting in the world, set politics as the process of instituting the social, and give political ontologically privileged role in the theory of Laclau and Mouffe. The major aim of hegemonic projects is the construction and stabilizing systems of meaning, through the articulation of nodal points (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 98–99). Thus, hegemonic struggle is always the construction of the ‘the other’ as well as construction of the ‘we’. However, political as such does not require an antagonistic relation in the sense of friend/enemy distinction, but only “the ever present possibility of antagonism”, that means that there is always the constitutive outside in a terms of we/they and the possibility of it to turn into an antagonistic friend/enemy distinction if ‘they’ is perceived as putting into a question the identity and existence of the ‘we’ (Mouffe 2005, 14–17).

As the competition between different versions of the social antagonism and common good is in the heart of the political defined by Laclau and Mouffe (2001), the construction of social antagonism is not to be understood to mean a state of exception in terms of Carl Schmitt, or end of regular politics, but quite the opposite. Hegemonic project aims at this ‘naturalization’ or objectivecation, where the hegemonic formation is unquestionably taken as natural and true. The hegemonic formation is *dislocated*<sup>4</sup> as it confronts new events it cannot domesticate and becomes disrupted by them. Dislocations are processes by which the contingency of discursive structures is made visible and leads to disruption of identities and discourses (Howarth & Stavrakakis 2000, 20). Dislocations also create a lack at the level of meaning and enable new discursive constructions that attempt to suture the dislocated discursive structure (ibid.). In other words, this process opens up the space for hegemonic struggle of “how to heal the rift in the social order”, and leads to new articulations of nodal points and antagonistic frontiers of the society (Torfing 2005, 17). The nodal points that manages to take the form of

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<sup>4</sup> Laclau (1998) distinguishes dislocation from social antagonism by setting social antagonism to be one way of responding to the dislocation. Dislocation refers to the impossibility of any discourse to provide a fixed structure under the necessary forces of constitutive outside.

empty universals, or in other words, empty signifiers, names the structure of hegemonic formation that has been constructed. (Ibid.; see also Howarth & Stavrakakis 2000, 20.)

Laclau (1990) has further theorized this process of hegemonization by introducing the concepts of myth and social imaginary. Myths attempt to rearticulate the dislocated elements to form a new objectivity by forming a new space for representation. In international relations the nation-state is a widely recognized example of a myth (Erdogan 2017, 22). If myths manages to structure or 'cover up' the dislocation and incorporate variety of social demands they transforms into imaginaries. These social imaginaries are defined by Laclau (1990, 63) as 'a horizons' or as 'absolute limits which structures a field of intelligibility'. In the form of social imaginary, hegemony has achieved its most objective, or institutional form. The more objective social relations seems, the more 'natural' they appear.

#### Discourse coalitions and storylines

To gain more analytical clarity I have conciliated Maarten Hajer's concepts of discourse coalition and storyline with Laclau and Mouffe's chain of equivalence. The logic of equivalence is stressing the similarities of elements and seeking at dissolution of the differences by uniting them under the master signifier i.e. discursive nodal point. Through declaring a common adversary or antagonism, frontier is established between this common enemy and the united elements, and variety of different demands can be brought together (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 113–116; Howarth 2000, 107).

Hajer defines storyline as "a condensed statement summarizing complex narratives, used by people as 'short hand' in discussions" (Hajer 2006, 69). It is possible for many actors to share same storylines with quite a lacking mutual understanding (ibid.). These storylines similarly to nodal points are dispersing differences and bringing together discourse coalitions that are giving a structure to a specific discourse. Discourse coalition refers to a group of actors who from different subject positions shares the usage of a particular set of storylines, and is this way brought together by a common orientation towards a particular problem (Hajer 2006, 70; Rothe 2016, 60, 72). Hegemonic project involves coalition building as through coalition building disparate discursive elements are fused into broader consensual storylines (Rothe 2016, 73; Howarth 2010).

### Method applied in the thesis

Discourse analysis is not a coherent method but an ensemble of approaches belonging to the field of qualitative analysis (Hajer 2005, 314). The basic assumption in discourse analytical approach is that language profoundly shapes our understanding of the world and reality. Discourse analysis provides a way to analyze discursive structures such as narratives, story lines and metaphors. It is also a methodologically sound way to analyze discursive production of a meaning and socio-political practices from which social constructs emerge. (Hajer 2006, 66–67.) The methodological tools used in this thesis are constructed around the discourse theoretical framing presented in earlier in this chapter.

My analytical focus here is a) the different meanings of climate security b) the discourses that inform these meanings c) the notions that constructing the discourses and their particular qualities and functions. The examination is done through textual analysis. A central aim of textual analysis in discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe is to locate and analyze the mechanisms by which meaning is produced, fixed and contested within particular texts in question (see Howarth 2005, 340). This can be done by examining what signs have a privileged status, and how are they defined in relation to the other signs.

Following Martin Müller's (2010) suggestion I distinguished three interdependent apparatuses: the discourse apparatus, the identity apparatus and the politics apparatus. The concepts of nodal point, floating signifier, articulation and field of discursivity, presented in this chapter, belong to the discourse apparatus. It conceptualizes the creation, transformation and fixation of meaning "through discourses within a hierarchical, relational and situationally contingent structure" (ibid.). By identifying nodal points, I was able trace the signification chains through investigating how they are combined with other signs. After identification of the discursive structures I could analyze the alternative ways of producing meaning of identified nodal points. The identity apparatus includes the concepts of subject position and split subject and investigates the different possibilities of constructing of meaning of a subject in a different discourses (ibid.). This is examining the process of identification and exclusion. Who is threatened, who is acting and who/what is threatening. The concepts of hegemony, antagonism and dislocation belong to the politics apparatus (ibid.). This examines the working

of chains of equivalence and difference within hegemonic projects. How floating signifiers are fixed within discursive structures and how discourse coalitions are produced.

All of the concepts presented above refer to key signifiers in the social organization of meaning, which by identifying from specific empirical material reveal how discourses, identities and social space are organized discursively (Jorgensen & Phillips 2010, 50). Through this analyze it was possible to identify the struggles taking place over the meaning.

## Security

The contingency of meaning, as discussed above, is clearly seen in the concept of security. Within Security Studies there are multiple ways in which to define and approach security. These definitions, and the discourses they belong to, are embedded with different kind of premises and understandings of the world, and vary in their views of the legitimate objects of security, means to provide security and by the nature of threats. In the Charter of the United Nations signed in 1945, after devastating experiences of the Second World War, the maintenance of international peace and security was set as the primary target of the new founded organization. Security was seen mainly in the light of preventing major disputes and war between nation states, as the preamble of the Charter notes, the determination of the United Nations is to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” (The UN Charter 1945). The new challenges and threats posed by arising nuclear warfare and growing tension between the eastern and western blocks, after the end of the Second World War, created a need for more academic based military expertise and led to the emergence of Security Studies as a distinct field of study (Wæver & Buzan 2010, 466–467).

The discourse of security during the Cold War was dominated by the threats of arms race and deterrence theories, where the state was not seen only as the object to be secured but also gained new responsibility towards providing security for its own citizens in a more comprehensive manner (ibid.; Buzan 1997, 6). It was only after the tension between rivaling powers of the Cold War eased, that the focus of Security Studies significantly shifted away from the strategic manners —namely that of the study of the threat, use and control of military force— and moved towards studying less traditional security issues, such as the

environment and international economy. The end of the Cold War and widening of the security terrain were also seen in the work of the UNSC as the fading of numbing tension engendered new freedoms for the Council to act (The United Nations 2016). This newfound ability to act was seen in the rise of new principles and ideas, such as the humanitarian intervention and 'responsibility to protect', which according to Juergen Dedring (2004) are interconnected with increased influence of the idea of *human security* within the UNSC framework.

However, there was a great number of scholars that at least since the 1970s had been persistently emphasizing the inability of traditional security discourse to manage environmental risks such as environmental degradation. In these arguments it is environment that is seen as the most pressing source of threats. It is rather the environmental degradation and hazardous pollution than military attack that is forming a threat to security. Many of these authors seek to reorient security studies by demonstrating how it is the material well-being rather than abstraction like "the state" that is in fact threatened. National sovereignty is considered less important than the well-being of individuals or the species, as the national security itself is highly dependent on the well-being of the citizens and environment. (Krause & Williams 1996, 233–234.) Recently the environmental security discourse has increasingly been coalesced with human security approach.

Human security is often defined as an alternative approach to state-centric security, as it shifts the focus on individuals as referent objects. Human security pays attention to insecurities people suffers within states, and according to Pauline Kerr (2010, 122), "continues to drive the very old political philosophy of liberalism, which places people and the individual at its epicenter and prescribes some necessary conditions, such as freedom and equality, for people to be secure". The concept of human security became into prominence after the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published the Human Development Report in 1994, and was right from the start a very much part of the so called "wide" versus "narrow" debate characterizing security studies. Matthew et. all (2009, 5–10) point out in their comprehensive study of environmental change and human security, that even as the discourse on human security came to challenge the state-centrism, it is internally very much divided by the stances on how broadly security should be approached. The proponents of broad conceptions of human security emphasizes the interconnectedness of issues such as war, poverty and bad

governance, when as advocates of narrow conception see this as unhelpful since “[a] concept that aspires to explain almost everything in reality explains nothing”, why the approach should focus only in “the freedom from fear” and not to “the freedom from want” (Mack 2004, 367; see also Matthew et. all 2009, 5–10).

One attempt to construct a conceptualization of security with more analytical validity comes from the so called Copenhagen School. The school approaches security as ‘survival’, stating that “when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated object” it becomes a security issue and legitimatizes the use of extraordinary measures (Buzan et. all 1998, 21). It is through speech act that an issue can be lifted from being an issue of ‘lower’ politics into a concern of ‘high’ politics – or above politics – i.e. as security issue. Security in this way, is a particular type of politics applicable to wide range of issues. (Buzan et. all 1998, vii, 21–26; Emmers 2010, 137–138.) Today, the analytical framework offered by the school has become widely used in studies of security and international relations. It has also provoked notable criticism and further theorizations. From the point of view of this thesis the most prominent one coming from the field of poststructuralism<sup>5</sup>.

### Traditional security discourse

Prior to the expanding of the definition of security— and in large extent regardless of it— security was understood as “military protection against the threats posed by the armed forces of others states” (Sheenan 2010, 172). Kenneth Waltz argued in 1979 that the interactions between states is always based on ensuring their own survival (Glaser 2010, 20). The sovereign state is seen as the legitimate object of security as well as the principal actor in the security field. The inherent idea is that the state’s most prominent interest is the security in a world dominated by power play. Weapons provides, not the only, but the most effective tool in providing security, as the ultimate mechanism to maintain security is, paradoxically, that of resort to war.

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<sup>5</sup> There are notable debates on the extent of which the Copenhagen school’s Securitization theory in itself is poststructuralist. This is understandable as poststructuralism itself is a highly contested label. However, the Copenhagen school’s theory departs from the view of poststructuralism presented earlier in this chapter by engaging with the theory of speech act rather than to the theory of discourse. (see Rothe 2016 cf. Balzacq 2011).

Security is central to the legitimacy of a state, as providing security is conceived as a primary reason for state's being (Bellamy & McDonald 2004, 309–310). Sovereign power is a vital end that needs to be valued and preserved above any obligations to those outside the state (ibid.). The right of a state to non-intervention and non-interference is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, with only exception of the Security Council's right, after identifying a threat to international peace and security, to authorize use of force against the common threat. (Bellamy 2010, 362.)

### Environment and security

The whole notion of security as traditionally understood in terms of political and military threats to national sovereignty - must be expanded to include the growing impacts of environmental stress - locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. There are no military solutions to 'environmental insecurity'. (WCED 1987, Chapter 1 III.3.86)

From the viewpoint of international politics the report *Our Common Future* published in 1987 by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) led by Gro Harlem Brundtland, marked a significant articulation for the discourse of environmental security, and also more generally for discourses attempting to challenge the narrow security approach. The report states that the old patterns to maintain security and pursue development must be changed, and security must be sought through change as the “[threats] to environmental security can only be dealt with by joint management and multilateral procedures and mechanisms” (WCED 1987, chapter 11). The report addressed the harmful effect of current economic development to the environment, consequently challenging the inherent idea of national security where state's best defense is to pursue economic growth to enable efficient military capacity.

Since the publishing the report has worked as a reference in many United Nations' conferences and multilateral agreements, highlighting that the most significant threats to international security come not from other states, but from global problems shared commonly by the international community (see e.g. Barnett 2010, 221, 224–225; Death 2010, 36–41). This acknowledgement is interconnected with the rise of an idea of 'new wars' where the threat arises not from the most powerful and strong states, like it has been seen in traditional security theories based on realist and neo-realist paradigms, but rather from the most fragile

ones. In new wars conflict do not necessarily spring from ideological and political reasons but can be triggered from issues such as degrading living conditions. (Beswick & Jackson 2015.) Many scholars saw this rise of the environmental security concept into the political debates initially as a good idea, as it was “meant to alarm traditional security analysts about the issues that ‘really’ matter” (deWilde 2001, 2 cited in Trombetta 2008, 586), but it also aroused concerns about bringing within a militarization of the environment (Käkönen 1994; see also Barnett 2010, 235), and being overwhelmingly a discourse only for northern countries (Trombetta 2009, 586).

Within the environmental security discourse environment can be approached both as an object to be secured and as a source of threats. Jon Barnett argues that there are six major interoperations of environmental security that differ according to whether environment is set as the source of threats or object to be secured, and by the solutions proposed. From these six major interoperations, only ecological security and human security approaches to environmental security significantly departs from the premises of traditional security paradigm (Barnett 2010, 224–224). Ecological security draws on both Green philosophy and ecological theory to demand for a change in the reasons for action, so that they include concerns about the overall welfare of entire social-ecological system of the planet. Thus, building rather on planetary thinking than to national interest. (Barnett 2010, 224.) When as human security – which I will come back later – sets the environment as one of the seven sections identified in the United Nations Development Program’s early definition of human security, where the environment is brought to be an inseparable part of human life and security. Opposite of these are the interoperations that more or less focus on the national security interests and possibilities of violent conflicts.

In similar vein with Barnett, scholars such as Julia Trombetta (2008), Nicole Detraz and Michele Betsill (2009) have distinguished two generalized ways of linking security and environment within the environmental security literature, one drawing on the state and conflict centered discourse of security, and the other on human security and broad range of threats. Detraz and Betsill (2009, 305–306) have named these generalized ways as *the environmental conflict* and *the environmental security* discourse. According to the authors, the environmental conflict discourse draws largely on traditional military security discourse and focuses on the threats of conflict arising from environmental conditions and scarcities. Environmental security

discourse on the other hand draws on human security by setting the well-being of individuals at the center. (Detraz & Betsill, 2009, 305–306.) The idea of environmental degradation and scarcities leading into conflict situations, prevailing within the environmental conflict discourse, is familiar from the so called neo-Malthusian storyline.

#### *Neo-Malthusian storyline*

On late 18<sup>th</sup> century Thomas Malthus (1798/1998) notoriously assessed that there will be serious food shortages and large scale human misery on Earth due to growing population. According to Malthus' assessment, world's population would grow exponentially and food production only arithmetically, inevitably leading to shortage of food and recourses causing war, famine and diseases. The concern was reiterated by thinkers such as Fairfield Osborn (1948, 200–201, cited in Matthew et. al. 2009, 11) who 150 years late wrote: "When will it be openly recognized that one of the principal causes of the aggressive attitudes of individual nations and of much of the present discord among groups of nations is traceable to diminishing productive lands and to increasing population pressures?". The idea was also present in the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* report published in 1970s (Meadows et. al. 1972). In more recent times the idea is famously reconstructed and studied by the so-called Toronto Group under the leadership of Thomas Homer-Dixon. The group has conducted a series of studies of scarcity-induced environmental conflicts where scarcity of renewable resources interacting with harsh social effects (such as population displacement or declining economy) creates social instability and leads to violent conflicts (Homer-Dixon 1994; Floyd 2008, 55). According to Homer-Dixon the causes of scarcities springs from decline in the quantity or quality of renewable resources, population growth and/or unequal resource access, interacting with failing states, international population displacements and rise of authoritarian regimes (Homer-Dixon 1994).

Although the suggestion of straightforward connection between environmental degradation and violent conflict was made cautiously by Homer-Dixon, the thesis was very much popularized by Robert Kaplan's article 'The coming anarchy' (1994) where he stated that "[i]t is time to understand the environment for what it is: the national-security issue of the early twenty-first century. The political and strategic impact of surging populations, spreading disease, deforestation and soil erosion, water depletion, air pollution, and, possibly, rising sea levels in critical, overcrowded regions like the Nile Delta and Bangladesh—developments that

will prompt mass migrations and, in turn, incite group conflicts—will be the core foreign-policy challenge from which most others will ultimately emanate, arousing the public and uniting assorted interests left over from the Cold War.”

The influence of the works of Homer-Dixon and the idea of large-scale environmental degradation, (exacerbated by rapid population growth) threatening to undermine political stability of states, regions, and through fragmenting or authoritarianizing state structures, will undermine international security, has had notable significance especially in the United States (Hartmann 2009, 198–199; 2010, 236). The findings of Homer-Dixon and the Toronto Group have also been utilized by NATO researchers, according to whom the notion of environment in itself is unusable as an analytical category as the environment is rather a source of a complex series of syndromes that might cause conflict and not a straightforward causal factor (Dalby 2002, 97).

In the very heart of the neo-Malthusian narrative is the concept of environmental refugee, who is identified by Norman Myers and Jennifer Kent (1995, 18-19) as,

persons who can no longer gain a secure livelihood in their traditional homelands because of environmental factors of unusual scope, notably drought, desertification, deforestation, soil erosion, water shortages and climate change, also natural disaster such as cyclones, storm surges and floods. In face of these environmental threats, people feel they have no alternative but to seek sustenance elsewhere, whether within their own countries or beyond and whether on a semi-permanent or permanent basis.

According to the studies of Betsy Hartmann (2010) discourses linking climate change to security are very much influenced by the neo-Malthusian narrative of poor, starving populations being forced to overuse their scarce natural resources, leading to engagement in violent conflicts, and storming en masse to the borders of western world.

Many scholars are critical toward the storyline, like it is stated by Idean Salehyan, “claims of environmental determinism leading seamlessly from climate change to open warfare are suspect. The overly structural logic linking climate change to armed conflict ignores human agency, ingenuity, the potential for technological innovation, and the vital role of political institutions in managing conflict (or failing to do so).” (Salehyan 2008, 317.) The narrative is also contested by the so called resource abundance or “honey pot” thesis where it is an abundance of valued resources that can spark conflicts. The proponents of the environmental scarcity

thesis have argued that the resource abundance thesis ultimately falls down into the scarcity thesis as the value of abundant resources springs from their scarcity on a global level. (Floyd 2008, 54.) This has also led to criticism of the storyline too often confusing environment per se with that of the economic value (see e.g. Barnett 2001).

### Humans and security

Today we cannot secure security for one state at the expense of the other. Security can only be universal, but security cannot only be political or military, it must be as well ecological, economical, and social. It must ensure the fulfilment of the aspirations of humanity as a whole. (WCED 1987.)

A demand for redefining security in more global and comprehensive manner was the central to the Brundtland commission's report, like the above citation of denotes. But it was not until in 1994 when the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) published *Human Development Report* that the notion of human security came into prominence (Matthew et. al 2009, 8–9) and articulated a demand that really challenged the state and conflict centered discourse of security. In the Human Development report security is defined as “safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression [...] protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of our daily lives-whether in our homes, in our jobs, in our communities or in our environment.” (UNDP 1994, 3). In-line with the Brundtland Commission's report, the UNDP's report demands defining development and security in terms of sustainability and universality, and prioritizing individuals over the states, as it is elaborated below:

For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with the threats to a country's borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime – these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world. (UNDP 1994, 3.)

It is not the threat of nuclear holocaust that is in the heart of human security approach, but “the threat of global poverty travelling across international borders in the form of drugs, HIV/AIDS, climate change, illegal migration and terrorism” (UNDP 1994, 24). And for that reason the concept of security must be changed “[f]rom an exclusive stress on territorial

security to a much greater stress on people's security" and "[f]rom security through armaments to security through sustainable human development. Security is not just about survival, but "safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression" and protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions (UNDP 1994, 3). Security means protecting the livelihoods and dignity of people as well as strengthening their own capacities to act as subjects of security (the United Nations Human Security Unit, 2009, 5).

Many scholars have argued that if human security is to have any analytical relevance, it should focus on the narrow 'freedom from fear' definition (see e.g. Thomas & Tow 2002; Kerr 2010, 124–127; Mack 2004). The concern should be on the threats of violence individuals and societies face. The international Commission on Human Security, among many other institutions and scholars, have gone to the opposite direction arguing that human security needs to be seen as protecting the fundamental freedoms and vital core of human lives, and not to be restricted to physical violence (The United Nations Human Security Unit 2009, 5.)

This broad definition also emphasizes the heterogeneity of 'vital core' that is valued in societies, and gives importance to that of what is seen as the paramount concerns (Matthew et. all 2009, 9). Neither the nature of a threat nor the vital core is seen as universal and fixed, but requires context-specific investigation. The approach acknowledges that "insecurities vary considerably across different settings and as such advances contextualized solutions that are responsive to the particular situations they seek to address" (the United Nations Human Security Unit 2009, 7). It also builds on idea of interconnectedness of threats which causes domino effects and allow the uncontrollable spreading of threats into other areas that demand preventative and comprehensive dealing with security. It is through "development of an interconnected network of diverse stakeholders" — which is comprised of multiple actors from private and public sectors at the local, national, regional and international levels — that sufficient knowledge and expertise can be achieved for implementing policies and programmes of human security. (The United Nations Human Security Unit 2009, 14, 22–24.)

#### *Storyline of development security*

Especially since the end of the Cold War development has been increasingly interlinked with security concerns (see Chandler 2007; Duffield 2007). Governments and international institutions have increasingly acknowledged development as a prerequisite for development and security as a necessity for development. Mark Duffield (2001) has argued, that the

decolonialization, guerrilla movements and Western governmental rationality of privatization shifted security rationality based upon the accumulation of arms and political alliances, to governing the lives of poverty ridden societies that were seen potentially dangerous. Poverty, unchecked population growth, and environmental collapse do to overuse, with insufficient or 'predatory' institutions were seen to drive societies into violence and chaos (ibid., 311).

Fragile, poverty ridden states are thus conceived as more prone to instability and conflict, and lack capacity to tackle networks of terrorism and organized crime, which has risen liberal state-building and developmental assistance as crucial security strategies of the West (Beswick & Jackson 2015,10–11, 14, 21; see also Duffield 2001). Security is conceived largely as borderless and interconnected with new ways, forming an integrated network of global security (Sörensen 2010, 60–61). Rather than to create a sovereign unit, stated-building aims at shaping 'human-security states' (ibid.). In more recently, the focus of development has shifted more into establishment of efficient natural resource management mechanisms and 'Climate-Smart Development', which addresses the necessity of environmental sustainability (Duffield & Evans 2011, 96–100).

The idea of good governance is crucial part of the development narrative (Pomerantz 2011, 163–164). The idea of good governance highlights the meaning of rule of law, accountability, participation, human rights, regulatory authority and institution building in pursuing effective development and desired outcomes (ibid.). Good governance is seen to be enhancing both human security and sustainable development and promoting active citizen participation in decision making (Nsiah-Gyabaah 2007, 248). By sharing the same objectives, human security and human development are seen as mutually reinforcing, and interdependent (Nsiah-Gyabaah 2007, 251, 253).

### Securitization

One widely renowned attempt to explain the processes of which the security practices has been extended to different sectors, such as the environment and economy, is the securitization theory of Copenhagen school. Building on the speech act theory developed by John Searle and John Austin, the authors of Copenhagen School constructed security as a speech act, and argued that it "is when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to

designated referent object” and gains acceptance by relevant audience, something becomes a security issue (Buzan et. al. 1998, 21). The threat and the object are thus discursively formed through this speech act. The speech act can be performed by any individual or group that has certain amount of authority and legitimacy, and through acceptance constructs a sense of urgency and legitimizes a deployment of a range of exceptional measures that would not be accepted for a problem in the terrain of ‘regular’ politics (Wæver 1995, 55). Securitization is thus, “the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as special kind of politics or as above politics” (Buzan et. al. 1998, 23). In other words, securitization is an extreme version of politicization that occurs if the referent object and its claim of survival gets accepted by a relevant audience. However, not all things can be equally securitized, a lack of authority of an individual or the high level of abstraction of systemic units such as humanity or international community, often prevents them to be successfully securitized (ibid. 36–37). Neither will all successful securitizations lead to the adaptation of exceptional measures. According to the authors, successful securitizing move does not require adaptation but only approval of exceptional measures (Buzan et. al. 1998, 25). This, of course, raises questions of the causes which then leads or does not lead to the adaptation of the exceptional measures.

From the viewpoint of this thesis’ poststructuralist engagement there are few profound shortcomings in the theory. One of the shortcomings is the theory’s focus on securitization as a particular moment rather than as a continuous inter-subjective process forced by multiply actors is also clashes with poststructuralist understanding of discourse (Balzacq 2011a). Other troubling shortcoming is the understanding of security as fixed to survival and exceptional measure (see Buzan et. al. 1998, 21). These deficiencies have been acknowledged by poststructuralist scholars such as Thierry Balzacq and Delf Rothe, who have been further developing the theory of securitization from the viewpoint of poststructuralism.

It is argued by Balzacq (2011a, 8) that in order to overcome the deficiencies, “securitization studies must generate theoretical assumptions about intersubjectivity, context, and practices”. According to Balzacq securitization needs to be brought from emphasizing the illocutionary act underpinning the emergence of security problems to concentrate more on the sociologically focused perlocutionary act of language. This would free the framework of securitization from a ‘conventional procedure’ to be understood as a ‘discursive technique’.

(Balzacq & Guzzini 2015, 99; Balzacq 2005, 172–173). Balzacq's critics and analytical approach builds strongly on one hand to Pierre Bourdieu's theorizations of *habitus*, and on the other Michel Foucault's notion of *dispositif*. Habitus refers to a set of dispositions that informs the perceptions and behaviors of agents' performatives in specific socio-cultural context, and helps to understand the ability of their participation in the process of securitization. When as the concept of *dispositif*, which Foucault established in order to extend his notion of discourse to include not just linguistic practices but the institutions, administrative measures, knowledge structures and other social practices, helps to overcome the Copenhagen School's fixation on language. (Balzacq 2011a, 2–3; Rothe 2016, 36–37.) Balzacq (2001, 3) argues that securitization needs to be understood as “an articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.) are contextually mobilized by a securitizing actor, who works to prompt an audience to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thoughts, and intuitions), about the critical vulnerability of a referent object, that concurs with the securitizing actor's reasons for choices and actions, by investing the referent subject with such an aura of unprecedented threatening complexion that a customized policy must be undertaken immediately to block its development”.

This approach brings us closer to the logic of social presented in the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe. Rather than being dependent on a specific moment, the securitization is seen as a continuous discursive formation. It also acknowledges the importance of “mundane” practices of security actors and experts in the securitizing move. Like it is argued by Didier Bigo (2002) in his study of securitization of the European Unions' immigration policy, it is precisely in the routinized and mundane practices of surveillance and control of security professionals where the securitization takes place. According to Bigo, it is through the habitus of security professionals that immigrants are securitized to be conceived as a risk (ibid.)

Along with Balzacq, Delf Rothe (2016, 53, 56) argues that there is a major contradiction in Copenhagen School's theory as it by building on the speech act theory engages with an ontology revolving around the securitizing actor and the securitizing move that is incompatible with the notion of discourse that it is also engaged to. Where Rothe departs from the view of Balzacq is in defining discourse as an ontological category, as it is understood in the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe. From this point of view, the performative action of language is

not reducible to the intentions of a speaker – as there is not such a thing as pre-discursive consciousness– but is to be studied through the context of which subject positions are maintained and transformed. Rothe argues that securitization can only be understood in terms of ‘citational chains of performativity’, where performativity does not refer to a singular act but to the patterns of *repeated* articulations — which to recall, are not reducible to the semantic aspects of language but includes also the pragmatic aspects of action — that forms the discourse and the effects it names (Rothe 2016, 52–55). As he illustrates:

No actor in the world, however powerful she might be, could constitute climate change as a security issue through her articulation. Only through repetition and rearticulation of arguments that link climate change to security could a genuine climate security discourse develop. And the repeated articulation of statements such as ‘climate change represents a global security issue’ at the same time affects the context of articulations itself – for example the dominant security concepts could slowly change, e.g. from a national to a global reference point of security. (Rothe 2016, 56.)

Rothe criticizes the Copenhagen school for restricting the ‘grammar of security’ i.e. the determination towards existential threats and exceptional measures, from the area of radical contingency of meaning. In purely poststructuralist view, there is always a possibility of a change also within the security discourse itself. (Ibid., 83–84.) He argues against Copenhagen School’s tendency to draw security out of the sphere of politics and take it as “anti-politics” or as “the politically constituted limit to politics” (Wæver 2011, 478, cited in Rothe 2016, 76). Align with Balzacq and other authors engaging with sociological version of securitization<sup>6</sup>, Rothe acknowledges the political relevance of mundane security practices, but sees it as theoretical biased to be approaching these mundane practices – that are most often approached as technique of governance through risk – as distinct from the ‘exceptional’ security practices. Rather he suggests that “security and risk are actually two sides of the same governmental coin” (Rothe 2016, 87–89). According to Rothe,

[to] assume the existence of two independent logics of securitization and riskification is problematic as it blurs how security and risk rationales actually become fused in complex processes of securitization; this is not a process of a unidirectional transfer from exceptional security to mundane risk – from

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<sup>6</sup> The sociological version of securitization is often referred as Paris School of Security Studies. They strongly build on the heritage of Foucault, and focus mainly on security professionals, the governmental rationality of security, and the political effects of security technology and knowledge. (C.A.S.E. COLLECTIVE 2006.)

geopolitics to biopolitics – but rather one of mutual imbrication of both discourses. (Rothe 2016, 88–89.)

He draws his argument on the theory of hegemony, while suggesting that the technologies of risk and security can be read as an expressions of the hegemonic struggle. Following the logic of difference, the practices of risk management are separating and translating social demands into differential risks that need to be addressed separately. The antagonisms of these demands are decentralized into the periphery of the social and the society is constituted as a space of differences that offers only differential subject positions, and as a result, preventing the establishment of new political projects. In contrast to this, the geopolitical logic of security constitutes the logic of equivalence and demarcates the boundaries between the “likeness” of individuals and the external enemy, creating a homogeneous space with a common political identity. (Rothe 2016, 89–90.)

For Rothe securitization to this *process* of discursive struggle where discourse coalitions tend to share and (re)articulate storylines of faced problem as a security problem, and establish the storylines and demands as a common sense (ibid., 95–97). There are two criteria for the storyline to become hegemonic and thus to appear as a common sense. The first criterion is discourse structuration, which gets higher as more discursive agents have to draw upon the storylines in order to make a relevant contribution to the discourse. In climate change discourse it could be said, for example, that the Anthropocene has a pretty high discourse structuration, as it is hard to deny the human influence to the world’s climate if to make a reasonable contribution. (Rothe 2016, 63.) Second criterions is discourse institutionalization where, after accepted, the storylines “become inscribed into societal and political practices, routines and organizations and materialize in important societal and governmental institutions” (ibid). The policy impact of securitization project is dependent on the degree of which it manages to fulfill these two criteria. By articulating alternative storylines securitizing discourse can thus bring changes to the very definition of the discourse of security itself. And that it exactly what Rothe suggests has happened in the climate security discourse with the concept of risk and resilience that have been challenging the storyline of a military security (Rothe 2016, 102–103).

The logic of securitization suggested by Rothe, is convenient especially for its ability to understand both the depoliticizing and politicizing effects of securitization and for surpassing

the gap between the Copenhagen School's aim to reveal the realities constituted by securitizing moves and Balzacq's endeavor to reveal the complex social mechanisms behind securitizing processes. It enables to analyze not just the discourses, but also the political effects of repeated articulations.

## Analysis

As an act of articulation the debates on the issue of climate change held in the United Nations Security Council represent a challenge to the traditional definition of security. The United Nations Security Council was established under the hegemony of a discourse of security as securing the state's sovereignty and territorial integrity against external military threats. The existence and everyday functioning of the UNSC is part of the ongoing practice of defending the discourse of traditional security as the UNSC itself manifests the institutionalized form of that understanding. Climate change as a disruptive or dislocating discursive event challenges the meaning of security as it is conceptualized in traditional security discourse. Climate change is constructed as a threat that will increase the possibility of conflicts by working as a root cause and multiplier. It is also a grave threat by itself and it should be urgently recognized that its "consequences can be far greater than any battle fought" (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 36).

While the traditional security discourse principally conceives the threat in terms of external military attack, the threat of climate change is presented both as engendering internally within societies and as an external threat. What constitutes the threat of climate change to the international security, is not the change in climatic conditions per se, but poor governing structures, lacking or unsustainable development and failing adaptation measures. Climate change is seen causing changes in economic structures by undermining the capacity to produce food, destroying habitable areas and creating scarcities of natural resources, such as water, that without convenient adaptation measures threatens the wellbeing and existence of individuals, societies and even states.

Climate change poses a threat that overwhelms the defensive capacity of an individual state without engagement to joint efforts with other security actors. Climate change is not manageable with conventional security tools, even as it does retain the military aspect as

some of its implications are fightable with weapons. This is making the threat posed by climate change even more immense, and heightening its significance in the frames of international security. The accelerating, global and interconnected nature of climate change calls forth preventive, holistic and multilevel orientation towards security, which produces challenges to the international community and existing security structures that have not been established to face the new security realities.

According to Rothe (2016, 259), the emergence of climate change as a security problem is both the outcome and cause of mutual imbrications and interplay of specialized discourses that has resulted “both a transfer of security rationales to the climate change discourse and at the same time a spillover of concepts from climate change discourse into the security field”. What this means in the process of securitizing climate change is that the securitization is not to be conceived only as an outcome of articulations of existential threats nor of acceptance of exceptional measures, but is highly induced by adaptation of ‘risk grammar’ that highlights uncertainty and calculation of potential future harms, which do not take the form of ‘state of exception’ (Rothe 2016; see also Corry 2012). This means that rather than the disappearance of geopolitical security logic, what is happening is the (re)articulation of antagonisms and the construction of a collective identities whose wellbeing are to be secured.

Following the definition of articulation presented by Laclau and Mouffe (2001, 91), where articulation is understood as “any practice establishing a relation among elements in such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice”, I have conducted three *attempts* of (re)articulation establishing new a understanding of security. The dislocatory effects of climate change for hegemonic structures result in a proliferation of floating signifiers, which is followed by a hegemonic struggle over the integration of those floating signifiers into competing discourses (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 28–29; Methmann 2010, 353–354). The floating character represents the overflowing of meaning, as the signifier is articulated differently within different discourses (Laclau 2014, 20). The (re)articulations identified in this thesis, are based on discourses of security presented in previous chapter. In each discourse the meaning of security is taking a different form. The third (re)articulation presents an exaptation in a way that it does not fit into any prevailing discourses of security, but is attempting to structure its own discourse.

These different articulations are united through chain of equivalence and common nodal points that harmonize the differential features (Laclau 2014, 19–20). For example, human security is brought to the equivalential relation with international security by introducing human insecurity as a source of interstate conflicts. The more the equivalential chain is extended, the more the particularistic characters of the elements in the chain are dropped out (ibid.). That is why climate security discourse is able to absorb even contradictory concepts. Climate security in the analysis seems to take the form of an empty signifier by presenting that which is absent.

I will start by introducing the way in which climate change is widely conceived within the debates. I will then go through the (re)articulations, which each is constructing different understanding of security. I will continue to discuss how climate security discourse is produced through chain of equivalence and emptying of the sign 'climate security'. In each part I am at introducing the ways in which the traditional discourse of security is challenged by the climate security. Since this offensive hegemonic project does not occur without defense of the existing form of hegemony, I will introduce how many of the demands of climate security are merged into the old discursive structures. At the meeting over *impact of climate change*, a presidential statement was agreed on. I will discuss it separately as it can be seen that the statement acts as an articulation on its own. But the statement also demonstrates to what extent the climate security discourse has already affected to the understanding of security prevailing within the UNSC.

#### [What makes Climate Change threatening: The narrative of dangerous climate change](#)

I started my analysis by investigating what makes climate change threatening. What the arguments favoring securitization of climate change are, and why climate change is linked to international security. Through this analysis, I was able to find certain characteristics linked to climate change that are producing an imagery of climate change as *dangerous climate change*. Arguments calling forth immediate and effective action and recognition of climate change as a security issue draws on these feature, but at the same time these very same features are also used as justifications of why climate change is not nor should be seen as a security issue. I will then present the (re)articulations of security that each establishes the relation of security and climate change in their own but overlapping way. I will then move on to discuss how the

climate security is established through chain of equivalence to form a commonly shared demand that aims at contesting the hegemonic discourse of security that fails to acknowledge climate change as a security issue. The understanding of climate change as a dangerous other, is the outcome of this production of climate security discourse. I will later on show in more detail how these characteristics presented below are central to the construction of climate change as the antagonistic enemy of humanity that produces humanity as a homogenous social space.

First, climate change is characterized as being *exacerbating* in *dangerous* manner with possibility to be hindered, but not turned back or eliminated. If action is not taken to hinder the climate change, it will inevitably lead to abrupt and catastrophic consequences. In other words, the threats posed by climate change, irrespective of the referent object articulated, are something that cannot be fully eradicated but mitigated and adapted through collective action. Secondly, climate change is seen as highly *complex and interconnected*, which makes it very challenging to be scientifically calculated and predicted. Climate change itself is “a fact”, but it is uncertain “how fast and in how many different domains it will manifest itself” (S/PV.6587, 4). It is a cross-cutting issue that includes unavoidable uncertainties demanding urgent and globally administrated action on multiple fronts and with varying ways. These uncertainties brings forth a picture of a looming catastrophe that worsens by far as disagreements prevail within joint commitments and common procedures, rendering international community to be “at risk of an abrupt climate change” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 22). Conventional weaponry is insufficient in facing complex and interconnected climate change. At best it can bring security in climate related conflict situations but has only negative effects on the root causes of climate change itself.

And thirdly, “[c]limate change is truly a *global* problem” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 24, emphasis added), in the sense it has an effect on everyone in a one way or the other. It is acknowledged that developed countries bear the main responsibility of the onset of current climate change, whereas the most severe effects fall on those who are the least responsible for it, such as small island developing states. Nevertheless, the populations and states that are better equipped to face the changes in climatic conditions “will be forced to cope with agony of human displacement of determined refugees and the consequences of the human misery of people flooding their borders on a quest for peace and security” (S/PV.7499, 32) as in “an

interconnected world, no man is an island” (S/PV.7499, 76). Climate change is a “global threat that requires global solutions that are just, equitable and balanced” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 12).

### The three (re)articulations.

As it was discussed earlier, articulation refers to any practice that shapes the structure of discourse modifying the identity of its elements. I have distinguished three different articulations that aim at partial fixation of a meaning of security. The discourses of security introduced in previous chapter are used in framing the articulations found from the research material. These articulations do merge in certain points, but differ in articulation of subject positions. What is notable, is that even as the participators in the UNSC are representatives of states, state is not conceived as the only subject of security. Especially the private sector actors are seen as crucial partners in security governance. There are also calls for a universal body that could reconstitute state as the provider of security against climate change, which overruns the capabilities of many states. What needs to be secured is not only survival, but environmental conditions and economic and social structures that provide decent living conditions.

#### *Articulation 1. Climate change as a root cause of conflict*

One of the articulations that modifies the meaning of security establishes the relationship between climate change and security by designating climate change *as a root cause of conflicts*. Climate change is defined as the mother of all other major environmental problems such as degradation, scarcities of natural resources and loss of habitable land, which in turn are provoking conflicts and resource wars. This articulation is highly influenced by the neo-Malthusian narrative where environmental degradation and depletion of renewable resources together with social conditions unable to buffer these changes are seen as the triggers of conflicts (Homer-Dixon 1994). Environmental changes engender stress to societies, which without requisite adaptation measures and preventive action, will cause mass migration and violent behavior. War and violent conflicts are seen as likely ways to secure the possession of scarce resources and livelihoods. As the potentiality of a conflict depends not only on environmental changes but also on the capacities of societies to adapt to these changes, poorer and less developed societies and fragile and weak states are seen as the most potential breeding grounds for conflicts. These societies and states are seen more vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change and thus more conflict prone. As viewed from the

conflict perspective, it is these hot spots that are forming the danger as the “[a]dditional pressures caused by climate change increase the risk of having fragile States lapse or relapse into civil war and chaos” (S/PV.5663, 5), from where it can spread across the globe through “migration on an unprecedented scale” (S/PV.5663, 18).

Whereas for the vulnerable states and societies the threat of climate change arises from the dangerous climate change that is undermining the states capacities and institutions, and increasing internal instability potentially leading to conflicts, for international security, and especially for the national security of Western states, it is these vulnerable who are forming the dangerous enemies that need to be secured against. As the securitization logic takes it, this implies an adaptation of security measures against the threats. But instead of seeing military intervention as the most optimal way to address the threat, the exacerbating, pervasive and thoroughly unstoppable nature of climate changes shifts the emphasis on preemption and to the root causes of conflict defining capacity-building as the most effective way of defense. If climate change as the root cause of conflicts is not addressed, the international community “will be helpless to prevent conflict, and will have to spend much money on peacekeeping operations that do not address its root causes” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 34), and which will increase in number and magnitude as “the looming climate catastrophe” is missed to be softened (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 2).

War and conflict are more likely survival techniques for those societies that are the least equipped to respond and adapt to the negative effects of climate change, and through “destabilizing population movements” (S/PV.6587, 24) the conflicts can potentially spread across the globe. Environmental scarcities plays central and growing role as triggers of conflict, but it is the increasing movement of people that transfers the threat to the international level, this is apparent in following kind of statements: “[C]limate change, with its potentially tragic consequences for security — such as the displacement and transfer of populations, the former of which we have already witnessed — will become an increasingly critical factor in the underlying causes of conflict as the climate continues to change at an ever-faster pace” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 4). The aggravating nature of climate change is accelerating and transforming the patterns of migration with blurring “the traditional distinction between migrants, who cross borders in search of a better life, and refugees, who are forced to flee persecution and conflict” (S/PV.6668, 5).

According to Betsy Hartmann the concept of environmental refugee is today seamlessly morphed into a climate refugee with continuation to draw on the neo-Malthusian storyline (Hartmann 2013, 159). Climate refugee symbolizes the threat of spreading social unrest, instability and increased potential of conflict. The concept of a climate refugee, however, departs from the concept of environmental refugee presented by Myers and Kent (1995, 18–19) by emphasizing climate change not as one of the factors forcing people to seek secure conditions outside of their traditional homelands but as the fundamental reason. Climate refugee thus represents both, the danger of outbreak of conflicts people seek secure from, and the danger of the conflict moving to the borders of developed nations. Betsy Hartmann argues (2013, 154, 163–164.) that the narratives around climate related conflict and climate refugee are closely connected with worst-case scenarios and counterinsurgency strategies of Western defense interest, further blurring the line between humanitarian aid and military intervention.

The underlying logic of neo-Malthusianism locates the resource related conflicts primarily to the so called developing states, where if not rightly governed, they can spread to all over the world, forming a threat to the identity of developed states as a coherent and stabile. But this logic also stresses the need for capacity and institution building as a security strategy in order to prevent the outbreaks of conflicts that are in significant extent arising from environmental sources, needing efficient management and practices of adaptation. The lacking or insufficient governing structures are one of the main reasons causing vulnerability to climate change, together with the exposure of the physical impacts. It is the lack or fragility of state institutions that account for failed adaptation and provides conflict prone conditions.

Climate change will increase the pressure on the states coping capacities on multiply fronts. By increasing poverty and environmental stress, climate change can push fragile and poor states into a vicious cycle, where the causes of vulnerability are brought under intensified pressure due to the climate change. The conflict is more likely to occur between non-state actors and the state or between actors none of whom have any links to the militaries of states. Conflicts are outcomes of complex and interconnected chains of deteriorating environmental and social conditions that overrun the institutional capacities of states to provide safety from them. Put differently, what always precedes the climate conflicts is social instability, which is the result of a forced change that is faced with a maladaptive manner.

Those better equipped and less vulnerable are at the heart in advancing and strengthening of the governmental structures of fragile and developing states. This offers subject positions that I have named as ‘a preventer’ and ‘a vulnerable’ state. Preventer aims at building and strengthening the means of vulnerable societies and states to cope with changes and stress without engaging into violent behavior or provoking widespread political unrest. “A key issue is the identification of cases of successful adaptation in the developing world, where the greatest risk and physical vulnerability persists” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 30). At the heart of this subject position is the aim to prevent “the poorest and the most affected by climate change [from migrating] towards the most developed areas, with the resulting tensions and risks” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 20). As a leaders of international community it is the responsibility of preventers to “mobilize the political will necessary to address vulnerability in countries liable to suffer from instability, through promoting knowledge, facilitating the transfer of technology, putting in place adaptation and impact mitigation mechanisms and providing sufficient resources to rise to the challenges of climate change” S/PV.5663, 10). The vulnerable state is seen to suffer more badly from the effects of climate change and in need of the help of the preventer. Those state representatives that identify themselves to the subject position of the vulnerable, are often identifying themselves also as a developing state. In the heart of the identity of the developing state, is a right for development. Right for development is often characterized as a linear improvement that is necessary for enhancing security. The lack of development is understood to lead to chaos and disorder that can only be overcome through achieving —mainly economic—development.

The argument challenges the logic of security prevailing within the traditional security discourse by shifting the focus from security measures based on absolute sovereignty and reaction to prevention and intervention. The best way to achieve security for the future is no more the menace or use of force as the accelerating climate change will increasingly complicate and multiple conflicts. What is demanded is a global approach and security politics based on cooperation and joint efforts, maintaining within the traditional nation based security logic is seen to lead to conformational politics. As it is stated by one representative in the Council that, “[o]ur response will either unite us in cooperative action or divide us and lead us into chaos, tension and potential conflict” (S/PV.6587, 6). It is thus claimed in the articulation that addressing climate change is a conflict prevention imperative that demands

joint efforts and global governance. Even as it is the state that forms the referent object, the national security can only be provided through cooperation as “[n]o region on the surface of the globe is immune” (S/PV.6587, 16) to the interconnected and global threat of climate change. Thus it is by jointly strengthening the security of vulnerable states that also the security of less vulnerable states is strengthened.

The precautionary aim central in the articulation emphasizes the threat of climate change as a future threat that must be addressed with risk management measures. Drawing on calculations on probabilities and vulnerabilities, certain places or societies can be seen as a risk-groups that are in need of precautionary measures. It is only if these risk management practices are failed more exceptional security measures are called forth. Certain on-going conflicts such as Darfur, are presented as warning illustrations of situations where climate change as a root cause of conflict has demanded exceptional measures in the behavior of the international community (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 14; S/PV.6587, 7; S/PV.6587 (Res.), 34).

Olaf Corry (2012, 247) has suggested that in ‘riskification’ “[t]he referent-object itself rather than an enemy becomes the primary target of risk programmes – something to be changed and governed rather than something to be defended as such”, and the concept of defense ceases to have operational sense. The riskification leads to the adaptation of risk management programmes that are presented as opposite to exceptional mode of security of securitization logic (ibid. 247–248; Rothe 2016, 87). In the articulation of climate change as a root cause of conflict the governance through risk is a central part of defense strategy, as the threat is not simply shifted to the periphery of social by depersonalizing and differentiating the danger, but also articulated with binary framing, where the boundary drawn between the adaptive and maladaptive societies, poor and rich, responsible and irresponsible or the preventers and the ones becoming dangerous.

#### *Articulation 2. Climate change as threat multiplier*

The articulation I have named as *climate change as threat multiplier* acknowledges climate changes as a driver of conflicts but sets conflict neither as the only nor the biggest threat climate change is causing. The stressors such as natural hazards, changing environmental conditions, deflating economic structures and livelihoods, sea-level rise and shifting demands on energy supplies that result from climate change, are themselves great threats to the lives and well-being of people. The relationship between security and climate change in this

articulation is established through climate change's negative implications on human security. It is the tremendous human suffering and loss of life caused by environmental changes what make climate change a security issue. Climate change increasingly exacerbates existing negative trends, tensions and instabilities, and gives rise to new highly complex and integrated insecurities that are more developmental and humanitarian than military by their nature.

Aligned with the broader human security approach, the articulation insist an open character towards constituting the vital core of people's lives and the nature of threat. What the fulfillment of this open character requires in order to become a global problem is, that the threat is commonly shared by a great number of individuals, or it is violating human rights, which are acknowledged as universal rights. Respect of human rights are presented to be at the heart of human security, and are thus seen also as a prerequisite for peace and security. The articulation states that international and global security must be rooted on human security as there are no clear boundaries "between the agendas of health, human rights, environmental protection, economic development and maintaining international peace and security"(S/PV.7499, 70). "Ultimately, security must be rooted in opportunity, freedom and hope" (S/PV.6668, 3).

It is also stressed that "[p]eace, security, stability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, as well as respect for cultural diversity, are essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all" (S/PV.7499, 84). Sustainable development is not linked to economic growth only, but to development of individuals' capacity to cope in increasingly insecure and unstable world. Sustainable development works as an antidote against the vulnerabilities associated with the threat of climate change. Vulnerability to climate change arises from the exposure, sensitivity and capacity to respond to it, as well as from their unequal distribution. Equality is a crucial part of security, as in the frames of climate change "peace and security becomes consolidated when we have inclusive development, namely, a development with healthy ecosystems, a development that promotes equality and respect for human rights" (S/PV.7499, 71). Climate change both fosters and creates inequalities, together with increasing vulnerabilities that arises from other sources. The UNSC collectively with multiple other stakeholders, like non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments and international organizations, should act as a promoter of global security that is sustainable, just

and coordinated. This articulation argues that as the UNSC is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security under the United Nations Charter, it has a legitimate aspiration to ensure human security everywhere, as it is stressed that there can be no global security without human security.

An individual is a part of a common humanity which is threatened by complex and devastating climate change, rather than a citizen of any particular state. The winners and losers of climate change emphasized by the inequality perspective are humans and not states. Many individuals are suffering from the causes of climate change on the basis of their everyday lives, without having contributed to it equally. Climate change “impacts primarily the most vulnerable, who are the least responsible for its causes but have to cope with its effects on a daily basis” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 4). In the longer run, not only states can fail or disappear from the map, but many individual suffers by losing livelihoods, nationhood and even culture. They are the victims of climate change that are most often seen as innocent of the devastating situation they are faced with, and in need of a guidance and empowerment. The representatives of these vulnerable states are demanding those responsible of the outset of climate change to provide their societies with financial and technological aid to tackle the insecurities the people are increasingly facing. Climate change creates humanitarian emergencies that are global security threats which the global community must prepare for, manage and prevent. As a universal right human security should be provided to every human on behalf of the global community and especially by its leaders. This should be done by establishing new structures and rules to ensure that proper action is taken to deteriorate the threat of climate change.

People and societies are set as referent objects to be secured from the complex and integrated threat of climate change. These vulnerabilities do not follow borders, but are outcomes of different characters shared by individuals and groups. Groups such as women, migrants and poor, are seen as especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The implications of climate change on human security are multiple and connected in a way that every insecurity potentially feeds one another. Insecurities are interlinked into a ripple effect where every threat is fed by the other, and potentially spreading globally with no respect to the national boundaries. For example a loss of agricultural land is linked with increasing poverty and food insecurity, which in turn, are seen to provoke crime and extremism that create more insecurities for people everywhere. Forced migration is conceived as one of the potentially

threatening outcomes of climate change, which unlike in previous articulation, is approached from the viewpoint of the person forced to migrate. It is argued that no one should be obligated to leave their homes due to environmental threats nor to face the hostile uncertainty that displacement is causing. The best way in providing global human security, and thus international security, is through sustainable development.

As a global threat climate change demands global action, where everyone is to be provided with the capacity to adapt to environmental changes and to secure themselves against the multiple stressors caused by climate change. The articulation spreads the threat of climate change into multiple different and context dependent threats. It is demanded in the articulation that as the physical and social impacts of climate change are causing more deaths and large scale suffering than any ongoing war or conflict, it should be defined as a high priority threat and addressed with a great urgency. But as the articulation differentiates the threat by insisting on the open character, it articulates climate change as such many-faced threat that it limps with articulating the common good in effective manner. Put differently, the insecurities resulting from climate change vary highly depending on the contexts, rising from differential needs in providing the well-being and securing the lives of the people. The subject position of the most vulnerable, offered within the articulation, is represented being the ones most urgently in need of a capacity-building as they are less developed and least able to adapt and protect themselves from increasing insecurities. These are often the citizens of vulnerable states. But as human security is the prerequisite of a global security, the articulation calls forth humanity as a collective subjectivity. It is stated that fight against climate change “is not a struggle against anyone; rather, it is a fight against time and for the benefit of humanity”(S/PV.5663 (Res.), 32).

The proliferation of points of antagonism, which makes it more difficult to articulate a political project and defining the common good, is entwined through construction of antagonistic frontier between common humanity and climate change (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 117–120). In other words, in the articulation, the multiple and varying sources of vulnerabilities is tied together through their common underminer of climate change. However, the articulation leaves both the meaning of security and its tools to relatively abstract and open as, “a one-size-fits-all approach cannot provide workable and sustainable solutions” (S/PV.7499, 8) in a search for global security.

### *Articulation 3. Climate change as an existential threat*

But Tuvalu is not alone in facing the threat of climate change. Many millions of people will suffer the effects. The world has moved from a global threat called the cold war to what should now be considered the “warming war”. Our conflict is not being fought with guns and missiles but with weapons from everyday life — chimney stacks and exhaust pipes. (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 8.)

Especially small island developing States (SIDS) that identifies often with the subject position of vulnerable and of *a victim*, articulates climate change as an existential threat. Climate change is not just a multiplier or root cause of threats, but an existential threat. It is not the threat of conflict or deteriorating human well-being, but a threat of pure existence. Climate change threatens the existence of many cultures, states, societies and individuals. These victim define themselves as being “confronted with a chemical war of immense proportions” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 8) that along with violating the fundamental rights of many people by depriving their traditional living areas, nationhood, identity and possibilities to maintain their own ways of living, is rendering their whole existence at risk.

The articulation of climate change as an existential threat departs from the two previous articulations in its emphasis on climate change as the solely most concerning security threat international security is facing. Climate change does not form a threat only by exacerbating already existing threats or by triggering conflict, but is an independent variable insulting territorial integrity and state sovereignty, and poses threat on citizens security. The impacts of climate change works “on a greater scale and with disastrous effects that will dwarf the invasions and raids of ancient times” (S/PV.5663, 8) and can erase whole nations from the map. Climate change is also threatening to put an end to sustainable development which will lead in alarming consequences for human security, endanger state institutions and breed crime and violence. The victims are ‘peace-loving’ nations that are left under a quiet onslaught of climate change by the richest and most powerful countries (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 8; S/PV.7499, 29, 69). The victim is characterized with an inability to secure itself against climate change as it is other countries that is subjecting them under low-intensity biological or chemical warfare with their patterns of consumption that are destructive (S/PV.5663, 8, 31).

The victims are dependent on the UNSC to carry out its Charter obligations and to “fully embrace the concept of environmental security within its mandate”, and not only as “a matter of identifying trouble spots where armed conflict may be linked to environmental decline” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 9), but by realizing the devastating security threat the victims are exposed

to. As a global security actor, it is the responsibility of the UNSC and the most powerful States leading it, to establish ambitious and legally binding agreements, and to use their legitimate power to put a greater international effort on ensuring the human and institutional capacity of the victims to deal with their threat of existence. It is a matter of solidarity, responsibility and legal obligation for the largest emitters and economically prosperous countries to act, as they by creating such an interconnected, pervasive and disastrous threat, have deprived the victims' ability to secure themselves. For the victims security is about survival and exceptionalism, but only worsened by military solutions and separate national security policies. Climate security cannot be addressed or achieved without a recognition of the interconnectedness of global environmental, economic and security governance. The failure to acknowledge the interconnectedness between states and between the environmental, economic and security sector, has a result where "vulnerable countries have been left to shoulder the growing security burden with minimal assistance [and] [o]n every continent, the rich and the powerful contain the problems in ever higher barbed-wire fences" (S/PV.7499, 70).

The confrontational line rises between the victims and those large emitters who do not take their responsibilities in mitigating the threat of climate change. The Security Council must act as a security actor on behalf of the victims, as it is illustrated by a statement of one of the representatives of SIDS identifying to the subject position of a victim.

In my frustration, I often wonder where we would be if the roles were reversed. What if the pollution coming from our island nations was threatening the very existence of the major emitters? What would be the nature of today's debate be under those circumstances? But that is not the world that we live in, and this is not a hypothetical exercise for us. Many of our countries face the single greatest security challenge of all, that is, our survival. For that reason, we have come to the Security Council today. (S/PV.6587, 22.)

The means in securing the existence of the victims implies financial and technological inputs from the developed nations to secure the sustainable development and thus ability to adapt. But it also implies significant reduction of emissions on behalf of the large emitters as for some as the low-lying island states, there is no amount of development that can save them from disappearing if the harmful emissions are not restricted (S/PV.7499, 76).

Most of the victims, both in terms states and human living within them, are especially threatened by sea-level rise and severe storms that can destroy whole infrastructure,

economic base and habitable land from small, low-lying and poverty ridden states. Climate change is thus a matter of sovereignty and territorial integrity for the victim states, and raises the question whether the world is “ready to accept the idea of a State without a territory?” (S/PV.6668, 6). Besides the large emitters, foreign investors, criminal groups, drug dealers and human traffickers are linked with the threat of losing sovereignty. With its harmful effects on social and economic structures, climate change weakens governmental structures of these states, making them more vulnerable to external manipulation and capture. The threat is not military one but no less dangerous, and have at least as devastating consequences and can force whole nations to migrate, eventually forcing more secure States “to cope with the agony of human displacement of determined refugees and the consequences of the human misery of people flooding their borders on a quest for peace and security” (S/PV.7499, 32).

#### [Chain of equivalence and production of climate security discourse](#)

The articulations establish new relations among elements in security discourse modifying the identities and engendering new understandings of security. Even as the relation between climate change and security is produced differently within each articulation there are certain shared storylines that work as nodal points allowing these competing versions to be articulated as a relatively coherent whole (Rothe 2016, 161). The nodal points, hence, partially stabilize the discursive field so that a shared representation of security can be established within the climate security discourse coalition.

Storylines of climate-induced migration, necessity of preventive and joint security efforts and sustainable development as a security strategy, are all accepted by the three (re)articulations. These storylines are crucial in structuring a new security landscape that reconceptualizes international security discourse in the frames of the UNSC. Surely, this reconceptualization does not occur in isolation from broader discursive shifts prevailing within wider context of global security politics<sup>7</sup>. David Chandler (2012a, 218–221; 2012b, 115), for example has argued that there has been a clear shift in international security order from the state-based territorialized language of intervention to the language of individual empowerment, freedom and capacity-building that is highly informed by the resilience paradigm. The focus of this

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<sup>7</sup> Events such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the rise of HIV/aids to the agenda of the UNSC in 2000, undeniably have been structuring the discursive space of which the articulations are taking place.

thesis, however, is restricted to the discursive struggles prevailing within the climate change debates of the UNSC.

*Shared Storyline: Climate induced migration*

Climate induced migration is linked in all the three articulations to the harmful and threatening consequences of climate change. A climate migrant or refugee represents a danger of distracted identity and failure of security governance. The people who are ripped out of their traditional living areas, communities and cultures are seen to face challenges in maintaining their identities, which are conceived to be highly dependent on the traditional homelands. Also the identities of the people in the receiving nations are seen to be facing a threat due to external intruders of large scale migration. Migration is presented as one of the most certain and worst consequences of climate change that not only threatens security, but is in itself a proof of the threatening nature of climate change. As the first example presents climate-induced migration more as a potential conflict trigger, the latter links it to the effects of climate change that are in themselves a threats to people and states.

Climate change continues to act as a threat multiplier and risks triggering or exacerbating conflicts stemming from the consequences of sea-level rise, the depletion of natural resources, desertification, climate-induced migration and the crucial question of sustainable energy supply, just to mention some of the main challenges. (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 40–41.)

Indeed, some of the adverse impacts of climate change include the gradual loss of land, floods, inundation, droughts, sea-level rise, increased salinity, extreme weather patterns, decreased food production, scarcity of fresh water and climate-induced migration (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 24–25).

In all three (re)articulations the threat of climate change is very much conducted through dangerous migration. A migrant fleeing from unsecure homeland manifests the failure of a state to provide security for its citizens, the form of insecurity climate change is causing to human security and the shift from national to international and global level. The severity and acceleration of climate changes is indicating extensive population movements that need to be governed through global administration for mitigating the dangers posed on the migrant and on the transit and receiving nations.

The climate-induced migration is also linked with many criminal acts such as human trafficking, narco-trade and terrorism that in turn have negative implications on international and global security. All these diverse threats are linked together through common

determinant of climate change. Climate change comes thus not only to the source of migration that is conceived as globally threatening phenomenon, but as a source of all the threats arising out of the large scale movement of people. By accelerating climate change will accelerate all these repercussions on global level, producing a threat that is commonly shared by all subject positions. The concept of climate migrant thus unites the narrow nation based security thinking and humanitarian concerns and symbolizes the ways in which climate change is forming a common threat to whole humanity.

*Shared Storyline: "The sad reality is that we cannot do this alone"<sup>8</sup>*

Another shared storyline within the three (re)articulations is that of climate change's global character, which is resulting an inability of any state to secure itself against climate change. Most of the causes and effects of climate change are not something that can be administrated with border control mechanisms or by military means. Despite of how powerful the state is, its emission mitigation efforts cannot alone stop climatic change from accelerating, but cooperation and global governance is needed. Besides the participation of all states, the involvement of actors from civil and private sectors is seen as crucial in maintaining and establishing security against climate change.

All the sectors in which climate change is causing changes, such as energy, economy and health, are highly interconnected, and most often sources of interdependency between states as well as between public and private sectors. It is thus acknowledged that the security mechanisms against climate change must be equally integrated and multifaceted, and cannot be restricted to states' monopoly on force. In many cases states' governing structures are seen as inefficient, or certain governments as invalid partners in global security governance, of why it is necessary to improve the subjectivity of other stakeholders in maintaining and building security. It is also necessity to take more global standpoint to the security policies in order to mitigate the future's insecurities, or even the future as such. Security cannot be conceived only in national or international terms as it is increasingly impossible for a state, and eminently that of a developing state, to secure the lives and well-being of its citizens of which its own very survival is acknowledged to be dependent on. Disregarding global standpoint in states' security policies is "a concrete example of the proverbial discarding one's dirty water in the backyard of one's neighbor" that will put the future of whole humanity at stake (S/PV.5663,

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<sup>8</sup> S/PV.7499, 29

32). The UNSC should work, not as a platform for states, but as a security actor who can ensure “the emergence and implementation of effective and timely solutions [in order] to provide peaceful responses that are based on shared values of respect for life, human dignity and the environment” (S/PV.7499, 64).

This globality, pervasiveness and need for collective action is accepted within all the subject positions in the (re)articulations. Vulnerable states and individuals together with preventer states and victims presents climate change as a threat that overrides their capacities to fight against the threats they are posed to by climate change, without joint efforts on global scale. Even as the ways in which climate change manifests the threat to each subject position is differential, they are all undermined by the same source of threat and inability in longer run to secure against it on their one.

#### *Shared Storyline: Sustainable development as Security*

The third shared storyline presents sustainable development as the best way in securing security. Sustainable development forms a vital tool in maintenance of security that is threatened by non-sustainability and non-development. In all the levels — human, state, international and global — sustainable development is set as a precondition for a secure future. Sustainable development cluster brings together the vital ingredients of security, environmental protection and development. Sustainability is presupposed for stopping climate change from accelerating in a dangerous manner, when as development is conceived as a prerequisite for successful adaptation that is a necessity in protecting the well-being and lives of humans and states, and thus maintaining security on a global level. Sustainable development is accepted as necessity for human security, which is in turn is broadly accepted as a precondition for a national and planetary security. Therefore, it is necessary to protect sustainable development from the threats brought about by climate change which “are primarily threats to sustainable development” (S/PV.5663, 9).

Sustainable development is perceived as a way to reduce vulnerabilities behind human insecurities and provocation of conflicts and social unrest. Sustainable development governance is represented as a security technique that can prevent the actualization of many climate-related threats by addressing the root causes of these threats. Crucial feature of the sustainable development its ambiguity and vagueness that enables it to work as an answer to multiple different security demands. Conflict centered environmental security discourse sees

sustainable development as a precautionary measure that forestalls the emergence of environmental and social conditions triggering conflicts, when as human security approach acknowledges sustainable development primarily as a way to enhance people's capacities to adapt. The articulation presenting climate change as an existential threat, finds sustainable development also as a way to improve their capacities, but also emphasizes the responsibility of major emitters to urgently shift their production patterns towards sustainable ways. Sustainable development is a prerequisite for peace and security and "the failure to maintain peace and security is a root cause for the absence of sustainable development" (S/PV.7499, 49).

The ambiguity and vagueness of sustainable development signifier enables it to be accepted as a universal tool that is holistic and precautionary, but leaves open the ways in which its implementation actually happens, and leaves it compatible with many different security discourses. It allows the articulation of diversifying referent objects and empowerment of multiply different security actors. Non-sustainability and non-development as the antagonistic frontiers of society enables all the different subject positions to share the storyline.

#### Climate security as an empty signifier

The effects of climate change are shattering the stability of existing social structures that do not manage to represent or explain the occurring events that leads to reactivation of deeply sedimented structures (Methmann 2010, 353–354). What this means is that the basic structures of security, which are built on state sovereignty and military power, are rendered into a contestation as the threat of climate change is not manageable through these old structures, but can only be accelerated by them. In this way, climate change represents the 'discursive outside' that is disrupting the logic of security by systemically linking the traditionally conceived means of security to the sources of new insecurities. Climate change discourse relates the growth of threats to globally non-administered and separate security policies, and to the narrow security approach, which fails to acknowledge the interconnectedness of different sectors and actors. It is thus seen that "[s]ecurity policies exclusively based on national sovereignty appear less and less appropriate in this context" of climate change, as they obstruct the necessary precautionary action and creates insecurities (S/PV.5663, 5–6).

The discourse of climate security as a hegemonic project contesting the meaning of security, is based on the construction of a chain of equivalence. In the chain of equivalence different political demands are united under one hegemonic demand representing them all. Like the theory of hegemony posit, the articulation of an antagonisms is a prerequisite for the construction of a chain, which results that a political discourse is always characterized, on one the hand, with the articulation of social antagonism that reveals the limits of the social structure, and the common good and ways to enhance it on the other (Rothe 2016, 70). The three (re)articulations of security, presented above, embody many heterogeneous demands that can in some points even be contradictory. The logic of equivalence is diluting these internal differences through construction of a common threat (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 114).

This means that the common orientation towards climate change and security, does not mean that the coalition build through equivalential chain is marked with an overall consensus (see Rothe 2016, 151). The empty signifier, that is the hegemonic demand, represents all the demands that has been attached to it, and the non-being of the elements that have been excluded, and has itself been 'emptied' of any particular content (see Laclau 2005, 69–71; Methmann 2010, 353).

#### *Constructing climate change as a universal threat*

In first articulation climate change presents a threat to vulnerable states through creating environmental conditions that together with insufficient governmental capacities produces a national security threat. Climate change increases the stress on state institutions by bringing about scarcities of vital resources and causing resource management problems, deteriorating food and energy security, undermining livelihoods and increasing poverty, instability and forced migration, which are all forming a fertile grounds for an outbreak of conflict within and cross the borders. Security is obtained through institutional capacity-building, where the vulnerable are aided by financial, technological and scientific support that enables them to build institutional structures to overcome the environmental changes without a radical decline in societies' well-being, which would endanger states' security, and spread into international level. Climate change is brought from environmental problem to a problem of governing and maintaining stability, through which it is understood as a root cause of conflicts. What blocks the being of security is the non-capacity to face the effects of climate change. The non-capacity, in turn, is the result of non-development.

For preventer states the fragility and possible collapse of vulnerable countries constructs a threat of spreading of the conflicts and having to face a large scale movement of people that can violate their identity and bring “ethnic power struggles” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 15). The capacity-building of vulnerable states is thus seen as a common good, which is best enhanced through securing the sustainable development of the vulnerable states. Helping the more vulnerable to develop, is taken out of a mere economic — and even normative— context and linked to national interest of preventer states. Climate change not just aggravate and foment conflicts, but increases “climate-change-related poverty” that breeds “recruitment by rebel or terrorist groups” (S/PV.5663, 4). Also ‘statelessness’, ‘migratory pressure’ and ‘cultural mortality’ caused by climate change that are linked with lost coherence, hatred, instability and alienation, can spread borderlessly in globally integrated and networked world, increasing risk of spread out instability and violence.

Ensuring and promoting sustainable development for vulnerable states is also connected to the protection of the most vulnerable people and whole humanity. “Threats brought about by climate change do not loom over vulnerable States exclusively but are primarily threats to sustainable development” that is a universal tool to secure the common future (S/PV.5663, 9). The various insecurities arising from climate change, from the perspective of human security, are interconnected with the security of a state as fragile and insufficient resource management institutions foment inequalities and decline of environmental conditions increasing these insecurities even further. There is therefore a double effect as climate change, through creating multiple struggles for individuals to maintain their decent living conditions and well-being, causes stress on state institutions, the weak institutions further feed the insecurities.

Security against climate change is thus presented as a universal concern through an equivalential chain that unites the diversifying demands through articulating climate change as an antagonistic other, and links the subject positions into a joint project of fighting the common enemy. Climate security is extend into adjacent spheres so that it becomes to symbolize the demands of human, national and international security. It also takes the form of a master threat as it overwhelms the capacities of individual security actors and creates an image of chaotic and insecure future, if the joint project is missed. Climate change is described as “one of the most severe global challenges facing humankind” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 24) which

manifests how “nature rebels against humans” (ibid., 12), and “acts as a threat multiplier” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 22, emphasis added) that “will intensify already existing global challenges, exacerbate water and food scarcity, and cause a range of other shocks and stresses, some of which will be highly unpredictable and abrupt” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 28).

This construction of dangerous climate change as a collective enemy uniting the subject positions, also constructs humanity as a collective identity, and sets it as a referent object that is sought to be protected. Climate change do not only deepen existing social antagonisms within societies, but own the potential to destroy the whole societies, and eventually that of humanity. Climate change constructs a threat in terms of in terms of “cultural and geographic mortality” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 25). Climate change is “a security challenge that has the capacity to wipe out whole nations and whole cultures and indeed wipe out life as we know it today on this planet”(S/PV.7499, 29). It is not a sovereignty, but the whole existence of humanity as such, which need to be protected. Security is survival, but also stability, which presupposes maintaining decent living conditions on global level by reducing the vulnerabilities. It is also securing the right for identity, which is most often articulated through a universal right for nationhood<sup>9</sup> and culture. Where this claim departs from the traditional security discourse’s claim for nationhood, is in that the security can only be provided by externally aided capacity building and mitigation efforts on behave of both public and private sector actors. Like one of the representatives of the victims illustrate as he states that what they are asking for is “to be given the chance by the rest of our global family to live on in our own islands and to guarantee that we can still say “kia orana<sup>10</sup>” long into the future” (S/PV.7499, 42).

The collective security is best enhanced through prevention and adaptation that are most often linked to sustainable development. Sustainable development is at the heart of climate security, as it seen to reduce the vulnerabilities and to enhance the adaptive capacity and thus preventing mass migration and violent conflict. Climate change is articulated as a matter of ‘high politics’ but the adaptation of exceptional measures is taking the form of bolstering sustainable development through partnership and global governance. The representatives of states as a leaders of global community must institute this action with great urgency or

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<sup>9</sup> There is no contradiction in identifying with both subject positions as far as they are not an antagonistic relation, but equivalented through common enemy (See Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 43; Laclau & Mouffe 2001, 103, 107; Rothe 2016, 166).

<sup>10</sup> According to the representative ‘kia orana’ means ‘may you and your lineage live on’ (S/PV.7499, 42).

“humanity will have to face unprecedented challenges of an inconceivable magnitude” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 9).

#### The role of the Security Council

Securitization of climate change through articulating climate change as the antagonistic other bears two stances over the role of the UNSC in global security governance. For many vulnerable states the Security Council represents the international structure from the time of its founding owning the old power structures and inheriting military and sanction based tools, which are not appropriate to handle the new non-traditional security threats. Especially the exclusive nature of the Council which concentrates power to the ‘largest emitters’ is seen makes it unacceptable to the Council to take action toward global and complex threat of climate change. Due to the power structure favoring the largest emitters it is questioned whether “is it possible for the Security Council to adopt resolutions on sanctions or reparations that effectively hold those countries responsible for the damage they are causing?” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 26).

The Security Council is representing invalid agent to address universal threat as it enables drawing of nationalistic interests of the permanent members. The increasing military expenditures of the permanent members is raised to exemplify the hypocritical position of the Council in debating the non-traditional threat that strikes primarily on the most vulnerable. “A first positive step would be to significantly reduce military expenses and to allocate those resources to a fund to tackle the impacts of climate change in developing countries” (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 26). But even as the lack of universal human security based approach is set as the reason for the Security Council’s inappropriateness, it is often the state based ‘common but differentiated responsibilities<sup>11</sup>’ that is seen as threatened by the actions of the Security Council. The Security Council is feared to use punitive measures which can hinder the development of some of the vulnerable countries.

Especially for those of the preventers, the Security Council forms an appropriate and crucial part of the United Nation’s governing structure that enables versatile and effective action. The

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<sup>11</sup> “In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.” (Rio Declaration 1992, principle 7.)

Security Council conceived to provide urgency to the problem, and to provide authority to other bodies of the UN. Even as partnership is presented as the most attractive mechanism to implement adaptation measures, the UN is presented as vital actor in ensuring the global efficiency and coordination. Here, the agency of security actor is rather decentralized than centralized. The prevention of catastrophic future and negative effects of climate change is mutual work of whole humanity, as the insecurities of those more vulnerable constitutes insecurities for those less vulnerable. Like the following statement exemplifies:

[S]ecurity risks and vulnerabilities are interrelated, which constitutes in itself an additional threat to stability and must be addressed in a comprehensive and collaborative way. These risks and vulnerabilities equally require the involvement of all actors and concerned stakeholders. (S/PV.7499, 54)

The Security Council thus an important coordinator or platform in orchestrating and uniting the collective efforts.

The third role given to the Security Council can be found from the articulation of victims, which is here presented separately, as it shares the storylines structuring the evolving discourse of climate security, but is constructing common identity of the political community through refining the antagonistic point. What is addressed is the agency behind climate change. It is those who are causing the danger of climate change through inaction and refusal that are formed as the antagonistic other. The causers are not conceived through historical responsibility, but are those forestalling the needed prevention measures, and blocking the Security Council's possibilities to fulfill its mandate, that are causing the danger for victims.

[“Yet all that is needed for those multifaceted threats to become complex and contagious sources of global instability is the inaction of powerful multilateral partners”<sup>12</sup>](#)

While the rest of the world debates the implications of climate change, we in the small islands and atolls of the Pacific are having to deal with the problem, because it is already upon us” (S/PV.7499, 35).

The meetings were held between 2007 and 2015, and there is a shift that can be discerned in defining climate change as a future threat towards an emphasize that the “[d]angerous climate change is already occurring” (S/PV.6587 (Res), 28). Especially in the arguments of victims the cruel reality of dangerous climate change is already occurring. Destructive storms and dying reefs are used as examples of how the victims are already suffering from the dangerous effects

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<sup>12</sup> S/PV.7499, 38

of climate change. Climate change is presented as a source of present difficulties with food and health security, loss of traditional ways of life and increased criminality.

Climate change is linked to unfairness, as the victims are the ones to experience the power of climate change to destroy the whole existence of societies, even they have not contributed for its outset. The ability to provide their own security is ripped off from the victims, and it is “morally and ethically unacceptable for the international community to fail to respond” to the global meltdown that causes hunger, poverty, and eventually extinction of the vulnerable states (S/PV.6587 (Res.), 28). Climate change is described as “an unprovoked war being waged” against the victims (S/PV.5663, 32). “Climate change is a global threat, not an abstract concern”, which threatens the existence of the victims through refusal of some to see it as such and refusing to carry their responsibilities (S/PV.6587, 24). Climate change itself is reduced from its agency and the common identity is structured through those not taking part to fight against climate change. Climate change is rather conceived as a weapon that that is used through blocking global effective action to defend from it in terms of mitigation and adaptation. It is the existing global security and economic structures that are responsible of the current situation. It is the deficiencies in global environmental governance, global economic governance and global security governance that are at the root of the security challenges faced by the victims, which is the outcome of the failure in acknowledging the interdependence of these areas.

To fulfill its responsibilities “[t]he Council must look at issues of international peace and security through the lens of the present tense by redefining its understanding of security to be in line with today’s realities, as non-traditional causes of the difficulties in maintaining peace and security are plentiful”. “The root causes of the difficulties in maintaining international peace and security are no longer drawn from traditional definitions of security, as those root causes have evolved over the years into what might be considered non-traditional causes. The lines are blurred between the traditional realpolitik of the past and today’s more complex notions of non-traditional definitions of security”. (S/PV.7499, 49.) It is continuously urged that the UNSC must broaden and redefine its approach to security and “institutionalize the threat of climate change on its agenda” (S/PV.7499, 59). It is the states who refuse to acknowledge the urgency and danger formed by climate change, and repressing

the UNSC to fulfilling its responsibilities to maintain security and peace, that are causing the threat for humanity.

It is addressed that while the international community debates on whether or not climate change can constitute a threat, coastal areas are disappearing and lives suffering in the societies of the victims. The inability to act as a subject of security against dangerous climate change, constructs the UNSC as a securing subject. The UNSC is conceived as a global conductor who has the power and responsibility to establish more effective security structures to secure the humanity. The UNSC is rather conceived as a representative of the UN that a platform of exclusive number of state representatives. Like the following statement illustrates: “The Security Council ultimately acts for the whole Organization, not solely on behalf of narrow interests, and it has full power to investigate any situation that could lead to international friction so as to better understand the possible danger to international peace and security” S/PV.7499, 75). It is understood as a representative and authority of global, rather than international, community.

### Protecting the hegemony

The discourse coalition around securitizing climate change presented above, shares the understanding of climate change as a security issue. In the discourse coalition the security signifier is taken out of its conventionalized military context and related to development and humanitarian problems. An equivalential chain is produced between different vulnerabilities of individuals and societies against a threat of chaotic and dangerous future, and potential destruction of humanity, brought about by climate change. Vulnerabilities are not only causes of human insecurities, but also triggers of conflicts and migratory flows. Security is rather conceived in terms of sustaining peace in transformation, than as maintaining any stable state of security. Security as sustaining peace, requires “a pre-emptive response” instead of a reaction that in the face of global and pervasive threat of climate change, can be too late (S/PV.7499, 31).

However, there are attempts to break the chain of equivalence and to channel the grievances and social demands into already existing hegemonic structures. This is done by keeping the demands separate, which is preventing the establishment of discourse coalitions, or by adopting the social demands into the already existing structures (Rothe 2016, 72–73; Howarth

200, 107). The unified demand for climate security is separated into multiple different demands that need to be addressed separately. For example, it is stated that there “is a more relevant, stronger link between climate change and development as opposed to security (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 20), and climate change will turn into an international security threat only if the international community “fail to deal with climate change as a sustainable development issue” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 9). Climate change “is in essence an issue of sustainable development” (S/PV.5663, 12). Here the link between sustainable development and security is detached. Climate change is articulated as a sustainable development and *not* a security issue.

The role of hunger, poverty and competition for scarce resources, and climate change’s potential to aggravate the disputes, is acknowledged in some arguments, but the straightforward link between them is denied. These are conceived as separate dangers that must be addressed separately through developmental and environmental governance that fall out of the mandate of international security governance. Since climate change do not form an independent factor in conflicts, its contribution can be addressed only separately in the context of each the conflict situation. It is empathized that “[e]nvironmental impacts do not threaten international peace and security on their own” ( S/PV.6587, 8) nor is climate change “a threat in the context of Article 39 of the Charter” (S/PV.5663 (Res.), 21). The Article 39 states that “[t]he Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance”(the UN Charter 1945).

The effects of climate change on human and energy security are separated from international security. Welfare and energy politics of state are a domestic issues that, only if combined with military power, can be seen as a concern for international security. The urgent need for emission reduction is best achieved on behalf of development states, who are the most responsible of climate change. The responsibility cannot be thrust into the shoulders of developing states as they have a legitimate aspiration to pursue development for achievement of United Nations Millennium Development Goals<sup>13</sup>, and for adapting to the environmental

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<sup>13</sup> “The United Nations Millennium Development Goals were 8 goals that all 189 UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2015. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, signed in September 2000, committed world leaders to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women.” (WHO 2017.) In 2015, the Declaration was replaced by adopting the 2030

changes. The adaptation should be financially aided by the developed states through developmental and humanitarian aid, which is built on voluntary partnership. Like the following statement by one of the deniers of climate threat illustrates: “We call on all interested donor countries to consider the possibility of providing, on an urgent and targeted basis, aid to the countries concerned for the purpose of adaptation” (S/PV.6587, 13). Security measures are only needed if maladaptation leads to large scale violence or the trend of aggressive interference into the internal affairs of sovereign States continues. The encroachment of the Security Council into the environmental, social and economic sectors is conceived illegitimate, and climate change must be addressed within bodies representing these separate sectors.

It is the security framing of climate change that can pose a threat to international security, not climate change itself. Security, and especially international security, is to be approached through military or conflict centered security, where sovereign state is conceived as the basic unit. The transition into low-carbon economy must be achieved through financial and technological aid that does not form a threat to the sovereignty or developmental goals of states, which would potentially lead to military involvement. The security framing of climate change was also argued to bring forth unnecessary politicization and disagreement between countries, which would only hinder the actions taken in order to tackle climate change. The complexity and unequal distribution of the effects of climate change necessitates approaching the problem through the context of each state in concern. The possible (but not evident) security implications of climate change can only be investigated within universal body, where each state can decide what action on their behalf is appropriate.

#### [UN Security Council Presidential Statement 6587th](#)

The debate held in 2007 was not able to result a resolution or statement, but was groundbreaking contribution to the climate security discourse and to the transformation of the discursive field. In 2011 more states had shifted from climate security deniers to identify with the subject positions of climate security discourse, and were therefore participating in securitizing of climate change. In comparison to the 2007 meeting, the number of both the

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Agenda for Sustainable Development, which increased the number of goals to 17 and puts more emphasis on climate change (see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>).

participating states, and those in favor of an active role of the Security Council in addressing climate change-related insecurity, increased notably in 2011 (Cousins 2013, 203).

The presidential statement was adopted as an outcome of the meeting held under the heading *impact of climate change*. Even as it did not lead to an adaptation of any significant action, its acceptance acted as a symbol of widening of the understanding of security within the Security Council. In the statement the Security Council addresses that climate change is principally a sustainable development issue of which main responsibility is conferred upon General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, but acknowledges that “possible adverse effects of climate change may, in the long run, aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security,” and “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, when such issues are drivers of conflict, represent a challenge to the implementation of Council mandates or endanger the process of consolidation of peace” (S/PRST/2011/15).

Even as the statement felt short in recognizing climate change as a threat to international peace and security, it did acknowledge that climate change has security implications. It recognized climate change as a potential factor in conflicts and as an exacerbator of already existing security threats. Together with the ethos of prevention, which was also stressed in the statement, this recognition of the interconnectedness of environmental, social and security sectors builds stronger emphasis on non-traditional sources of security threats. Environmental and social governance are, thus, linked to conflict prevention. What it means is that climate change mitigation (of emissions) and adaptation are not irrelevant in maintaining peace and security, but connected to the outset of conflicts and exacerbation of ‘certain existing threats’. However, the possibility of the Security Council to investigate the potential climate-related security threats is tied in to a contextual approach. This gives space for conceiving adaptation measures as a part of a conflict prevention strategy, but leaves out the global emission mitigation efforts. This may result from fear of the Security Council using its punitive and legally binding measures in a way they would endanger states’ ‘legitimate aspiration for development’ as discussed above.

The statement also acknowledges “that possible security implications of loss of territory of some States caused by sea-level-rise may arise”(S/PRST/2011/15). What the security

implications arising from sea-level rise are, is left open. This ambiguous language used in the statement do not link security strictly to warfare and conflicts, but allows articulation of non-traditional security threats. However, the demand for global perspective central in climate security discourse, is highly disregarded in favor of a state sovereignty. The potential security implications of climate change are passed somewhere into the future, where they may occur if climate change is failed to be addressed as a developmental problem. The normative aspiration of the Security Council to protect populations from crimes against humanity and genocide, is still highly dependent on traditional security discourse. But the ability of the Security Council to agree on a presidential statement over climate change is demonstrating how a discursive struggle over the meaning of security is taking place.

## Conclusions

In order to answer the question of how climate change is constructed as a threat in the United Nations Security Council, I studied the ways in which security is understood within the Security Council. I investigated who or what is threatened by climate change, how they are threatened and what needs to be done and by whom, to be secured from the threat. Using poststructuralist approach that provided tools and theorizations for analyzing and understanding how discourses structure the world we are living in, I traced the signification chains behind the production of meaning. I found four different understandings of security, of which three differ from the traditional understanding of security where security is conceived as a state's ability to withstand aggression from abroad. In the traditional understanding of security climate change itself is not recognized as a threat, but can only form a threat through others states' or the Security Council's aggressive interference into domestic politics of another state. In this understanding, what needs to be protected is the state sovereignty.

In one of the other understandings, security is conceived as an absence of conflict, which do not always occur between states, but also within them. State is the main object to be secured, but the necessity to secure decent living conditions for populations is acknowledged. Neither national nor international security cannot exist if citizens are facing large scale hardships to maintain their living. Climate change is seen to cause scarcities of natural resources and

degradation and loss of land, which can engender poverty, migration and social unrest that are potential breeding grounds for conflicts. Climate change is seen as a root cause of conflicts by engendering environmental conditions that changes in livelihoods and causes pressure on governmental capacities of states and international institutions. Failed resource and population management on national and international level results conflicts that can spread across the world.

Security is also conceived in terms of human well-being and dignity. Security-insecurity is defined in relation to vulnerabilities that causes human suffering and (unnecessary) loss of lives. Security means safety from threats that arise from a great variety of sources and threaten the vital cores of human lives. Poverty, hunger, diseases and environmental disasters are threats that people need to be protected from. Security is fulfillment of human rights and capabilities to adapt to environmental and socio-economic changes, without jeopardizing well-being or lives of people. Climate change exacerbates and multiplies these vulnerabilities, endangering human rights and thus increasing human insecurity.

The fourth definition of security is related to cultural rights, global equality and survival. Security is the ability to survive in geographical and cultural terms. It is also safety from human insecurities, which is a precondition for cultural survival. Security can only be provided through global responsibility and coordination. Security is not a freedom of war, but freedom from sea-level rise and destruction of biodiversity, and preparedness for environmental disasters. With all implications, climate change itself endangers traditional ways of lives, devastates states and threatens the lives of the people. What threatens security is not warfare in traditional sense, but biological and chemical outputs that are accelerating climate change.

These different understandings of security that acknowledge climate change as a security problem, merged in many points. In all three latter definitions climate change is conceived as a security issue that cannot to be tackled by separate security policies, requiring joint efforts. Cooperation and multilateral action are prerequisite for maintaining security in all levels and perspectives. Global governance is needed, as it does not matter where the harmful emissions are produced, they still have the same effect on global climate change. The global character of climate change is also a crucial feature in climate-induced migration, which is commonly recognized as a dangerous consequence of climate change. In all definitions climate migrant is presented as the symbol of the dangerousness of climate change. What provides the

common mean to fight against climate change is sustainable development. Sustainable development is conceived as a way to reduce vulnerabilities of humans and states alike. It is also a vital tool to provide security for those facing an existential threat due to climate change. Climate change is thus conceived as a common threat of whole humanity.

Each of the signification chains offer differential subject positions from where the representatives of states speak from. These subject positions represent differential political communities which are seen as threatened. Coalition-building through commonly shared storylines as presented above, make climate security function as an empty signifier. Empty signifier represents an empty place unifying a set of equivalential demands (Laclau 1995, 155). In the situation of climate insecurity, climate security is present as that which is absent. Climate security thus represents the equivalential relation between various demands such as environmental protection, sustainable development, food security, energy security and equality.

To be able to seek an answer to the question of how does the construction of climate change as a threat affect the traditional understanding of security, I analyzed the how the hegemonic discursive structure of security was defended. In the defensive hegemonic project the chain of equivalence was intercepted by addressing the differences between demands. Environmental protection, human development and security were detached from each other and articulated as separate demands. The demands were also merged into the already existing structures by articulating that climate change is most effectively addressed through environmental and sustainable development governance and not through security, which would politicize the problem further and bring forth more obstacles for cooperation. The equivalential relation between human and international security was also separated into non-relation and the well-being of people is seen to be secured through developmental aid that is based on voluntary partnership. Security framing of climate change was seen inconvenient as the security tools are inappropriate in addressing complex problems such as climate change, but are designed to combat military threats.

A presidential statement that was agreed on at the second meeting on climate change, acknowledges that in the longer run, climate change may aggravate already existing security threats and have negative effects on the consolidation of peace, but defines climate change to be primarily a sustainable *development* issue. Sea-level rise and loss of territory is

recognized to potentially have security implications for some *states*, but sea-level rise as such is missed to be conceived as a threat. The necessity of cooperation and integrated response, crucial for climate security, is recognized, but is stated to be accomplished through relevant organs of the United Nations, such as General Assembly and ECOSOC, that own appropriate mandates. The presidential statement emphasizes the importance of cooperation between these institutional bodies and requests the Secretary-General to provide the Security Council with contextual information of possible security implications of climate change.

It seems that rather than the Security Council extending its area of operation radically out of the military sphere, actors from social, environmental and economic sectors are seen increasingly important in maintaining peace. The exacerbating nature of climate change that is proceeding toward total disorder, both challenges and justifies the central position of weaponry within security thinking. Conceiving climate change as a threat demands radical transformation in the security tools, as that what needs to be fought against is environmental conditions overrunning the capacity of societies to adapt. But if climate change is seen simply as an exacerbator of already existing threats, it paints a picture of more conflict prone and socially unstable future, which also emphasizes the importance of military power.

Climate change does not only cause environmental changes, but has an effect on economic and social structures. Climate change symbolizes the globalized and interconnected nature of today's world, where states' capabilities to control the economic and social spheres have degenerated. Actors from private sector and civil society are increasingly seen as active partners in maintaining peace and security. Global consensus is seen as crucial, while the separate security policies of states are seen helplessly insufficient. Threats are increasingly seen to lack clear defined geographical or temporal parameters, which is highlighting the need of united preventative action. What seems to be hindering these efforts is the inequality in the magnitude of experienced negative effects and in demanded mitigation efforts. Those who are geographically and economically better positioned see climate change as a developmental problem that in the future can have security implications, when as those more vulnerable conceive climate change to be far more dangerous.

On the state level, there is a division between vulnerable or fragile and 'non-vulnerable'. Fragile and vulnerable states and societies suffering from climate change are potential national and global security threats to non-vulnerable states. When some less vulnerable

states deny their responsibilities and deteriorating global actions are aggravating and producing threats to vulnerable states. Global action is vital for security against climate change, which is conceived rather as a continuous process of adaptation and peace-building than a target or stabilized state. Sustainability is recognized vital for security, but it is more often understood as a sustainable development for the future than as a matter of reducing greenhouse gas emissions with immediate action. This is not that surprising taking into account that the Security Council is highly exclusive body that gives more power to less vulnerable and highly industrialized states, such as the United States, Russia and China.

I would argue that there is clear, even if only a minor shift in the meaning of security from being the defense of states sovereignty and territorial integrity, to the protection against vulnerabilities and the maintenance of global stability. Climate change is widely seen as a global threat demanding global response, instead of an international one. The effect of the discourse of human security and the idea of equal and common security for a humanity can be identified as prevailing within the debates. There is also an urge to better acknowledge threats that operate out of conflict centered perspectives. But this global framing also causes defenses over state sovereignty that is seen to be threatened by the demands of global governance structures and acknowledgement of more human security based threats. This understanding of climate change as a global threat does not stop the traditional security logics from working, but undermines its hegemonic position. Like it was stated by on representative of a threatened state, “[g]one are the days when security was about warfare” (S/PV.7499, 76).

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