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**Human Security: an operational paradigm for action in the  
field of peace, development and human rights**

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## *Introduction*

What is security? What does it mean to people today in places like Afghanistan, the occupied Palestinian territory, Italy or the United States? Who defines security? Is “security” an objective or subjective concept? Who or what is secured? What is the difference between the state’s security and people’s security – and is there a difference? What kinds of threats to security are there? Which tools can be employed to guarantee security? Questions like these are essential when we talk about security.

In international relations “security” has traditionally been understood as defense of the state against external threats, with diplomacy and national armies as the main tools employed to achieve this. With the post-Cold War era bringing major changes to the threats perceived, a new concept of “human security” emerged, referring to the security of individuals and communities. The notion of security no longer focuses on armed attacks against the state as threats but rather the complex political, social, economic and environmental factors that pose a threat to the security of people in particular. This has created the need to explore new ways to eliminate the threats or reduce their significance.

“Human security” has been adopted in the parlance of a variety of organizations and countries over the past ten years. Major proponents of the human security perspective have included the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and a few individual countries (such as Japan and Canada). Recent years have also seen discussion on the topic within the European Union. The term has also been covered extensively in academic literature. Each actor has sought to produce a definition for the concept that best suits its purposes, with perspectives applied to the definitions ranging from health and the environment to social policies. One may even ask if there is any area that has not been covered when addressing human security.

Nevertheless, a single universally adopted definition of the concept is yet to be produced. The current definitions all share the fact that the referent object is the individual or community – not the state, although none of the definitions seeks to replace the concept of ‘national security’. Instead, they see human security and national or state security as mutually complementary.

There are both a broader and a narrower definition of the concept of “human security”. The broader one – promoted by the UN and Japan in particular – focuses on “freedom from fear” (violence), “freedom from want” (poverty, hunger, disease) and “freedom to live in dignity” (human rights, democracy). This definition of human security values

the trinity of security/peace, human rights and development – with the strengthening of one supporting the strengthening of the others, and vice versa.

A narrower definition of human security focuses on the negative “freedom from fear”, which refers to the absence of violence. A particular proponent of this approach among countries promoting human security is Canada, with this narrower definition regarded in most academic articles as the easiest to operationalize.

The concept of human security has been greatly defined by the work carried out by both states and international organizations (and the UN in particular). The following elements have stood up particularly clearly in practical work: a common understanding of the major threats to security, the importance of multilateral action, and increased attention to the bottom-up approach. In recent years, however, the promotion of human security as a foreign and security policy tool has been left in the shadow of the s.c. “war against terror”.

This paper presents the theoretical and operational developments on human security through the activity of the United Nations (the UN System in general), the European Union, and two countries that have adopted human security as a foreign policy tool – Japan and Canada. The debate on human security seen in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is not covered in this context, because this is still in its early stages, despite a few appearances of the term in OSCE documents.

## I - THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN SECURITY

### *Human Security and the UN agenda from its origins to our days*

At the First General Assembly of the Organization of the United Nations on 24 June 1945, US Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius stated the following:

*“The battle of peace has to be fought on two fronts. The first is the security front where victory spells freedom from fear. The second is the economic and social front where victory means freedom from want. Only victory on both fronts can assure the world of an enduring peace.”*<sup>1</sup>

The human security perspective has been taken into consideration in the UN’s work since the founding of the organization, and the idea is also present in the UN Charter. The definition of security and the role of the UN in the maintenance of international security and peace were, however, greatly affected by the beginning of the Cold War. Until its end, “security” mainly referred to state security, with cross-border aggression regarded as the biggest threat, while “peace” was understood negatively, merely as a status of no war between states.

The redevelopment of the UN’s definition of human security began in 1994 when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stated in its *Human Development Report* that the definition of “security” was too narrow. The concept was further developed by the Commission on Human Security initiated by the Secretary-General. Since the 2005 publication of Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s report *In Larger Freedom*, the term “human security” has been widely adopted across the UN.<sup>2</sup>

UNDP’s *Human Development Report 1994* defines human security as security of individuals and communities, which means freedom from deprivation, poverty and oppression (“freedom from want”) and freedom from the fear of violence (“freedom from fear”)<sup>3</sup>. According to the report, in addition to a people-centered perspective, human security has three other essential characteristics that distinguish it from the traditional state-centered concept of security.<sup>4</sup>

First, human security is a “universal concern”. This means there are many threats to human security that are common to people everywhere, in rich nations as well as in

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<sup>1</sup> Sutterlin, James S. (1995), *Human Security and the United Nations*.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. United Nations (2002), ‘*Human Security*’ *Depends Not Only on Peace of Arms But on Socio-Economic Well-being*, General Assembly President Says, and Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies (2000), *Le concept de sécurité commune englobe le respect de tous les droits de l’homme, la bonne gestion des affaires publiques, l’accès à l’éducation et aux soins de santé*.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP (1994), *Human Development Report*, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 22-23.

poor ones. These include unemployment, drugs, crime, pollution and human rights violations.

Another characteristic of the definition is that the components of human security are interdependent, with the consequences of threats to people's security no longer being isolated events, confined within national borders. For example armed conflicts, natural disasters, terrorism and human rights violations have both direct and indirect impacts that travel the globe. These threats are often also interdependent and mutually stimulating.

Third, the definition given in the *Human Development Report 1994* emphasizes the significance of prevention. Early enough intervention on issues such as human rights violations may prevent an armed conflict which would compromise people's security. The *Human Development Report 1994* classifies threats to human security under seven main categories <sup>5</sup>:

1. economic security (such as unemployment or no access to income);
2. food security;
3. health security;
4. environmental security;
5. personal security (different types of physical violence; war, torture, rape, etc.);
6. community security;
7. political security (such as human rights violations).

Although the *Human Development Report* recognizes the key role of development in the creation of human security, it also stresses that human security should not be equated with human development. The latter concept refers to a process towards creating an environment where people can develop their capacities and that also secures the development opportunities of future generations. In this context human security means people being able to develop these capacities on their own free will and without the fear of violence <sup>6</sup>, but there is, of course, a link between human security and human development: for example, improved access to safe water may reduce tension between groups caused by poor access – and vice versa.

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<sup>5</sup> For further details see above, p. 25-33.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 13, 23.

## ***Work carried out by the Commission on Human Security towards the development of the concept***

In the *UN Millennium Declaration*, Member States made a commitment to improve human security through efforts including poverty reduction, democracy promotion and stricter arms control.<sup>7</sup> In response to these challenges, the UN Secretary-General established the Commission on Human Security (CHS) on the initiative of the Government of Japan. Co-chaired by Sadako Ogata (former UN High Commissioner for Refugees) and Professor Amartya Sen (1998 Nobel Economics Prize Laureate), the Commission consisted of twelve prominent international figures. It was tasked to develop the concept of human security as an operational tool for policy formulation and implementation and to propose a concrete programme of action to address threats to human security. The CHS presented its report to the Secretary General on 1 May 2003, advocating for action in the following areas.

1. Protecting people in violent conflict
2. Protecting people from the proliferation of arms
3. Supporting the security of people on the move
4. Establishing human security transition funds for post-conflict situations
5. Encouraging fair trade and markets to benefit the extreme poor
6. Working to provide minimum living standards everywhere
7. According higher priority to ensuring universal access to basic health care
8. Developing an efficient and equitable global system for patent rights
9. Empowering all people with universal basic education
10. Clarifying the need for a global human identity while respecting the freedom of individuals to have diverse identities and affiliations.

For each of these policy conclusions joint efforts are necessary, a network of public, private, and civil society actors who can help in the clarification and development of norms, embark on integrated activities, and monitor progress and performance. Such efforts could create a horizontal, cross-border source of legitimacy that complements traditional vertical structures. This array of alliances could begin to give voice to a nascent international public opinion. Human security could serve as a catalytic concept that links many existing initiatives. The Report also asked for effective and adequate resource mobilization, as not only must there be greater commitment to providing

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<sup>7</sup> United Nations (2000), *United Nations Millennium Declaration*.

additional resources but also a shift of priority in assisting people in greatest need. In this respect, the Commission recognizes the valuable contribution of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security and encourages the broadening of its donor base. It also recommends the establishment of an Advisory Board on Human Security to provide orientation to the UN Trust Fund and follow-up on the Commission's recommendations.

The Commission proposes the development of a core group of interested states, international organizations and civil society, around the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, as a part of its critical initiative, in which a small input of resources might leverage great impact, to forge links with disparate human security actors in a strong global alliance. Governments have the primary responsibility to protect their citizens, but due to the nature of today's security threats a similar obligation is also placed on international organizations, private sector actors and NGOs alike.

The CHS extends the definition of human security to also include "freedom to take action on one's own behalf", bringing empowerment alongside protection.

Empowerment means strengthening the resources of people and communities so that everybody can decide on her or his own issues and act in accordance with her or his needs.<sup>8</sup>

Ways of improving people's activity and resources include providing support for different forms of participation and improving access to employment, education and information.

### ***Human security in the report In Larger Freedom***

The terms "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" as well as "freedom to live in dignity" – derived from the wording used by the Commission on Human Security – became firmly rooted in UN language in the Organization's 60th anniversary year in 2005, which is when Secretary-General Kofi Annan published his report *In Larger Freedom – Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, with its recommendations based on the report of the UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change entitled *A More Secured World: Our Shared Responsibility*. In his *In Larger Freedom* report, Annan emphasizes the role of the triangle of human rights, development and security in the efforts to combat threats against human lives and to improve people's living conditions. Annan approaches "freedom from want" as a

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<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 10.



development issue. While factors such as poverty or diseases may not be said to cause civil war, terrorism or organized crime, he finds that they greatly increase the risk of instability and violence. To prevent violence, states and international organizations must make efforts to reduce poverty, epidemics and environmental problems.<sup>9</sup>

Like previous UN documents, Annan also uses “freedom from fear” in reference to threats with a direct impact on the most important of all rights – the right to life. Such threats listed by Annan include terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and war. Action against threats is the primary way to promote human security.

According to Annan, conflict prevention is also important during the period of reconstruction following armed conflict<sup>10</sup> and to promote this, the 2005 World Summit of the UN adopted Annan’s proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).<sup>11</sup> In Annan’s report, “freedom to take action on one’s own behalf” was transformed into “freedom to live in dignity”. According to Annan, this can be achieved through respect for human rights and the promotion of good governance.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Annan, Kofi A. (2005), *In Larger Freedom – Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, p. 11-29.

<sup>10</sup> See above, p. 33-43.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations (2005), *2005 World Summit Outcome*, para. 103.

<sup>12</sup> Annan, Kofi A. (2005), *In Larger Freedom – Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, p. 47-53.

## II - HUMAN SECURITY IN ACTION – THE ROLE OF THE UN SYSTEM

### *The Human Security Unit*

In September 2004, to follow up on the activities of the Commission on Human Security and take on the management of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), the Human Security Unit (HSU) was established inside the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in New York. The HSU's role is to promote and to mainstream the human security concept in UN activities, and act as the focal point for human security inside the United Nations System. The initiative of creating such a Unit was jointly proposed by François Fouinat, Executive Secretary of the Commission on Human Security, and Kazuo Tase, Liason Officer for the Commission, who is now heading the Unit, seconded by the Government of Japan<sup>13</sup>. As human security is a wide and comprehensive concept, it is relevant to many – if not all – of the United Nations' activities. The HSU, at its creation, needed thus to be placed strategically inside the United Nations organizational chart, to underscore the value of the concept and allow the message to percolate through the system. For its proximity with the Executive Office of the Secretary General, and for its focus on complex emergencies, humanitarian relief and coordination, the OCHA was chosen because human security fits logically within its framework and mandate. OCHA's role is indeed to respond to humanitarian crises, yet it also strives to work preventively, by identifying early warning signs for both man-made and natural calamities, and the HSU, through its projects, seeks to actively contribute to this overall preventive efforts. Furthermore, preventing humanitarian crises also means looking towards what triggers them. Human insecurities left unaddressed are often precisely what lead to the outbreak of humanitarian crises. By flagging those critical areas and issues that need to be addressed, human security as a framework fits directly within the preventive dimension of OCHA's work. But human security also focuses on conflicts and on transitions from humanitarian relief to development in post-conflict situations. Because of its double focus on protection and empowerment, human security is critical in binding and coordinating humanitarian assistance with dynamics towards sustainable recovery and longer term development. Beyond theory, by focusing a lot of its effort on post-conflict or protracted conflict situations, the HSU is supporting many projects that seek

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<sup>13</sup> This section is based on a personal interview with Mr. Tase conducted in April 2008 at the HSU in New York, as well as on Shusterman, Jeremy (2006), *From the field: An Interview with the Human Security Unit*, in *Revue de la Sécurité Humaine/ Human Security Journal*, Issue 2, Paris.

precisely to make the link between relief and development. In broadening and strengthening both of its ends, human security legitimately finds its place within the scope of the humanitarian field.

The Unit's objective is also to mainstream the concept within the United Nations, by emphasizing the many benefits of the concept, from operational to institutional levels. The Unit already collaborates with most of the UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs, such as UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Populations Fund, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and others) through the monitoring of field projects. The Unit also partners with UN and non-UN stakeholders on dissemination activities.

It has been underlined that human security as a concept has many layers and dimensions and while inside the United Nations different departments and agencies work on different issues and problems, human security is the first concept to address problems as a whole. If the HSU insists that human security is a formidable opportunity to better integrate conceptually United Nations activities, its message also emphasizes the operational value of human security and practical dimensions for future UN reform. Many UN agencies have had many different approaches, but only rarely have they combined these approaches and worked together. To a certain extent it has become part of the culture of the overall organization for different agencies to work separately, each on their own mandate. As AFPs' mandates naturally tend to be fragmented, as it is an unavoidable way for institutions to work, human security can help dampen the fragmentation of the UN's work. It is a unique opportunity to put together theories, approaches, and – very important – financial resources. It is a chance to gather agendas to strengthen the organization, improve its work towards peace and security at the individual, national and international levels. It logically follows that, by offering new perspectives on UN activities, human security has much to contribute in the process of UN reform. The Guidelines of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security<sup>14</sup> already encourage multi-agency cooperation and integrated management of projects and UN activities. More and more projects submitted to the UNTFHS are thus based on inter-agency cooperation and expertise sharing, so the Human Security Unit is actively collaborating in the general UN effort towards integration, whether it be in humanitarian affairs, with the competence clusters approach fostered by OCHA, or in

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<sup>14</sup> Human Security Unit (2008), *Guidelines for the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security*, 4<sup>th</sup> revision.

the development field, with the United Nations Development Framework (UNDF)<sup>15</sup>. Beyond its dissemination activities, the HSU, through the UNTFHS, is supporting a wide variety of projects in cooperation with various UN agencies, in view of improving the human security of people on the ground. The UNTFHS is the largest trust fund inside the UN system, and its contributions since 1999 have amounted to over US \$ 225 million, in support of more than 130 projects in over 100 countries. With more than twenty-five projects in sixteen different countries, Africa is the first recipient of support, with project activities focused on post-conflict reintegration, food security, health and poverty reduction. Projects in Asia particularly emphasize community development – especially in the post-conflict contexts of Afghanistan and East Timor – health, drug-related issues, food security and poverty reduction, as well as human trafficking and disaster response. In South America, the UNTFHS has supported a variety of projects, covering issues of gender, protection and reintegration of victims of conflict, disaster response, and a number of cross-cutting and comprehensive “human security initiatives”. The UNTFHS is also present in Europe, in the North Caucasus, Ukraine and the Chechen Republic, and in the Middle East, in Palestine and Lebanon, with projects in these regions focusing on reintegration and community development.

### ***Human Security and the UN peacebuilding architecture***<sup>16</sup>

It might be useful to briefly analyze another recent organizational development within the United Nations, parallel in a way to the developments around human security, although not comparable in size and scope. As mentioned above, in 2005 the Peacebuilding Commission was born. The UN General Assembly and Security Council, in their respective resolutions A/60/180 and SC 1645 (2005), along with the PBC, created a Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PSO), thus designing a brand new United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

The PBC is mandated to: “marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery.” The PBC focuses attention on reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development, in countries emerging from conflict. In doing so, it operates in three principal configurations:

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<sup>15</sup> For example, the author has been working with WHO in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) between 2005 and 2007: some of the activities carried out by the Office were part of a wider inter-agency project funded through the UNTFHS (Joint initiative in support of isolated and disenfranchised communities in the occupied Palestinian territories - UNDP, UNSCO, UNIFEM, WHO, UNICEF, UNRWA and UNFPA).

<sup>16</sup> For this section, refer to <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/index.shtml>

- Organizational Committee
- Country Specific Meetings
- Working Group on Lessons Learned

With assistance from the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO, see below), the configurations bring together the United Nations broad capacities and experiences in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, and long-term sustainable development assistance. Civil society may engage with the PBC and its related activities in a variety of ways. At UN headquarters, civil society organizations are encouraged to attend meetings of the Commission and may informally contribute to the PBC's work by providing written submissions to the PBC members and the Peacebuilding Support Office. Civil society organizations may also participate in certain meetings of the PBC country-specific configurations, often called NGO informal briefings. In countries receiving advice from the Commission, national and local civil society organizations are encouraged to engage in national consultations on the peacebuilding frameworks. Civil society representatives may also periodically participate in meetings of the PBC and serve as members of the Joint Steering Committees, which oversees the Peacebuilding Fund. The PBC brings together all relevant actors (donors, international financial institutions, Member States, troop contributing countries) around the issue of peacebuilding. It allocates and manages resources and advises on integrated strategies for peacebuilding and recovery. Furthermore, it has a role in highlighting response gaps that represent a threat to peace, as well as to extend the period of international attention on post-conflict countries where necessary.

The UNPBF has been established in response to the growing global demand for sustained support to countries emerging from conflict. The role of the PBF is to establish a crucial bridge between conflict and recovery at a time when other funding mechanisms may not yet be available. In helping to address the most immediate out of the multiple challenges facing post-conflict countries, it seeks to minimize the risk of a relapse into conflict. With an initial funding target set at US\$ 250 million, the Peacebuilding Fund aims at stabilising and strengthening government institutions thereby enhancing their capacity to sustain the peace process. The PBF aims to address countries' immediate needs as they emerge from conflicts. The PBF thus focuses on providing support during the very early stages of a peacebuilding process, as well as addressing any gaps in the process, in four main areas:

- Activities in support of the implementation of peace agreements;
- Activities in support of efforts by the country to build and strengthen capacities which promote coexistence and the peaceful resolution of conflict;
- Establishment or re-establishment of essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities;
- Critical interventions designed to respond to imminent threats to the peacebuilding process.

The Fund has a portfolio of over \$ 319 M (121 M of which have already been allocated at the time of writing), a base of 45 donors and 15 recipient organizations. Projects exist in Burundi, Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Nepal, Haiti and Kenya. The Fund has an emergency mechanism (called “emergency window”) through which it can disburse emergency funding, under exceptional circumstances, to support urgent peacebuilding activities. This facility is activated at the request of the Senior UN Representative in the country and follows a specific submission process, designed to ensure a rapid approval by the Head of the Peacebuilding Office.

The Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) was established to assist and support the Peacebuilding Commission, administer the Peacebuilding Fund, and serve the Secretary-General in coordinating United Nations agencies in their peacebuilding efforts. It helps to sustain peace in conflict-affected countries by garnering international support for nationally owned and led peacebuilding efforts. This includes providing support to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and catalyzing the UN System, on behalf of the Secretary-General, and partnering with external actors to develop peacebuilding strategies, marshal resources and enhance international coordination. This support is firmly based on the Office’s function as a knowledge centre for lessons learned and good practices on peacebuilding.

It is evident how this system for the development of peacebuilding has very tight links to the overall efforts of the UN in enhancing human security. In all of the three macro areas of the human security approach, we can identify activities that can be promoted under an articulated peacebuilding strategy:

- 1) Peace/Security – Self-explanatory, a peacebuilding intervention tries to break the circles of conflict and violence and restore a social, political and economic climate that favors a return to peace;

- 2) Development – We have seen that a major component of peacebuilding interventions (especially under the abovementioned peacebuilding architecture) relates to the establishment of a bridge between conflict and recovery; furthermore, the PBC gathers stakeholders active in the field of development assistance as a crucial contributor to an integrated approach to peacebuilding;
- 3) Human rights – Strengthening democratic authorities, fostering rule of law, enhancing women rights, are only some of the areas where dedicated activities can contribute to peacebuilding. Human rights and democratic governance are, among others, areas of activity included in the PBF priority plan.

### III - THE EU AND HUMAN SECURITY

#### *Human Security on the EU agenda*

The European Union (EU) has not produced a definition of the concept of human security. Therefore the EU does not have a mutually accepted action plan on human security either. However, a look into the EU's activity in the field of foreign and security policy shows that the EU *de facto* employs a human security agenda as it has functions that seek to secure people's "freedom from fear" (such as crisis management, humanitarian aid and disarmament) and "freedom from want" (development cooperation in particular).

Human security is taken into consideration in *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, the European Security Strategy adopted in 2003, which discusses threats against EU security, although the term is not explicitly used in the document. The strategy points out that current threats are more extensive than military threats targeted purely against states: armed conflicts, terrorism, failed states as well as poverty and disease affect the security of people in the developed as well as the developing world, so the strategy refers to themes that are associated with the concept of human security.<sup>17</sup>

In the Barcelona Report, the proposal regarding the implementation of the European Security Strategy (ESS), however, human security was adopted as the starting point and objective for the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

In recent years the term "human security" has been used on several occasions by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner responsible for External Relations and European Neighborhood Policy. The following statement made by her can be regarded as a kind of EU definition framework for human security: "(Human security means) the comprehensive security of people, not the security of states, encompassing both freedom from fear and freedom from want."<sup>18</sup> According to Ferrero-Waldner, human security stands at the basis of "modern foreign policy" – standing up for human security is not just a moral imperative but also in our "enlightened self-interest" because many threats emerging outside Europe have a direct or indirect impact on Europeans and Europe as well.<sup>19</sup>

Many EU strategies feature the trio of security, human rights and development, which is typical of definitions approaching human security broadly with consideration to

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<sup>17</sup> European Union (2003), *A Secure Europe in a Better World. The European Security Strategy*.

<sup>18</sup> Ferrero-Waldner, Benita (2006), *Human Security and Aid Effectiveness: The EU's Challenges*, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Ferrero-Waldner, Benita (2005), *Human Rights, Security and Development in a Globalised World*, p. 2.



“freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”. Therefore human security is implicitly present in various key EU policy documents such as the Göteborg Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (2001), the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict (2003), the Action Plan for Civilian Aspects of ESDP (2004), the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) (2005).

Adopted in 2005, the *European Consensus on Development* explicitly mentions the term “human security”. Although the document also deals with the relationship between security and development, human security is viewed expressly from the perspective of “freedom from want”, which takes the security of people living in poverty in special consideration.<sup>20</sup> In addition to these, the Finnish Presidency of the European Council (June-December 2006) brought human security up in the Political and Security Committee (PSC) which drew on the Barcelona Report and discussed how the EU can promote a human security agenda through the broad range of instruments at its disposal.<sup>21</sup>

### ***The 2004 Barcelona Report***

The Human Security Study Group, led by Professor Mary Kaldor from the London School of Economics and Political Science, prepared a plan for the implementation of the European Security Strategy (ESS) and has made strong efforts to promote the adoption of a human security agenda in EU’s foreign and security policy (EFSP) and in EU operations in particular. The Study Group presented its report about the implementation of the ESS, titled *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe*, to EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana in September 2004. Commonly called the Barcelona Report, it takes the five threats to security mentioned in the ESS (terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, failed states and organized crime) into consideration but focuses on EU operations in relation to armed conflicts, failed states and human rights violations as well as the development of the capacities required for this. The report proposes a Human Security Doctrine for Europe, defining human security as follows: “freedom for individuals from basic insecurities caused by gross human rights violations”.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> European Union (2005), *The European Consensus on Development*, p. 7 and 26.

<sup>21</sup> European Union (2006), *Presidency Report on ESDP*, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities (2004), *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe*, p. 5.

Although the report also mentions violations of the right to food, health and housing, its human security definition focuses on freedom from the fear of violence and is therefore narrower than other definitions such as the one adopted by the UN. According to the report, the traditional state-based approach to security is no longer appropriate in response to the above-mentioned five threats and other threats to human security because these threats are wider-reaching than those that are purely military. In addition, in armed conflicts human rights violations and abuses are carried out by states but also by non-state actors. Therefore the report presents a Human Security Doctrine for the common European security policy, consisting of a set of seven principles for operations in situations of severe insecurity that apply to both ends and means.<sup>23</sup>

Principle 1 is the primacy of human rights in human security operations. Under Principle 2, the central goal of the operations has to be the establishment of legitimate political authority in failed states or countries in a post-conflict situation. Therefore the operations must enjoy strong political support of the Member States and be led by a civilian. Principle 3 states that to succeed, the operations must be based on multilateralism. The EU must make a commitment to work with other actors – such as international organizations and non-governmental organizations – and to common ways of working and agreed rules and norms at the international level. Principle 4 calls for a bottom-up approach in decision-making. This means that decisions about whether or not to intervene and how to take account of the most basic needs identified by the people who are affected by violence and insecurity must be taken in coordination with the various stakeholders involved, particularly with representatives of the target population. Principle 5 is about regional focus, because new wars have no clear boundaries and tend to spread to neighboring countries. Therefore operations must be based on regional plans. According to Principle 6, EU operations must support the creation of a coherent legal framework in the country in question. The operations must also be based on legal instruments. Principle 7 states that use of force must be the last tool employed in operations and there must be clear rules regarding the use of force. According to the Barcelona Report, to be able to act in accordance with these principles, the EU needs a Human Security Response Force, composed of both military and civilians, and a legal framework governing decisions to intervene and directing operations on the ground.<sup>24</sup> The legal framework could build on the domestic law of the host state, the domestic law of the Member States and the rules of engagement,

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<sup>23</sup> See above, p. 14-20. See also Kaldor, Mary, Mary Martin and Sabine Selchow (2007), *Human security: a new strategic narrative for Europe*, p. 283-286.

<sup>24</sup> See above, p. 20–26.

international criminal law, human rights law, and international humanitarian law. It would govern decisions to intervene and to direct operations on the ground.

The Human Security Response Force would consist of 15,000 men and women, of whom at least one third would be civilians (police, human rights monitors, development and humanitarian specialists, administrators, etc.). The Force would have a small headquarters consisting of civilian and military in Brussels. This first tier would be tasked with strategic planning, intelligence and mobilization. The second tier would consist of 5,000 personnel at a high level of readiness able to deploy within days, while the third tier would consist of the remaining 10,000 personnel, who would be at a lower level of readiness. The Force should also have a voluntary element. This Human Security Volunteer Service should involve volunteers such as NGO representatives and students.

In comparison with the UN definition, the Barcelona Report has a greater focus on protection in the promotion of human security while it does in a way take empowerment into consideration as it proposes that the local population should be consulted about the goals and methods of the missions and that each mission should be followed by policy evaluation and impact assessment from a local perspective. The report also emphasizes that locals must be able to have access to complaints procedures in the event of misconduct by deployed personnel. One way to achieve this is through the appointment of a Human Security Ombudsperson attached to each mission.<sup>25</sup>

The Barcelona Report received little attention, which has been justified by at least two reasons: first, the report assumed that the EU Constitutional Treaty would enter into force soon after its publication and introduce the institutional changes needed within the EU that would have enabled the adoption of the Human Security Doctrine; second, the proposed structural and political changes – particularly the Human Security Response Force – were regarded as too ambitious.<sup>26</sup>

After the Barcelona Report, Kaldor's Study Group published a book titled *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe* (2005), continuing on the theme of human security and setting out possible initiatives on the basis of thematic and case studies. Published in autumn 2007, *A European Way of Security* is a report on the Study Group's refined ideas about the operationalization of the human security approach in the EU's foreign and security policies. The human security framework was developed further from the Barcelona Report in that Principles 6 (legal instruments) and 7 (use of force) were

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<sup>25</sup> See above, p. 26–28.

<sup>26</sup> Kotsopoulos, John (2006), *A human security agenda for the EU?*, p. 12–13.

incorporated into the other principles. The Study Group also created a new Principle 6, clear and transparent strategic direction, which means that when the EU intervenes externally, it must do so with clear legal authorization, transparent mandates, and a coherent overall strategy. All EU external engagements should also be led by civilians. According to the Study Group, the promotion of human security in the EU's foreign and security policies calls for the adoption of a strategic framework based on the six principles. This framework would be applied in all European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions as well as cooperation between the Council and the Commission, which would help achieving institutional coherence in EU operations. Furthermore, the operationalization of the Human Security Doctrine would be facilitated by steps including issuing EU personnel with "Human Security" cards setting out best practice guidelines, creating an evaluation system for missions that uses the principles as benchmarks, and training in both civilian and military crisis management.

## IV - VIEWS OF STATES PROMOTING HUMAN SECURITY

Human security has been included in the foreign policy agenda of a few medium-size countries, with good examples to be found in Japan and Canada.

### *Japan*

Human security emerged in the Japanese political discourse as early as in the mid 1990s when Prime Minister Murayama spoke at the UN General Assembly about respect for human rights and protection from poverty, disease, ignorance, oppression and violence.<sup>27</sup> The financial crisis that erupted in Asia in 1997 facilitated the adoption of the human security approach in Japanese foreign policy.<sup>28</sup>

According to the Japanese view, human security means “to protect the survival, livelihood and dignity of individual human beings from diverse threats by strengthening initiatives from human perspectives, so as to realize the full potential of each person”.<sup>29</sup> This definition is in harmony with the UN view. Japan regards military, economic and social factors such as human rights violations, environmental problems, diseases, terrorism and proliferation of small arms as threats to human security.

Unlike countries such as Canada, Japan has not focused on negotiation processes towards new international agreements. Instead, it has supported grassroots development cooperation carried out by UN agencies. Japan has institutionalized its efforts to promote human security by supporting UN activity. Japanese initiatives include the founding of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, with contributions totaling more than USD 200 million made to the Fund by the Government of Japan in 1999–2003.<sup>30</sup> Japan has also had a major impact towards the establishment of the Commission on Human Security, with Sadako Ogata, former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, co-chairing the Commission together with Amartya Sen. Japan’s work towards the promotion of human security has, however, been criticized for failure to cooperate with real grassroots actors such as NGOs.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Bosold, David and Sascha Werthes (2005), *Human Security in Practice: Canadian and Japanese Experiences*, p. 93.

<sup>28</sup> Obuchi, Keizo (1998), Opening Remarks at *An Intellectual Dialogue on Building Asia’s Tomorrow*, Tokyo, 2 December 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Koizumi, Junichio (2001) Remarks at the International Symposium on Human Security, *Human Security and Terrorism – Diversifying threats under globalization – From Afghanistan to the future of the world*, Tokyo, 15 December 2001.

<sup>30</sup> See the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: [http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human\\_secu/chronology.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human_secu/chronology.html).

<sup>31</sup> Bosold, David and Sascha Werthes (2005), p. 98.

## *Canada*

Unlike Japan, Canada has adopted the narrower definition of “freedom from fear” for human security.<sup>32</sup> In the late 1990s Canada launched the human security approach in its foreign policy at the initiative of Lloyd Axworthy, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. Canada has applied a dual human security promotion strategy. First, it has sought to bring issues relevant to human security to intergovernmental negotiations, such as the launch of negotiations towards a ban on antipersonnel landmines and the process that resulted in the establishment of the International Criminal Court. Second, Canada has sought to cooperate with likeminded countries but also with NGOs. The Canadian Government established the Human Security Programme for the purpose of strategy implementation, with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade as the agency responsible for the programme.<sup>33</sup>

In 1999 Canada founded the Human Security Network (HSN), with other members comprising Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, and South Africa as an observer. According to HSN principles, a commitment to human rights and humanitarian law is the foundation for building human security. Human security is advanced by protecting and promoting, for example, human rights, the rule of law and democratic governance.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to supporting multilateral negotiation processes and cooperating with likeminded countries, Canada has sought to promote the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) populations from genocide and ethnic cleansing in particular. In 2000 Canada founded the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty to consider how events such as the ethnic cleansing in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo could be prevented in the future – when should intervention occur, under whose authority, and how? In its final report, the Commission concludes that sovereign states have a responsibility to protect their people, but if they are unwilling or unable to do so for reasons including war or state failure, the international community has the responsibility to protect them. This responsibility does not merely mean the responsibility to react – it also embraces the responsibility to prevent the occurrence and spreading of armed conflicts and the responsibility to rebuild. The selection of measures available consists of those of a diplomatic, political, economic, legal and – in

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<sup>32</sup> See the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada: <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/library/humansecurity-en.asp>.

<sup>33</sup> Bosold, David and Sascha Werthes (2005), p. 88.

<sup>34</sup> See Human Security Network: <http://www.humansecuritynetwork.org>.

extreme cases – military nature. According to the Commission, the United Nations Security Council has the supreme authority to decide on interventions.<sup>35</sup>

The Human Security Programme at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade works in cooperation with and co-funds the Human Security Centre of the University of British Columbia. In 2005 the Centre published *The Human Security Report 2005 – War and Peace in the 21st Century*, an extensive contribution on issues related to human security<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2001), *The Responsibility to Protect*.

<sup>36</sup> The report can be found at <http://www.humansecurityreport.info/content/view/28/63/>. Updated versions of the Report were published in 2006 and 2007. See <http://www.hsrgroup.org/>.

## *Conclusions*

Cross-cutting and multi-disciplinary, the concept of human security is an appealing means for analyzing as well as for intervening in many complex emergencies and crisis around the world. It serves, for example, to better integrate conceptually United Nations activities in the various fields, and it has gained a vast consensus from politicians, academics and professionals around the globe. A broader definition of it, thus a broader and more comprehensive set of tools, can bring together our understanding and knowledge in the interconnected fields of peace/security, human rights and development towards the resolution of situations in which people's security is indeed threatened from violence, from poverty and from the lack of rights. There is hardly any situation in our time's world where a gap in one of these areas doesn't have implications and ramifications in the other two, but still the promotion and the adoption of human security as a paradigm and as a policy tool are not widely spread. One reason might be the accent on the *security* aspect (and therefore I have here sometimes substituted it – or accompanied it – with the term *peace*), with some countries being afraid of recognizing communities – thus the people – as being the *subject* of security – long a prerogative of States.

From a more *objective* perspective, it can also be understood how some members of the international community do not want to broaden the same concept of security to include freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity.

Although the founding principles of the concept of human security appear to be intrinsically interconnected, thus making this approach such a phenomenal tool for the analysis as well as the intervention in international affairs, resistance to its establishment is avoiding its wide use and promotion. The efforts of the Government of Japan, of other contributors to the UNTFHS and, in general, of those countries who support and adopt human security in their foreign policy, must be therefore praised. But one might wonder why peacebuilding, as highlighted above, though having a narrower (and therefore clearer, more specific) scope than human security, receives much more attention, and means, at the global level. The weakness of human security, in light of this consideration, can be identified in what can also be considered as its fundamental strength: the wide ranging of its assumptions, the complexity of its theoretical framework (meaning complex, not difficult), the little clarity of the borders of its application to real-life experiences.

This leads me to think that maybe, then, its operational role should be refocused to the design of frameworks in which to insert the different interventions by various actors



and partners – mostly UN AFPs. But to do so, human security should be the label of something more than a Unit within OCHA.

On the other end, it should be a priority from the theoretical and, I would add, managerial/organizational point of view. But again, a hypothetical “human security mainstreaming” cannot be the task of a small Unit at the UN Secretariat, no matter how hard its staff works. The issue, I understand, is political as still many countries don’t agree on the meaning and the implications of the concept of human security.

Positive developments in the EU and in some major Member State in this direction, along with a stronger common European voice in the global arena, might be beneficial also to the (re)positioning of human security within the UN System and, in general, in the joint efforts of the international community. It will also depend on the development of the European role and capacities in foreign and security policy, which is connected to the adoption of the European Treaty.

But this is another, very interesting, story...

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