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1. Introduction: Building secure cities will be critical to the prevention of armed violence and the protection of civilians

2. The objective of this project has been to examine in detail the nature and scale of organized armed violence in urban areas and to explore the value of bringing a human security lens to the challenges posed by cities at the beginning of an 'Urban Century'

3. For the first time in history the majority of people now live in cities. Rapid urbanization is already shaping trends in global peace and security. Armed violence is increasingly taking place in sprawling hillside slums involving adolescent boys with automatic weapons, corrupt police officers determined to 'clean up' the streets of rampant gangs who take justice into their own hands. The violence leads on the one hand to institutional criminal organizations and failed public security systems.

4. This book is the product of a unique research partnership between the Human Security Research and Outreach Program of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and the Canadian Consortium on Human Security, a research network operated through the University of British Columbia's Centre of International Relations. Over the past year our two organizations have together explored

the issues of human security in urban areas. Through this partnership we have sponsored expert dialogues and conferences, supported graduate student research, created a research website (www.humansecurity.ca), and presented our early findings to international experts at the United Nations' World Urban Forum in Vancouver in June 2008.

These research and outreach efforts were critical to the identification of a new community of expertise relevant to the human security and outreach agenda. The book provides an overview of what we have learned from these expert consultations, and provides a collection of contributions from 40 leading academics, civil society experts, government officials, and graduate students working together with a general narrative on human security in urban areas. We have also created the digital content which will be available on the

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