

The main proponents of human security to date have been affluent, northern states, while some of the greatest opposition to the idea of human security comes from the G-77 countries. In these countries, the vast majority of conflicts are internal wars, and states are often the primary perpetrators of violence and human insecurity.³ G-77 countries fear that human security will legitimize forcible humanitarian intervention, and would give the P-5 countries wide discretion to intervene where they saw fit, especially the US with what many in the south perceive to be a tendency towards unilateral action and inconsistent responses.

Several key foundational questions highlighted by participants included:

- In speaking of the goals of human security, are we implicitly promoting a Northern or Western agenda? How can countries advocating human security avoid seeming paternalistic and neo-colonial in their approach?
- Does human security smuggle in 'standards of civilization' and in so doing imply that certain groups/ nations are unable or unfit to rule or fulfil the obligations set out in the UN Charter, and therefore are not entitled to the right of sovereignty and non-intervention?
- What degree of intervention into the affairs of other states is permissible in seeking to ensure that a minimum standard of human security is provided? What are the implications for the potential arbitrary expression of power, in the name of humanitarian intervention, by the north over countries in the south?

Proponents of human security are faced with the question of how to frame the language of the concept in terms other than Western, liberal values, in order to win greater support amongst the G-77.

One suggested option was to move away from emphasis on the individual to a more inclusive notion of 'safety for people' or 'securing the lives and livelihoods of people and their communities'. Taking human security to be a *lens* which considers the end of human security in the context of each country's particular political landscape, rather than a set of universally and uniformly applied set of policy tools will help to ensure that solutions are both effective and culturally appropriate. Engaging civil society in the region concerned will also facilitate a culturally sensitive response to the people of that region. It is also important to gain the support of non-Western countries through alliances with sympathetic states; Thailand and South Africa's participation in recent human security discussions is encouraging in this respect.

³ For analysis of the changing nature of war, see: David Turton (ed.), *War and Ethnicity: global Connections and Local Violence*, University of Rochester Press, 1997; also, Kal Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.