

**UNU-ONY Book Launch of the fifth volume of the**  
Hexagon Series on  
Human, Environmental Security and Peace (HESP)  
**and of the third volume of the**  
Global Environmental and Human Security Handbook  
for the Anthropocene (GEHSHA)  
on  
**Coping with Global Environmental Change, Disasters and Security**  
**Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities and Risks**  
**23 March 2011**  
**Remarks by Hans Günter Brauch (Germany)**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am grateful to our host and its director, Dr. Jean-Marc Coicaud, and his staff, in particular Ms. Portia Gama, for your support to make this book launch possible. I also thank UNU-EHS for sponsoring this event.

Last not least I thank the panellists for your comments on this third volume of this the Global Environmental and Human Security Handbook for the Anthropocene. We are grateful to our host for the opportunity to present also the third volume to this distinguished audience

The Anthropocene is a term coined by the Dutch Nobel Laureate of chemistry Paul C. Crutzen that refers to the phase of earth history that is severely affected by human activities due to our burning of coal, oil and gas that has resulted in global warming and that may increasingly pose new international, national and human security dangers.

This theme was tabled to the UNSC on 17 April 2007 by the UK, discussed by the UNGA in June 2009 and in September 2009, UN Secretary General Ban-ki-Moon addressed it in his report on Climate Change and International Security.

With this huge book of 1872 pages this security handbook is nearly complete. These three volumes were edited by a team of 11 co-editors from 10 countries and its 270 peer reviewed chapters were written by more than 300 authors from about 100 countries. This volume we launch today was written by 164 authors from 48 countries all of them worked without any honorarium as did the 3 to 5 reviewers who carefully assessed each chapter.

In response to suggestions from policy-makers I will now write a 100 page synthesis volume that addresses the key policy-relevant conclusions and suggestions and a brief executive summary for busy delegates and policy makers. Hopefully we can come back within a year.

We are very pleased that the first female Foreign Minister and the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, her Excellency Amb. Prof. Dr. Joy Ogwu has contributed to all three volumes, a chapter to the first and forewords to the second and third. In the editorial team Africa, Asia and Latin America were represented by women, by three professors from India, Kenya and from Mexico. We tried hard to give more ‘voice’ and ‘visibility’ to scholars from the global South, especially also to women from developing countries.

I will address five questions: *Why? By whom? On What? For whom?* was this handbook written and *What is its relevance of this huge volume for the United Nations and for you?*

## 1) What are the reasons for and goals of this new volume on *Coping with Global Environmental Change, Disasters and Security*?

While in the first volume of this handbook on *Globalization and Environmental Challenges* (2008) we addressed three reasons for the reconceptualization of security: a) the end of the Cold War, b) globalization and its negative consequences that are partly linked to this city; and c) the process of global environmental and climate change. This has resulted in three changes of the security concept:

- i) a *widening* of the political and military focus of national and international security to include its economic, societal and environmental dimensions;
- ii) in a *deepening* from the state-centred concepts of “international peace and security” in the UN Charter, and of “national security” to human security issues.
- iii) a *sectorialization of security* that addresses *energy, food, health, water and soil security* as well as issues of “women, peace and security” that were put on the Agenda of the UNSC with Res. 1325 on 31 October 2000.

These developments are reflected in this security handbook for the Anthropocene, the era of earth history that is affected by human activities. The previous volume on *Facing Global Environmental Change* addressed the securitization of climate change, water, desertification, population change, urbanization and natural hazards and reviewed many sectoral security concepts that are widely used in the UN system. This new book on *Coping with Global Environmental Change* addresses threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and risks and policies for adaptation and mitigation to global environmental change.

## 2) By whom?

Among its 164 authors of this book are two active Under-Secretary-Generals of the UN, Mr. Steiner, the executive director of UNEP, and Prof. Dr. Osterwalder, the Rector of the United Nations University (UNU) as well as a former Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, Amb. Dhanapalla, who is President of Pugwash that received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995. In these books the south is not an object, many authors are distinguished scientists from developing countries that analyse the problems of their own region. The volume combines very distinguished scientists and promising young scholars from around the world coming from many disciplines in the natural and social sciences. Some authors work at the UN and UNDP in New York and at UNESCO.

## 3) On What?

The 100 texts in this volume, its five preface essays and 95 peer-reviewed chapters address in 10 parts the following themes:

In part I the concepts of security threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and risks are introduced and in part II, regional political and military security dangers and concerns are discussed from the perspective of countries, regions (e.g. the Mediterranean the Arab world and West Africa) and international organizations (EU, NATO). Part III assesses economic, social, environmental and human security dangers in the Near East, Africa and Asia, among them are authors from Tunisia, Jordan, Israel and Palestine. Part IV on threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and risks for urban centres in hazards and disasters contains chapters by authors from France, Colombia, India, China, Turkey and Nigeria, most where Ph.D. candidates who participated at a summer academy on social vulnerability of UNU-EHS.

Part V on “Coping with Climate Change, Soil and Desertification, Water Management, Food and Health” includes 28 chapters that address specific challenges. The six chapters on climate change discuss uncertainties in climate change impact assessments for the river Nile or are

mapping the areas that will be affected by sea level rise in the Nile Delta until 2100, or the vulnerability of tropical montane forest ecosystems due to climate change. Nine chapters on soil degradation and desertification focus on Northern Mexico, Egypt, Morocco and on Dryland Agriculture in Spain, while in the five chapters on water management authors from Sweden, China, Bangladesh, India, Niger, Mauritania and Tunisia assess different coping strategies for their region or countries. Five chapters deal with global and regional food and two with health security issues in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe.

The five chapters of Part VI on “Coping with Hazards, Social Vulnerability and Resilience Building” document conceptual and empirical work by heads of departments of UNU-EHS and of the first UNU-EHS chair on social vulnerability.

The 17 chapters of Part VII address scientific and policy efforts for Coping with Global Environmental Change documenting the work of the four major research programmes on Global Environmental change: WCRP, IGBP, IHDP and DIVERSITAS and of the Earth System Science partnership. This is followed by four chapters that summarize the results of WG II and III of the IPCC as well as the work of UNESCO on disasters and of UNDP on climate change that is available in the press folder for free download. Four chapters review regional strategies, policies and measures for the EU, East Asia, Latin America and the “Politics of Equity and Justice in North-South climate change negotiations”, while three chapters on national strategies focus on China and Japan.

In Part VIII two chapters deal with Remote Sensing, Vulnerability Mapping and Indicators of Environmental Security Challenges, while in Part IX two additional chapters discuss activities towards an Improved Early Warning of Conflicts and Hazards. In the final two chapters the two co-editors who are present today develop jointly with Simon Dalby from Canada a proposal for a political geo-ecology for the Anthropocene and offer their conceptual ideas on coping with Global Environmental Change with regard to sustainability revolution and a sustainable peace.

#### **4) For whom?**

The handbook was written for scholars, policy advisers and policy makers, journalists and students globally and it should be available in the libraries of major universities, research institutes and ministries that can afford this huge compilation of global scientific and policy relevant topical knowledge. This handbook is available as a hardcover, as an electronic book and all chapters may be purchased individually on the internet.

We launched a new book aid project to get these volumes to university libraries in developing countries that cannot afford such reference books. Of the first two volumes we could send so far 150 copies as book gifts to 110 Libraries in 69 countries and the German Academic Exchange Service bought an additional 100 copies it sent to its partners globally. All donors and recipients are documented on a special website for each volume and we plan to continue to send book gifts to university libraries to make this major reference book available to faculty and students in countries that cannot afford such books.

#### **5) Relevance for the UN System**

Security is a key concept of international and national politics, a basic value in societies, cultures and religions. Thus, the meaning of security matters for the United Nations system, for its member states and its peoples, and its meaning has changed since 1990 as is reflected in many resolutions of the UNSC and the GA. Maintaining “international peace and security” has been a key goal of the UN Charter.

This collective global scientific effort hopes to contribute to better face and cope with the challenges humankind will experience in this century.

The editors and authors want to foster a global anticipatory learning and to contribute knowledge for proactive policies.

They address the security dangers to avoid the worst societal catastrophes that may occur in this century if the tipping points of global climate change should trigger more severe changes in global climate than the projections of the scenarios assessed by the IPCC indicate.

To be able to act early requires both anticipatory recognition of future threats and learning as well as political will to implement such policies.

Let me conclude, the recent catastrophe that has hit Japan with the combination of an intensive earth quake of an intensity of 9 on the Richter scale, with a severe tsunami that triggered one of the most serious nuclear catastrophes whose consequences cannot yet be fully assessed is an illustration of the thesis of a *Global Risk Society* that Ulrich Beck addressed in his preface essay to this huge book.

The adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution on Libya was partly legitimated with a “Responsibility to protect” which reflects the significant change in the understanding of the concept of security that has occurred since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Given these two recent events the *Global Environmental and Human Security Handbook for the Anthropocene* (GEHSHA) and its third volume on *Coping with Global Environmental Change, Disasters and Security - Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities and Risks* e launch today could not be more topical.