

Preface

This book is the product of a unique research partnership known as humansecurity-cities.org, a virtual community of expertise brought together by the Canadian Consortium on Human Security (CCHS) hosted by the University of British Columbia (UBC), and the Human Security Research and Outreach Program supported by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT).

[Humansecurity-cities.org](http://humansecurity-cities.org) was launched in early 2006 as a vehicle to explore the potential for cooperative scholarship and policy development related to an urban human security agenda. The project's early activities were exploratory in nature, involving discussion with academics, policy makers and practitioners through a conference-call methodology known as Fast Talk Teams. Themes identified through this early research were developed into a discussion paper entitled *Freedom from Fear in Urban Spaces*, released in May 2006. New scholarship in this area was encouraged through a jointly supported CCHS/DFAIT graduate research awards competition which provided 10 Masters- and PhD-level research grants for essays on issues relevant to human security and cities.

In early June 2006, a two-day conference was held at UBC's Liu

Institute for Global Issues which brought together some 40 Canadian and international experts, including the graduate research award winners, to discuss these issues in more detail. DFAIT and CCHS also participated in the United Nations World Urban Forum in Vancouver in late June 2006, where the early research of the humansecurity-cities.org partnership was provided to a range of international experts through workshops and networking events.

Human Security for an Urban Century: Local Challenges, Global Perspectives is the most recent and comprehensive product developed by the humansecurity-cities.org partnership. It includes the work of 40 external contributors who share viewpoints and information from a broad variety of backgrounds and fields. The narrative text, jointly authored by DFAIT and CCHS, provides a snapshot of human security challenges and opportunities, with facts and analysis based on research and consultations conducted over the past year. *Human Security for an Urban Century* aims to take stock of what we have learned in the hope of devising a longer-term, strategic policy agenda for advancing human security in urban spaces.

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The views expressed in this volume represent those of the experts engaged throughout this process and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Canada, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, the Canadian Consortium on Human Security, or the University of British Columbia.

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