

Enhancing human security and preventing conflict

The goal of human security, including the effectiveness of conflict prevention, will be enhanced by deepening democracy beyond merely procedural mechanisms and by designing policies sensitive to the fluid, situational, multi-layered, overlapping, and contested nature of human identities.

Both cultural recognition *and* socio-economic justice are essential and inseparable elements of conflict prevention and the achievement of human security.

Outside governments and multilateral organizations need to be more alert to the possibility that their human security, conflict prevention, and other development programmes are often used by states or counter-state elites to promote aims contradictory to the goals of “deep democracy”.

International electoral support, monitoring, and observation missions should pay more attention to the long-term injustices that foster voting illegalities, intimidation, and human rights violations during elections.

Partnering with civil society

Outside states should focus their resources on supporting groups and individuals within Asian civil societies that seek to advance tolerance, inclusiveness, and demands for cultural recognition and socio-economic justice.

Rethinking the linkages between economic liberalization, democratization, and human rights

Recognition is needed both at the policy level as well as in public discourse, of the fact that economic liberalization, electoral democratization, and human rights are not always harmonious nor simultaneously achievable ‘goods’. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that economic liberalization and electoral democratization have costs and that these costs are often disproportionately borne by minorities, aboriginal peoples, and other vulnerable culturally distinct groups.

Promoting ethical business in culturally divided societies

The Canadian government should ensure that Canadian firms act in a socially responsible manner with respect to minorities, aboriginal peoples, and other vulnerable culturally distinct groups.

The Canadian and other governments should promote the amendment of business ethics guidelines to include explicit mention of the needs of minorities, aboriginal, and vulnerable culturally distinct groups, particularly in the context of democratization and economic liberalization.