

**United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**

**Country: United States of America**

**Delegate(s):** [REDACTED]

**School:** [REDACTED]



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### **Topic 1: Climate Change Exacerbating Conflict**

Climate change is a universal issue that has had a sizable impact on our planet and the diverse populations that inhabit it, with its effects causing turmoil and instability across the globe. As former U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel has stated, climate change is a “threat multiplier.”<sup>1</sup> “They will likely lead to food and water shortages, pandemic, disease, disputes over refugees and resources, and destruction by natural disasters in regions across the globe,” Hagel expressed about the effects of climate change. The United States has had a long history with the climate crisis, having contributed significantly to global emissions,<sup>2</sup> but now being a leading figure in the war against climate change and the struggle to mitigate its implications. The U.S. hopes to advocate for feasible and adaptive approaches, focusing on multilateral cooperation and region-specific strategies to combat the issue at hand.

The impacts climate change has had on human populations worldwide have been immeasurable. The effects of climate change—rising temperatures, natural disasters, and ecological degradation—have had profound impacts globally, but have disproportionately increased tensions in vulnerable regions around the world.<sup>3</sup> Resource scarcity and migration caused by extreme weather events have resulted in competition for limited resources and inevitable conflict both between and within populations.<sup>4</sup> Frequent attempts to curb the effects of

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. "Hagel to Address ‘Threat Multiplier’ of Climate Change." Defense.gov, <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/603440/hagel-to-address-threat-multiplier-of-climate-change/>.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich, Johannes. "This Interactive Chart Shows Changes in the World’s Top 10 Emitters." World Resources Institute, 2 Mar. 2023, <https://www.wri.org/insights/interactive-chart-shows-changes-worlds-top-10-emitters>.

<sup>3</sup> Lindwall, Courtney. "What Are the Effects of Climate Change?" Natural Resources Defense Council, 24 Oct. 2022, <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-are-effects-climate-change>.

<sup>4</sup> “What Are the Dangers in Refugee Camps?” n.d. PCRF. Accessed November 20, 2024. <https://www.pcrf.net/information-you-should-know/what-are-the-dangers-in-refugee-camps.html>.

climate change such as through the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the adoption of the Paris Agreement at the COP21 Paris Climate Conference have seen limited success,<sup>5</sup> as we continue to underachieve progress towards meeting Goal 13 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals<sup>6</sup>—and have been determined by COP28’s global stocktake to be well off-track from achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.<sup>7</sup>

The U.S. has seen steady progress towards decreased carbon emissions in the last decade, with emissions having declined significantly since peaking in 2007.<sup>8</sup> Despite this, the effects of climate change have still continued to be felt across the country. Extreme weather events have been estimated to cost the nation 150 billion dollars annually,<sup>9</sup> and have destroyed infrastructure, homes, and the lives of countless individuals. Many of the less noticeable impacts of climate change have also negatively impacted the U.S., such as with the destabilization of commercial marine fisheries throughout the country.<sup>10</sup> The U.S. has taken notice of all of these negative impacts, both major and minor, and made itself a leader in addressing change. The nation has contributed heavily to climate finance, aiding initiatives such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) which supports climate adaptation in developing countries, and funding climate resilience in vulnerable nations through USAID.<sup>11</sup> The U.S. has additionally made large investments in the

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<sup>5</sup> “History — IPCC.” Accessed November 20, 2024. <https://www.ipcc.ch/about/history/>; “The Paris Agreement | UNFCCC.” Accessed November 20, 2024. <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-parisagreement>.

<sup>6</sup> “Climate Change - United Nations Sustainable Development.” United Nations Sustainable Development, 20 Oct. 2023, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change/>.

<sup>7</sup> “What Is COP28, and Why Is It Important? - COP28 UAE.” Accessed November 20, 2024. <https://www.cop28.com/en/what-is-cop>.

<sup>8</sup> Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. “U.S. Emissions - Center for Climate and Energy Solutions.” Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 3 Apr. 2024, <https://www.c2es.org/content/u-s-emissions/>.

<sup>9</sup> “Climate Change Impacts Are Increasing for Americans.” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 14 Nov. 2023. Retrieved 20 Nov. 2024, from <https://www.noaa.gov/news-release/climate-change-impacts-are-increasing-for-americans>.

<sup>10</sup> “Climate Change Impacts Are Increasing for Americans.” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 14 Nov. 2023. Retrieved 20 Nov. 2024, from <https://www.noaa.gov/news-release/climate-change-impacts-are-increasing-for-americans>.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Delivers For The Green Climate Fund And The World’s Most Vulnerable. 8 May 2023, [www.nrdc.org/bio/joe-thwaites/us-delivers-green-climate-fund-and-worlds-most-vulnerable](http://www.nrdc.org/bio/joe-thwaites/us-delivers-green-climate-fund-and-worlds-most-vulnerable). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.; “Climate Adaptation | Basic Page | U.S. Agency for International Development.” U.S. Agency For International Development, 14 Nov. 2024, [www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation](http://www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.;

innovation of clean technologies such as renewable energy technologies, and has become a key supplier of them.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the U.S. has been a leader in international climate diplomacy, contributing to the development of the Paris Agreement, and pursuing cooperation with other nations to advance beneficial projects and programs—such as the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership.<sup>13</sup>

The United States believes that to truly make progress in alleviating climate change and its exacerbation of conflict, we must take an approach that emphasizes the implementation of both education and innovation, while also collaborating heavily with the private sector in developing sustainable practices and green technologies. The U.S. is a firm believer in facilitating technological advancement and research to monitor climate change and predict extreme weather events.<sup>14</sup> By developing partnerships with the private sector, we can collaborate on sustainable technologies and data collection which can aid in climate-change-related conflict prevention. Additionally, by focusing on developing inclusive solutions and incentive-based approaches with large corporations, we can avoid the antagonism of private sector entities which are crucial in developing technologies and investing in infrastructure.<sup>15</sup> The United States also

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<sup>12</sup> House, White. “FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Continues Driving Climate Investments to Reduce Emissions, Lower Home Energy Costs.” The White House, 13 Nov. 2024, [www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/11/14/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-continues-driving-climate-investments-to-reduce-emissions-lower-home-energy-costs](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/11/14/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-continues-driving-climate-investments-to-reduce-emissions-lower-home-energy-costs). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.

<sup>13</sup> “U.S.-India Joint Statement on Launching The ‘U.S.-India Climate And Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership’ - United States Department of State.” United States Department of State, 18 Aug. 2023, [www.state.gov/u-s-india-joint-statement-on-launching-the-u-s-india-climate-and-clean-energy-agenda-2030-partnership](https://www.state.gov/u-s-india-joint-statement-on-launching-the-u-s-india-climate-and-clean-energy-agenda-2030-partnership). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.

<sup>14</sup> “Biden-Harris Administration, NOAA Announce \$15.3 Million to Improve Climate Projections of Extreme Weather.” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 8 Oct. 2024, [www.noaa.gov/news-release/biden-harris-administration-noaa-announce-153-million-to-improve-climate-projections#:~:text=Biden%2DHarris%20Administration%2C%20NOAA%20announce,National%20Oceanic%20and%20Atmospheric%20Administration](https://www.noaa.gov/news-release/biden-harris-administration-noaa-announce-153-million-to-improve-climate-projections#:~:text=Biden%2DHarris%20Administration%2C%20NOAA%20announce,National%20Oceanic%20and%20Atmospheric%20Administration). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.

<sup>15</sup> “Massive Investment Is Needed in Sustainable Infrastructure to Build Climate Change Resilience.” OECD, 9 Apr. 2024, [www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2024/04/massive-investment-is-needed-in-sustainable-infrastructure-to-build-climate-change-resilience.html#:~:text=Climate%2Dresilience%20measures%20can%20also%20protect%20investment%20returns%2C,and%20support%20continued%20economic%20growth%20and%20development.&text=In%20parallel%2C%20infrastructure%20assets%20make%20up%20an,USD%20198%20billion%20to%20USD%201.6%20trillion](https://www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2024/04/massive-investment-is-needed-in-sustainable-infrastructure-to-build-climate-change-resilience.html#:~:text=Climate%2Dresilience%20measures%20can%20also%20protect%20investment%20returns%2C,and%20support%20continued%20economic%20growth%20and%20development.&text=In%20parallel%2C%20infrastructure%20assets%20make%20up%20an,USD%20198%20billion%20to%20USD%201.6%20trillion). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.

desires solutions that focus on educational initiatives.<sup>16</sup> By pushing educational initiatives worldwide, we can focus on reducing household carbon emissions and increasing consumer awareness, the latter of which can encourage large businesses to pursue more sustainable practices. Finally, the U.S. hopes to pursue adaptive strategies that can foster regional resilience against climate change and help prevent conflict.<sup>17</sup> These strategies would be implemented to prevent the strain on resources and conflicts that may result from extreme weather and could range from approaches such as developing sustainable agriculture to improving early warning systems for weather events.

There are countless directions this issue can be approached from, with the aforementioned methods only scratching the surface of the number of effective ways we could mitigate climate change and its influence on conflict. The United States is deeply interested in the various perspectives and ideas that other nations will have to offer and is committed to collaborating on solutions that play to the best interests of the global community.

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<sup>16</sup> Climate Program Office. "Education - Climate Program Office." Climate Program Office, 1 Oct. 2024, [cpo.noaa.gov/divisions-programs/communication-education-and-engagement/education/#:~:text=The%20Climate%20Education%20Program%20focuses,standards%2Dbased%20climate%20and%20energy](https://cpo.noaa.gov/divisions-programs/communication-education-and-engagement/education/#:~:text=The%20Climate%20Education%20Program%20focuses,standards%2Dbased%20climate%20and%20energy). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. "5 Ways Countries Can Adapt to the Climate Crisis." UNEP, [www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/5-ways-countries-can-adapt-climate-crisis](https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/5-ways-countries-can-adapt-climate-crisis). Accessed 20 Nov. 2024.