

SUMMARY of the Article “Conflict and climate,” by Huma Yusuf

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The outcome of COP28, while likely to focus on ambiguous terms regarding fossil fuels, invites skepticism due to the absence of concrete targets and deadlines. However, the summit's positive aspects include the new Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace. This declaration emphasizes collective action for building climate resilience, particularly in vulnerable countries and conflict-affected communities. Notably, seven out of the ten most climate-vulnerable nations are also considered fragile states. COP28 acknowledges the intersection of climate and security challenges, recognizing the vicious circle wherein climate change exacerbates security issues, while state fragility and conflict impede climate adaptation and mitigation. This nexus is relevant to Pakistan, witnessing a surge in militant attacks and security concerns leading to the expulsion of undocumented Afghans. The article explores how climate change contributes to security challenges beyond resource competition, impacting state legitimacy, increasing susceptibility to militant recruitment, fostering illicit activities through climate migration, and causing distractions for security forces engaged in rescue and reconstruction efforts. The author emphasizes the need for a climate lens in security policymaking and highlights the adaptation finance gap, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected areas. Pakistan's reliance on the Loss and Damage Fund for climate resilience underscores the importance of strategic partnerships with local governments and community networks for effective climate finance delivery in challenging contexts. The article concludes by urging vulnerable countries to address the climate-security cycle by enhancing democratic norms and prioritizing climate-related concerns.

Easy/Short SUMMARY:

The COP28 summit outcomes, with a probable focus on vague terms about fossil fuels, warrant skepticism due to the lack of clear targets. However, the positive aspects include the new Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace, emphasizing collective action for climate resilience in vulnerable and conflict-affected areas. The article highlights the interconnectedness of climate and security challenges, relevant to Pakistan's increased militant attacks and security concerns. Climate change impacts state legitimacy, susceptibility to militant recruitment, and fosters illicit activities, necessitating a climate lens in security policymaking. The adaptation finance gap, especially in fragile areas, poses a challenge, emphasizing the need for effective climate finance delivery and strategic partnerships at the local level. The article concludes by urging vulnerable countries, like Pakistan, to address the climate-security cycle through enhanced democratic norms and prioritizing climate-related concerns.

SOLUTIONS of The Problem:

1. Clear Targets in Climate Agreements:

- Advocate for setting clear targets and deadlines in climate agreements, particularly regarding fossil fuels, to ensure accountability.

2. Effective Implementation of Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace:

- Work towards the effective implementation of the Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace, focusing on collective action for building climate resilience in vulnerable and conflict-affected areas.

3. Integration of Climate Lens in Security Policymaking:

- Advocate for the integration of a climate lens in security policymaking to address the interconnected challenges of climate change and security,

including state legitimacy, militant recruitment, and illicit activities.

4. Strategic Partnerships for Climate Finance Delivery:

- Strengthen strategic partnerships with local governments and community networks for the efficient delivery of climate finance, especially in challenging contexts.

5. Addressing the Adaptation Finance Gap:

- Work towards closing the adaptation finance gap, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected areas, by addressing concerns about funding flows and project viability.

6. Empowering Disempowered Groups in Political Set-Up:

- Focus on empowering disempowered groups, such as local governments, schools, and NGOs, in the political set-up to ensure effective climate finance delivery.

7. Democratic Norms and Climate Prioritization:

- Enhance democratic norms and prioritize climate-related concerns at the national level to contribute to breaking the climate-security cycle.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the Article:

- **Increase in Militant Attacks in Pakistan (November):** 34% compared to the previous month.
- **Number of Attacks in Pakistan (until Nov 30):** 599.
- **Concerns About Security Reasons for Expelling Undocumented Afghans:**



- Security concerns are cited as the reason for expelling undocumented Afghans from Pakistan.
- **Adaptation Finance Gap in Low-Income Countries:** Between \$215 billion and \$387 billion per year.
- **COP28's Focus Areas:**
 - Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace.
 - Ambiguous language regarding the fate of fossil fuels.

MCQs from the Article:

1. **What is the likely focus of COP28 regarding fossil fuels?**
 - A. Clear targets
 - B. Ambiguous terms**
 - C. Concrete deadlines
 - D. Fossil fuel elimination plan
2. **What does the new Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace emphasize?**
 - A. Fossil fuel usage reduction
 - B. Individual country efforts
 - C. Collective action for climate resilience**
 - D. Ambiguous climate agreements
3. **How many of the most climate-vulnerable countries are also considered fragile states?**
 - A. Five
 - B. Three
 - C. Seven**
 - D. Ten
4. **What is the primary focus of the article regarding the climate-security nexus?**
 - A. Resource competition
 - B. Interconnected challenges**
 - C. State legitimacy

D. Climate migration impacts

5. **What is the author's suggestion for addressing the adaptation finance gap?**
- A. Relying on high-income countries
 - B. Strategic partnerships and local delivery**
 - C. Increasing funding for low-income countries
 - D. Expanding climate finance initiatives.

VOCABULARY:

1. **Scepticism** (noun) (شك في شيء): A skeptical attitude; doubt as to the truth of something.
2. **Fettered** (adjective) (مقيّد بالسلاسل): Bound by chains, typically the feet.
3. **Concrete Targets** (phrase) (أهداف محددة): Specific, clearly defined goals or objectives.
4. **Resilience** (noun) (مرونة): The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.
5. **Fragility** (noun) (هشاشة): The quality of being delicate or vulnerable.
6. **Enshrine** (verb) (محمّل في معبد): Preserve (a right, tradition, or idea) in a form that ensures it will be protected and respected.
7. **Susceptible** (adjective) (معرض للتأثر): Likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by a particular thing.
8. **Illicit** (adjective) (ممنوع): Forbidden by law, rules, or custom.
9. **Legitimacy** (noun) (شرعية): Conformity to the law or to rules.
10. **Distractions** (noun) (مشتتات): Things that divert one's attention.

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PROMISES are meant to be broken. That's why we should respond to the outcome of COP28 with a healthy dose of scepticism. The headlines will focus on the language agreed regarding the fate of fossil fuels: 'abate', 'phase down', 'phase out'. Whatever the agreement, it is unlikely to be fettered with concrete targets or firm deadlines and will rely on fantasies of how quickly we can scale carbon capture technologies. In all scenarios, you can expect the ongoing, unapologetic use of fossil fuels.

But let's not fully dismiss COP28 yet. In other areas, the summit has been more productive. Foremost among these is the new Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace, which calls for "bolder collective action to build climate resilience ... in highly vulnerable countries and communities, particularly those threatened or affected by fragility or conflict".

Seven out of 10 of the most climate-vulnerable countries are also ranked as fragile states. COP28's focus on intersections between climate and security is thus a welcome addition. The declaration enshrines a two-fold recognition: one, that climate change exacerbates security challenges; two, that state fragility and conflict impede climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. This is a vicious circle, leaving the most vulnerable further exposed to both violence and climate risk.

These topics have relevance to Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies, our country witnessed a 34 per cent increase in militant attacks in November as compared to the previous month, bringing the number of attacks this year until Nov 30 to 599. Security concerns are also cited as the reason why Pakistan is expelling undocumented Afghans in a controversial move. Though under-researched, there can be no doubt that cycles of drought and flooding in Pakistan and Afghanistan are exacerbating these trends.

Climate migration will increase demand for illicit activities.

The links between climate change and security challenges are increasingly better understood. Until now, the focus has primarily been on resource competition, the idea that food and water scarcity drives competition between different groups (for example, Kenya's herders, farmers and conservancy owners) leading to conflict. But other factors are at play too.

In an article titled How Climate Change Helps Violent Non-State Actors, Noah Gordon underscores how climate change undermines state legitimacy by reducing states' capacity for service delivery and creating more space for non-state actors. Gordon discusses how the spread of inhospitable environments, particularly in agricultural economies, will lead to farmers being desperate and more susceptible to militant recruitment. He also points out how climate migration will increase the demand for illicit activities such as people smuggling, which will provide militant groups with a new funding stream. Most importantly, climate injustice post-disasters will further weaken state legitimacy and spread anger that can be channelled through non-state actors' narratives.

There is also growing awareness that climate disasters distract security forces from their prime aims as they are increasingly pulled into rescue and reconstruction efforts. This year, from Spain to the US and East Africa, militaries were involved in responses to wildfires and floods, tapping resources and blocking capacity in unpredictable ways. In this context, Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said at COP28 that climate change would be at the top of Nato's agenda and that member states would be more cautious about considering issues such as food and energy security while supporting the just transition.

Including a climate lens to security policymaking is arguably more easily achievable than ensuring that insecure areas receive adequate access to climate finance and adaptation and mitigation initiatives. A UNEP report released ahead of COP28 found that there is an adaptation finance gap in low-income countries of between \$215 billion and \$387bn per year, at least 50pc larger than thought. The issue is worse in fragile and conflict-affected areas, due to concerns about funding flows and project viability in these areas.

Given that Pakistan is eyeing Loss and Damage Fund support to build climate resilience, including in many parts of the country that would be categorised as



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fragile or conflict-hit, we should pay close attention to the plans for better partnering with local governments and community networks, such as schools and NGOs, to deliver climate finance in difficult contexts, groups that are sadly disempowered in our political set-up. Ultimately, vulnerable countries themselves will also have to play a role in tackling the vicious cycle of climate and security by improving democratic norms and prioritising climate-related concerns.

The writer is a political and integrity risk analyst.

X: @humayusuf

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