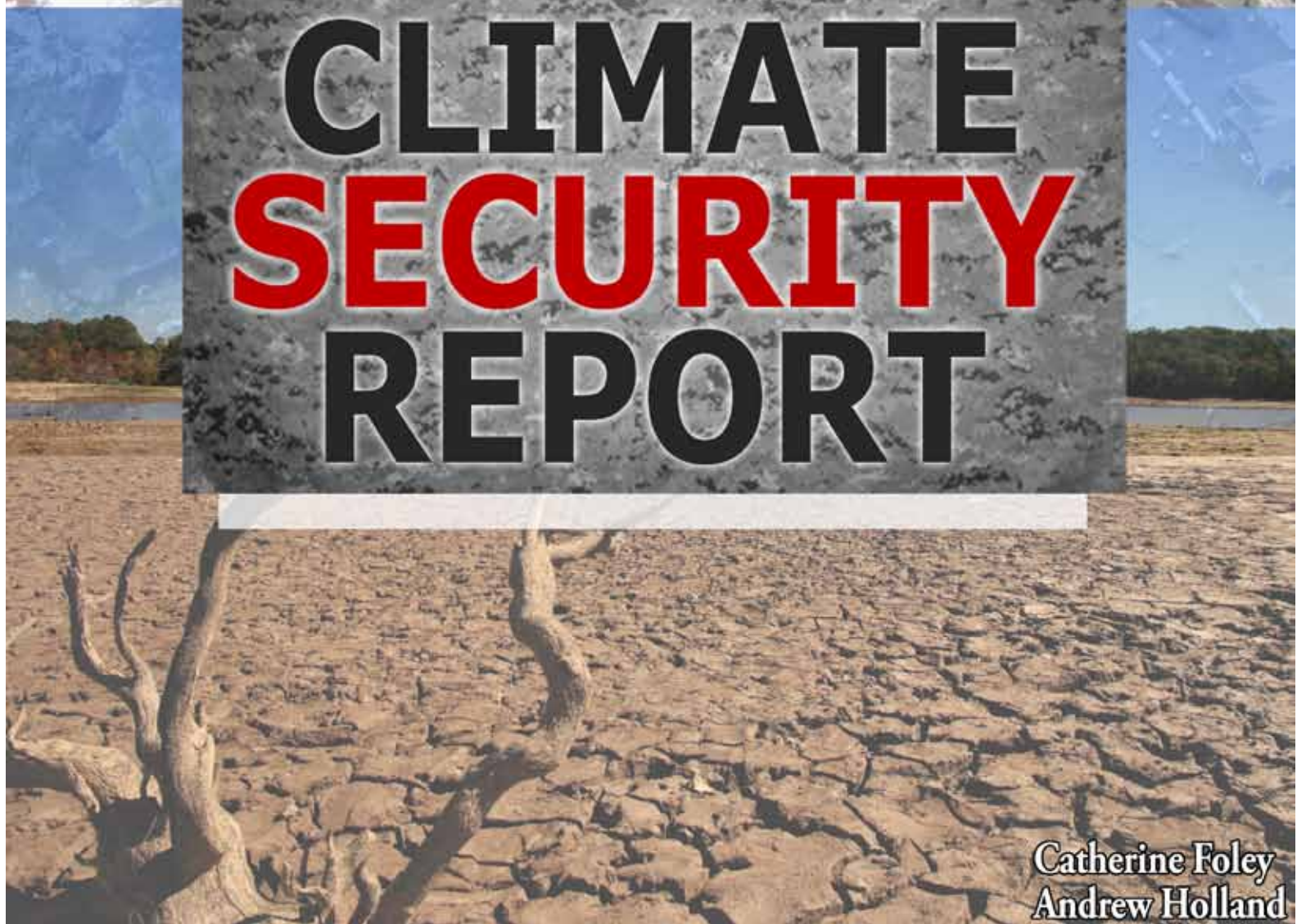




CLIMATE SECURITY REPORT



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Andrew Holland



INTRODUCTION

The American Security Project is organized around the belief that honest, public discussion of national security requires open, non-biased, non-partisan discourse about the dangers and opportunities of the 21st Century. Security is a fundamental responsibility of the U.S. military now more than ever, as the threats to American interests change rapidly. Security threats of the 21st Century include “non-traditional” threats like terrorism, climate change and the spread of disease. The policy answers to these non-traditional threats are not simply guns and bombs; the policy options are even more unclear. What is clear is that there is a need for honest dialogue on these issues in order to create strategic policy options for the future.

One of the most significant challenges to the global security system in the 21st Century will be a changing climate; the effects of these changes are already being felt all over the world. Climate change poses a clear and present danger to the United States through its effects on our global allies as well as its direct effects on our agriculture, infrastructure, economy and public health. ASP strives to avoid the poisonous, partisan debate about the topic by focusing on the science; we must first start with the facts. In order to move from today’s divisive debates to a point where we can discuss solutions, it will be necessary to build a more civil, non-partisan discussion based on facts and sound science.

Though this debate continues to rage, there should be no doubt that national security leaders understand that this is a question of risk management. As a national security institution, ASP knows that there is no such thing as “certainty” on the battlefield—there is only uncertainty. The same goes for preparing for climate change; the United States must be ready for contingencies. Strategic planning for these contingencies will render the U.S. more secure, helping to ensure global stability in a warming world.

The following report aims to move past the current debate about climate change and towards a real, informed discussion about its security implications—both global and domestic. Though we do not expect that there will be legislation passed on this issue in the next few years, this report hopes to discuss the strategic security imperative of climate change to the United States and the necessity to prepare for the changes that lie ahead.

BGen Stephen A. Cheney USMC (Ret.)
CEO American Security Project
 October 2012

"Traditional national security is giving way to international security... The 21st Century is already as different from the 20th as the 20th Century was from the 19th.

“Traditional, conventional thinking will increase our vulnerability. Anticipation, imagination, flexibility and experimentation are required to make us secure in an age of profound revolutionary change.

"Our senior military leadership now acknowledges climate change as an international security issue."

Senator Gary Hart

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