

Outline of the Report of the Commission on Human Security

Human security – now

People's security around the world is interlinked – as today's global flows of goods, services, finance, people and images highlight. Political liberalization and democratization opens new opportunities but also new fault lines, such as political and economic instabilities and conflicts within states. More than 800,000 people a year lose their lives to violence. About 2.8 billion suffer from poverty, ill health, illiteracy and other maladies. Conflict and deprivation are interconnected. Deprivation has many causal links to violence, although these have to be carefully examined. Conversely, wars kill people, destroy trust among them, increase poverty and crime, and slow down the economy. Addressing such insecurities effectively demands an integrated approach.

The report's call for human security is a response to the challenges in today's world. Policies and institutions must respond to these insecurities in stronger and more integrated ways. The state continues to have the primary responsibility for security. But as security challenges become more complex and various new actors attempt to play a role, we need a shift in paradigm. The focus must broaden from the state to the security of people – to human security.

Human security means protecting vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood. Human security connects different types of freedoms – freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf. To do this, it offers two general strategies: *protection* and *empowerment*. Protection shields people from dangers. It requires concerted effort to develop norms, processes and institutions that systematically address insecurities. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential and become full participants in decision-making. Protection and empowerment are mutually reinforcing, and both are required in most situations.

Human security complements state security, furthers human development and enhances human rights. It complements state security by being people-centered and addressing insecurities that have not been considered as state security threats. By looking at “downside risks”, it broadens the human development focus beyond “growth with equity”. Respecting human rights are at the core of protecting human security.

Promoting democratic principles is a step toward attaining human security and development. It enables people to participate in governance and make their voices heard. This requires building strong institutions, establishing the rule of law and empowering people.

Ways to advance the security of people

Human security seeks to strengthen and bring together efforts to address issues such as conflict and deprivation. Attempts are being made, for example, to realize the United Nations' *Millennium Declaration* and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Achieving human security requires building on and going beyond the MDGs, by undertaking efforts to address the full range of critical and pervasive threats facing people.

Protecting people in violent conflict: Civilians are the main casualties in conflicts. Both norms and mechanisms to protect civilians should be strengthened. This requires comprehensive and integrated strategies, linking political, military, humanitarian and development aspects. The Commission proposes placing human security formally on the agenda of security organizations at all levels. There are critical gaps in how human rights are upheld, in respect for citizenship and humanitarian law. These gaps need to be closed as well as attention given to ending the impunity of perpetrators of human rights violations. Community-based strategies to promote coexistence and trust among people will support these efforts. Equally urgent is meeting the life-saving needs of people through humanitarian assistance. Special attention should be given to protecting women, children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups. Disarming people and fighting crime through preventing the proliferation of weapons and illegal trade in resources and people has to be a priority.

Protecting and empowering people on the move: For the majority of people, migration is an opportunity to improve their livelihood. For others, migrating is the only option to protect themselves, such as those forced to flee because of conflicts or serious human rights violations. Others may also be forced to leave their homes to escape chronic deprivations or sudden downturns. Today, there is no agreed international framework to provide protection or to regulate migration, except for refugees. The feasibility of an international migration framework should be explored, through establishing the basis of high-level and broad-based discussions and dialogues on the need to strike a careful balance between the security and development needs of countries, and the human security of people on the move. Equally important is to ensure the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, and identify ways to end their plight.

Protecting and empowering people in post-conflict situations: Cease-fire agreements and peace settlements may mark the end of conflict, but not necessarily the advent of peace and human security. The responsibility to protect people in conflict should be complemented by a responsibility to rebuild. A new framework and a funding strategy are necessary to rebuild conflict-torn states – one that focuses on the protection and empowerment of people. Such a human security framework emphasizes the linkages among the many issues affecting people, such as ensuring people’s safety through strengthening civilian police and demobilizing combatants; meeting immediate needs of displaced people; launching reconstruction and development; promoting reconciliation and coexistence; and advancing effective governance. To be successful, it requires setting up unified leadership for all actors close to the delivery point of human security. To implement such a framework, a new fundraising strategy should be designed for post-conflict situations, at field level, to ensure coherence in the planning, budgeting and implementation of human security related activities.

Economic insecurity – the power to choose among opportunities: Extreme poverty remains pervasive. The proper functioning of markets as well as development of non market institutions are key to poverty eradication. Efficient and equitable trade arrangements, economic growth reaching the extreme poor and a fair distribution of benefits are essential. Together with addressing chronic poverty, human security focuses on sudden economic downturns, natural disasters and the social impacts of crises. To make people secure when crisis hits or to enable them to move out of poverty, we need social arrangements to meet their basic needs and ensure an economic and social minimum. Three-quarters of the world’s people are not protected by social security or do not have secure work. Efforts to ensure sustainable livelihoods and work

based security for all need to be strengthened. Access to land, credit, education, and housing, especially for poor women, is critical. An equitable distribution of resources is key to livelihood security and can enhance people's own capacity and ingenuity. Social protection measures and safety nets can advance a social and economic minimum. States, supported by the international system, need to establish early warning and prevention measures for natural disasters and economic or financial crises.

Health for human security: Despite the progress in healthcare, 22 million people died of preventable diseases in 2001. HIV/AIDS will soon become the greatest health catastrophe. In their urgency, depth and impact, global infectious diseases, poverty-related threats and health deprivations arising from violence are particularly significant. All health actors should promote health services as public goods. It is essential to mobilize social action and invest in supportive social arrangements, including the access to information, to remove the root causes of ill-health, to provide early warning systems and to mitigate health impacts once a crisis occurs. Providing access to life-saving drugs is critical for those in developing countries. An equitable intellectual property rights regime needs to be developed to balance incentives for research and development with ensuring people's access to affordable life-saving drugs. The international community must also form a global network of partnerships for health, promoting, for example, a global surveillance and control system for infectious diseases.

Knowledge, skills and values - for human security: Basic education and public information that provide knowledge, life skills and respect for diversity are particularly important for human security. The Commission urges the international community to actively help the achievement of universal primary education, with a particular emphasis on girls' education. Schools should not create physical insecurities, but protect students from violence including sexual violence. Education should foster respect for diversity and promote the multiplicity of our identities by employing a balanced curriculum and method of instruction. Public media are important as they can provide information on life skills and political issues, and give people voice in public debate. Not only should education and the media provide information and skills that will improve work opportunities and family health, but they should also enable people to actively exercise their rights and fulfill their responsibility.

Based on the foregoing the Commission has arrived at policy conclusions 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.

Linking the many initiatives

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.

But effective and adequate resource mobilization is also required. Not only must there be greater commitment to providing additional resources but also a shift of priority assistance to 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 made up 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.