



Challenges and Future Directions

At a clinic for healing the psychological scars of conflict, Chechen refugee children work on drawings depicting scenes of their homes in Grozny under attack. (2000)

*CP Picture Archive:
Fred Weir*

Freedom from fear means the capacity to protect innocent people caught in war zones. It means ending the use of weapons that contribute to making conflicts more brutal and more deadly. It means not being at the mercy of the violence that accompanies international crime and terrorism. It means a global determination to intervene in defence of whole populations at great risk. As the UN Secretary-General has challenged us at the turn of the millennium, we must “put people at the centre of everything we do.”

Developing New Norms

Fundamentally, addressing the challenge of human security requires building new international norms. By establishing the safety of people as an essential, integral element of global peace and security, human security is revolutionary in its implications. It reminds us that sovereignty as a concept has no defensible meaning unless it is grounded in the state’s responsibility and accountability to its people. To be sure, the development of new norms will in some cases be controversial; however, it will be essential if the international community is to confront new security realities and respond in an effective and principled way.