



WORKSHOP REPORT FORM

Number and title of workshop

5.4 Climate Change and Migration: Human security risk for the Mediterranean Region

Date and time of workshop

1st November, 14-16h.

Moderator (Name and Institution)

Dr. Thanos Dokos, Director General, Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy, ELIAMEP

Rapporteur (Name and Institution)

Josie Hooker (TI-S)

Panellists (Name, institution, title)

- 1) Anna Triantaphyllidou, Senior Research Fellow, Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy ELIAMEP – **failed to arrive**
- 2) Dimitri Lalas, Director of FACE3TS Ltd
- 3) Theodore Skylakakis, Secretary-General for International Economic Relations and Development Co-operation and Special Representative of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs on climate change
- 4) Tina Birbili, Head of Environment Section, Municipality of Athens Development Agency

Main Issues Covered

- The synergies between climate change, associated rises in population movement and corruption
- The scientific forecast for climate change in the Mediterranean and MENA region
- The implications of these climatic changes on food, water and energy security and economic growth on one hand, and thus on political stability and conflict on the other
- The disparities between the Global North and the Global South with respect to: their contribution to the emissions and consumption driving climate change, ecological vulnerability to the effects of climate change, and the capacity to deal with the repercussions of climate change.
- The potentially unprecedented scope of increases in environmentally induced migration flows, both within countries and regions but particularly from the Global South to the Global North. Exacerbation of such trends by population growth.
- The push factors behind this increase in migration: droughts, flooding, natural disasters, desertification and agricultural crises provoked by environmental degradation on one hand; and heightened civil strife and conflict on the other
- The corruption risks associated with such migration flows (both domestic and transnational), with illegal migration a particular concern. Such risks included illicit networks and organised crime, human trafficking, bribery of border-control officials and underground labour markets – as such encompassing not only risks produced at



the moment of illegal entry/exit, but also those generated in both sending and receiving societies

- The particular geopolitical features of the developed Mediterranean countries that mark this region as a potential hotspot for these types of increased instability, namely proximity to regions of the Global South with high vulnerability to ecological degradation and therefore out-migration (MENA region), and positioning as “gate-keeper” of Europe for both African and Asian continents
- EU responses to this future global panorama, particularly with relation to both selfish and moral interests in providing “adaptation funds” for weak and vulnerable states
- Measures needed to combat corruption and capture of such funds, and to ensure transparency in the new paradigm in global governance that this new panorama will necessitate
- Leading role taken by the Greek government to generate research, debate, policy recommendations and programmes in this vein

Main Outcomes

- Need for urgent, careful and decisive attention to developing policy that will put a halt or at least contain runaway climate change and mitigate against the negative repercussions of already “locked in” climate change. The current global financial crisis should not be a barrier and pretext for neglecting this urgency, nor for lower levels of transparency in dealing with the climate crisis
- Panellists agree that the EU should play a leading role in developing and implementing such policy, adopting a more direct, interventionist approach than thus far taken, and that efforts be more closely integrated across the EU
- Panellists urge that the economic and security-related benefits of the pre-emptive approach they describe is compelling enough a motive for action and should not be shied away from
- The need for greater dialogue and cooperation between the development community and the climate change community

Main Outputs

Recommendations, Follow-up Actions



- The workshop presented the findings of the policy paper: Climate change: Addressing the Impact on Human Security, a joint publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic and the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) as part of their one-year chairmanship of the Human Security Network.
 - Already presented at forums in New York, Bali, Geneva and Vienna, **the paper will next be presented at the 17th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum** (Athens on 19-20 May 2009) and the **2nd Global Forum on Migration and Development**, with the aim of generating policy debate in wider circles
- Call for innovative and creative initiatives such as that of the Greek government, which is recruiting migrants in Greece, both to direct remittances to development projects in their home countries and as development volunteers

Workshop Highlights (including interesting quotes)

- Debate over whether environmental migrants should be considered refugees, as defined by the Geneva Convention. The difficulties in attributing causality between environmental deterioration and migration given the delayed and indirect effects of climate change was perhaps the most compelling argument against such a classification
- The potential for development of theory on “migration tipping points”, based on the “environmental tipping point” literature
- A comment on the EU’s “schizophrenic” attitude to immigration: on one hand it wants to limit immigration, on the other, ageing populations mean immigration will be a valuable source of labour

Signed

Josie Hooker, 01/10/08