



THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH TO SECURITY

Since the end of the Cold War, security for the majority of states has increased, while security for many of the world's people has declined.

The end of the superpower confrontation has meant greater security for states touched by that rivalry. Yet during this decade we have seen new civil conflicts, large-scale atrocities, and even genocide. Globalization has brought many benefits, but it has also meant a rise in violent crime, drug trade, terrorism, disease and environmental deterioration. It clearly does not follow that when states are secure, people are secure.

Security between states remains a necessary condition for the security of people. The principal objective of national security is the protection of territorial integrity and political sovereignty from external aggression. While declining in frequency, the threat of inter-state war has not vanished, and the potential consequences of such a war should not be underestimated. Technological advances and proliferation of weaponry mean that future wars between states will exact a horrific toll on civilians. At the same time, national security is insufficient to guarantee people's security.

A growing number of armed conflicts are being fought within, rather than between, states. The warring factions in these civil wars are often irregular forces with loose chains of command, frequently divided along ethnic or religious lines. Small arms are the weapon of choice and non-combatants account for eight out of ten casualties. Once considered merely "collateral damage," civilians are being thrust into the epicentre of contemporary war.