

- bring technical expertise and experience to the policy-making process
- work with government to implement international agendas
- inform citizens about challenges and choices on the international agenda
- mobilize human and financial resources to help solve local and global problems
- work to end human suffering
- help hold governments accountable.

Working with civil society and the NGO community is critical to forwarding the human security approach. With their help we are attempting to create a new political constituency to enforce existing international law and create new conventions to deal with emerging threats. This unique coalition adds strength to the belief that the protection of the individual is an essential precondition for international peace and security. Activism, the likes of which we witnessed during the Ottawa process and the lead to the establishment of the International Criminal Court, would not have been possible without information technology. By expanding our use of information systems we can change the politics of human security. But, we are only at the beginning of the curve in determining the potential of this new tool. The explosion in dot.com enterprises, e-commerce and integrated networks that are rising for purposes of marketing, financing and advertising in the private sector is having a profound impact on how business is conducted. We need an equivalent creative burst to serve the common good -- to advance the welfare and safety of individuals. A global compact starts when humanity bonds against aggression and atrocities. The Minister concluded his address by relating a story of young Hutu and Tutsi girls who chose to stand together in the face of genocide and perished side by side in an attack on their (joint) refugee camp.

Synopsis of the Discussion

Ramesh Thakur drew attention to a recurring criticism of the human security framework: Do we include everything within the human security agenda at the peril of resolving nothing? What is left behind and by which criteria? Paul Heinbecker said he was conscious of this problem. The definition of human security, adopted from the UNDP, needs to be narrowed and further developed. Nevertheless, getting the "general" objectives of human security on the Security Council agenda legitimised the shift away from the state-centred approach to peace and security to a more people-centred approach. It also opened doors to New Diplomacy. Similarly, Andy Knight (University of Alberta) asked the Minister, how is the human security agenda framed to fit the Security Council mandate? There is conceptually little difference between the UNDP and the Minister's definition of human security, Andy Knight went on to say. "Freedom from want" issues (i.e., development, health, etc.) included in the UNDP definition, will inevitably seep into the "freedom from fear" issues, emphasised by the Minister. Other international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, would perhaps be better positioned to address these concerns. Minister Axworthy replied that the major factor in selecting human security issues are resources. There is only so much time and so many able and willing people. Only the most immediate and pressing problems can be presently addressed including "killing fields," child soldiers, and water related issues in the near future.