

Next for Peacebuilding and Human Security? What follows is an unofficial transcript of highlights of the discussion and subsequent questions and answers involving the audience that was compiled by Robin Wentzell for the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee.

Ann Medina: Canada is now playing a military role. Our usual non-combatant activities are no longer in the forefront of the national arena as we participate in military solutions. Why has this happened? There has been a failure of prevention. The wounded US is now challenging the world with "you are with us or against us" and the strategies of the 1980's and 1990's are no longer effective. Are the risks to human security greater since September 11th?

Paul Evans: This event changed the world: it changed the US; the US became more assertive; and there is a new face of global terrorism. However, the changes are not as deep as first thought. Worldviews did not change but convictions deepened. An IPSOS Reid poll on the fundamental risk to your security, conducted in February/March in 13 countries, revealed that mass destruction was not high on the list. The real concerns were crime and violence at the national level, accidental threats and health, rather than nuclear war and terrorism (with India being the one exception). Only 8% in Canada and less than 16% in the US thought mass destruction was the highest risk.

Pierre Beaudet: The biggest surprise is that we were surprised. There have been all sorts of signs. We have declarations and policies in place to protect against these risks and yet the international community was still caught by surprise. What do we do now? What is happening in Afghanistan is not encouraging and is worrisome. We are still following the same process. We have not accepted the lessons of September 11th.

Rieky Stuart: We need a change in perspective. Like a change from winter to spring, we feel different, we see things differently and we react differently, but the same things are still there. September 11th has shown us how fragile our economic situation is and fear and insecurity are marking our lives. The risks to human security are violence, weapons and war. This despair and distrust builds a vicious cycle. There needs to be a shift from a vicious cycle to a virtuous cycle, built on trust. The insights and understanding of September 11th should help us make this shift. There are now opportunities to use these insights to build human security...

Morteda Zabouri: The shock of September 11th arises from ignorance. We do not know enough about the types of threats that exist, nor how to treat them, especially where manipulation is used to support their cause. The Islamic movement is a political movement that acts transnationally. In political science, we study rational actors in political action. These rules cannot be applied to stop this type of terrorism.

Gaston Côté: This new phenomenon -- globalization of threats -- requires new solutions. With the previous bipolar threat of two nuclear powers, it was hard to monitor and eliminate, but now with a global threat it is even harder to control. Prevention is needed. How is this done in countries like Afghanistan where there is no legitimate government and no rule of law? We need