

elements of the social transformation (information dissemination, public exchange/debate) have not proceeded fast enough thus compromising the ability of Vietnamese people to perceive exogenous/systemic threats to their livelihood that are just over the horizon. This leaves the human security of the Vietnamese population unclear and in a potentially precarious state.

Policy Critique and Recommendations

The countries examined in this paper serve as valuable case studies from which Canada's foreign policy community can draw useful lessons. As noted near the outset of this paper, some of the findings support and reinforce the Canadian government's conceptualization of human security (as articulated in *Canada in the World*), while the remaining evidence poses both informational and conceptual challenges to how the drafters of the Statement understand, articulate and seek to operationalise the notion of human security in Canada's foreign policy. Some of the quantitative and qualitative data uncovered during the author's field work highlights new areas that are rarely explored (in either the literature on the crisis or on human security) but should be addressed if Canada is to achieve a comprehensive, fully-integrated policy strategy that assists the vulnerable in achieving human security.³²

General Critique/Assessment

Overall, the Statement does not account for the potential havoc that exogenous shocks to the international economic system can wreak on human security concerns and how Canada's aid and foreign policy could be shaped to help others address these types of challenges when they arise. Moreover, as the quantitative and qualitative data presented in this paper point out, financial and economic turmoil has effects that often go beyond mere income/standard of living concerns and exacerbate existing political tensions and/or governmental transformations in the developing world that may threaten human security on their own. This conceptual gap in the Statement is surprising. Asia's economic turmoil is not the world's first experience with financial instability and its debilitating economic and social effects; the 1994 Mexican peso crisis and the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s should have impressed upon the drafters of the foreign policy statement the importance of accounting for financial and economic instability in a framework that explicitly places human security as a worthy and achievable objective for Canada's foreign policy.

Malaysia

Canadian policy towards Malaysia has been centred on helping the country enhance its capacity to achieve its economic growth and development objectives. While the current economic climate in Malaysia (and the region more generally) would suggest that these efforts are of merit, more attention should be given to those components of Canada's strategy that are intended to help people meet their basic needs. It is likely that the remainder of 1999 (and possibly into the year 2000) will see continuing desperation among the poor and the newly-poor.

The Malaysian case provides an example of how human rights and civil liberties have been affected by the political change wrought by the crisis --- an added dimension of human security that has not been explored in the available literature on the crisis. While the link between civil society, human rights and human security is accounted for in the Statement, *Canada in the World* is less clear on how it should be operationalised.

While the Statement does note the importance of providing support to civil society, it

³² Ostensibly, a more cohesive policy approach is the objective. See: *Canada in the World*, pp. 25 and 45.