

**African Union's Diplomatic Strategies for Addressing Climate Change-Related Security
Threats, 2015-2024**

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(M.Sc) in International Relations**

Certification

This is to certify that **Joy Fiyinfoluwa AFOLABI** with matriculation number LCU/PG/004002 carried out this study titled “**African Union’s Diplomatic Strategies for Addressing Climate Change-Related Security Threats, 2015-2024**”, in the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo state, for the award of Master Degree (M.Sc) in International Relations under my supervision and that this has not been previously submitted.

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Date

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Head of Department

Date

Dedication

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty, and my wonderful and ever-loving parents.

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Acknowledgement

I give thanks to Almighty God, the source of wisdom and strength, for sustaining me and granting me the grace to complete this research work.

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Abstract

Climate change has emerged as a major driver of insecurity across Africa, intensifying conflict, displacement, poverty, and humanitarian crises. This study investigates how the African Union (AU) employed diplomacy to address climate change as a security threat between 2015 and 2024. It examines how the AU reframed climate change from an environmental concern into an urgent security issue requiring coordinated regional and global responses. Guided by Securitization Theory, the research analyzes the processes through which climate risks were presented as threats demanding immediate diplomatic and policy action. A qualitative research design was adopted, relying primarily on AU summit declarations, communiqués, climate-security policy frameworks, peace and security reports, and relevant academic literature. Thematic analysis was used to examine documents produced between 2015 and 2024. The findings show that the AU made notable progress in elevating climate–security linkages, especially through the African Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy (2022–2032), the AU Climate Change and Security Framework, and the alignment of AU strategies with global commitments like the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the study also reveals persistent challenges that weaken the AU’s diplomatic effectiveness. These include inadequate and unpredictable funding, weak institutional capacity, slow implementation mechanisms, governance constraints, and competing priorities such as terrorism, political instability, and economic crises. The study concludes that while the AU has successfully advanced recognition of the climate–security nexus, greater effort is required to integrate climate-security considerations into Africa’s peace and security architecture. It recommends predictable climate-security financing, stronger implementation structures, and enhanced cooperation among AU organs, regional bodies, and international partners. Strengthening early-warning systems and mainstreaming climate-risk assessments into peace operations will further support proactive and coordinated responses to climate-related security threats in Africa.

Keywords: African Union, Climate Change, Security, Diplomacy, Securitization Theory, Conflict Prevention

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
AU	African Union
OAU	Organization of African Unity
AUC	African Union Commission
PSC	Peace and Security Council
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ASF	African Standby Force
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMs	Regional Mechanisms
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
SADC	Southern African Development Community
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
UN	United Nations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
EU	European Union
WTO	World Trade Organization
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
G20	Group of Twenty

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