Madam President,

Lithuania aligns itself with a statement to be made by the European Union.

I thank the Permanent Missions of Spain & Malaysia for organizing this Arria formula meeting to review and address the impact of the climate change on global security. It is important to ensure the continuity of this discussion by the Council.

To quote the Secretary –General Ban Ki-Moon, “Climate change threatens hard-won peace, prosperity, and opportunity for billions of people”. It is so, because climate change has the potential to exacerbate other drivers of insecurity – environmental, economic, social and political. It could lead to increased competition for scarce natural resources, including water; exacerbate migratory pressures, health and humanitarian needs. It could further weaken fragile governments, rule of law or even act as a facilitator to radicalism, ethnical tensions, extremism and terrorism.
Some ongoing conflicts could serve as case studies. Darfur’s conflict is often referred to as “the first climate war”. In Yemen scarcity of water contributes to development problems and indirectly weakens the state - making it susceptible to conflicts. Adverse effects of climate change contribute to a dire humanitarian situation in the Sahel, and pose serious security risks to the countries of the region.

Climate change effects will only further stretch already significant international humanitarian relief needs. SIDS, sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia are considered being in particular vulnerable.

Madam President,

Lack of state and regional capacity to manage the effects of climate change has a potential to delegitimize governments that did not move swiftly enough to restore basic services for their citizens. The UN should continue its assistance, in particular to fragile and most vulnerable countries, in strengthening the rule of law and building capable, credible and resilient state and regional institutions.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) is a good example of the UN’s role in the region in building conflict prevention capacities.
The Security Council could contribute through conflict prevention and mitigation. Peacekeepers could have a role in climate change induced local disputes mediation, aiming to prevent the conflict at its grassroots. They could be trained to respond to humanitarian situations triggered by climate change. Climate change adaptation is necessary to strengthen resilience of peacekeeping missions themselves.

Madam President,

In conclusion, it is of utmost importance to fully acknowledge the climate change induced tensions and react to them accordingly. A more holistic assessment of climate change and its interconnected risks is key. The role of regional organisations, local governments, religious and traditional leadership, women and youth should not be underestimated and could be a powerful tool in the race to combat climate change.

An availability of concrete information on climate change security implications is key for informative decisions. An update to the Secretary-General’s 2009 report “Climate Change and its possible Security Implications” would help to fill the gap.

Finally, it is of key importance to get a fair, ambitious and legally-binding agreement on climate, applicable to all, in Paris later this year. Being a global challenge, climate change requires global, multilateral solutions.

I thank you.