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**The Human Security Paradigm Shift:
A New Lens on Canadian Foreign Policy?
June 18, 1999**





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Report of the IIR Symposium on Human Security
June 18, 1999

1. Introduction: Background to Symposium

A one day symposium on Human Security and Canadian Foreign Policy was organized by the Institute of International Relations (IIR) and sponsored by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development. The event was held on June 18, 1999 at the University of Toronto. The symposium brought together 17 academics and government representatives broadly sympathetic to the concept of human security. This paper is an attempt to summarize the discussion, which took place and highlight some of the key ideas raised in the course of day.

The Symposium was the idea of Will Bell, a doctoral student at IIR, prompted by a concern over the dearth of discussion in the Canadian media and government about human security. The speakers included: Bill Bell, IIR; Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of International Trade and Development; and other speakers. The symposium sought to consider the meaning, scope and practical implications, as well as the implications, generally speaking, for Canadian foreign policy. As the discussion took place, the intervention by NATO in Kosovo was at the forefront of Canadian foreign policy and figured as a key case study in the discussion, particularly concerning the use of force in humanitarian intervention.

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In writing this report, the authors wish to provide both some fresh ideas, both outside of government, about the concept of human security, in practical terms for government officials, as well as highlight some of the important theoretical questions such a paradigmatic shift poses for academic, particularly scholars of International Relations theory. While the ideas came out of the discussion held, the organization of this material, and the themes drawn from the discussion are the sole responsibility of the authors.

2. Human Security: Definition and Scope

The notion of the human being as the referent object of development, as is the idea that security includes human rights, human dignity, violence and other non-military threats. The report is intended to be a contribution to the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's 'People's Security' initiative. There is, however, a great deal of uncertainty about what this means in policy terms, a perceived mismatch between the idea of human security and the practical and policy tools of domestic and international relations, and some real debates, even amongst those

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¹ Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World, IIRAH, Canada, April 1999.

The Human Security Paradigm Shift: A New Lens on Canadian Foreign Policy?
Report of the UBC Symposium on Human Security
June 18, 1999

1. Introduction/ Background to Symposium

A one day symposium on Human Security and Canadian Foreign Policy was organized by the Institute of International Relations (UBC) and sponsored by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development. The event was held on June 18, 1999 at the University of Toronto. The symposium brought together 17 academics and government representatives broadly sympathetic to the concept of human security. This paper is an attempt to summarize the discussion which took place and highlight some of the key ideas raised in the course of day.

The Symposium was the idea of Will Bain, a doctoral student at UBC, prompted by a concern over the dearth of discussion in the Canadian academic community about human security. The increasing use of this term by Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, and other politicians suggested a need to clarify what is meant by human security, and to examine it critically, in both theory and practice. In this context, the June roundtable sought to consider the meaning, scope and practice of human security, as well as the implications, generally speaking, for Canadian foreign policy. At the time the discussion took place, the intervention by NATO in Kosovo was at the forefront of Canadian foreign policy and figures as a key case study in the discussion, particularly concerning the use of force in humanitarian intervention.

In writing this report, the authors wish to provide both some fresh ideas, from outside of government, about the concept of human security in practical terms for government officials, as well as highlight some of the profound theoretical questions such a paradigmatic shift poses for academics, particularly scholars of International Relations theory. While the ideas came out of the discussions held, the organization of this material, and the themes drawn from the discussion are the sole responsibility of the authors.

2. Human Security: Definition and Scope

The notion of the human being as the referent object for defining security is a new development, as is the idea that security includes human rights, freedom from state violence and other non-military threats. The real meaning of 'human security', according to the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, is 'safety for people'.¹ There is, however, a lack of clarity about what this means in policy terms, a perceived mismatch between the idea of human security and the practices and policy tools of domestic and international institutions, and some real debate, even amongst those

¹ *Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World*, DFAIT, Canada, April, 1999.

who support the objective, about the means to achieve this end. In addition, the philosophical and normative underpinnings of the concept deserve closer scrutiny.

Participants began by considering whether human security represents a transitory policy change or a more long-term paradigm shift. A majority of participants agreed that 'paradigm shift', resulting from a profound set of changes in the international order, may be the more accurate way to conceptualize human security. This paradigm shift was described alternatively in terms of changing perceptions of what constitutes the main threats to security (from war and interstate conflict to environmental threats, drug smuggling, epidemic disease, etc.), changes in the political context of the post-Cold War world (including globalization, the much heralded international 'victory' of liberal democracy, the search for a new mandate for the UN) or the impact of the weakening nature of the nation-state to adequately respond to these changes.

Some argued that even if one accepted that human security is a paradigm shift, it is, nonetheless, too broad and vague a concept to be meaningful for policy makers, as it has come to entail such a wide range of different threats on the one hand, while prescribing a diverse and sometimes incompatible set of policy solutions to resolve them on the other. Moreover, it was argued, that in practice, human security is too amorphous to implement successfully, particularly in the days of dwindling public dollars. If human security is taken to be a 'grab bag' of either new threats or 'new goods', it becomes so elastic and beyond fiscal reach as to lose any utility as a principle for Canadian foreign policy.

Consensus developed during the day that human security should not be seen as either a particular set of threats, or as a substantive package of goods which can be applied uniformly and universally. Rather human security could be considered as a new *lens*, which if taken seriously, profoundly transforms the foreign policy landscape. In applying this lens, whether to initiate new global initiatives (like treaties on small arms or child soldiers), or more modestly, as a new way of looking at existing bilateral relations in a given country, multilateral institutions, or on the ground aid dollars and contracts, Canadian foreign policy makers should ask themselves, what is the best allocation of money to secure the lives and livelihoods of people and their communities, *in this particular context and at this particular time*. Human security could thus mean both incremental as well as large-scale visionary change. The specific mix of items and the agenda followed will differ in different contexts but the lens (which ensures human security is not only visible, but paramount) remains the same.

There may be dangers inherent in such a selective, 'pick and mix' definition, some of which are suggested below. The most obvious is the question of consistency between different responses to situations of human insecurity. Would widely varying responses to abuses of human rights, for example, undermine Canada's commitment to human security abroad? Secondly, there is the potential tendency of calling every policy initiative a support for human security. Thus, existing programs are simply sold in the new language of 'human security'.

As a preliminary framework for looking at this new landscape, participants suggested that the following could be considered core components of a human security lens.

- At its most basic, creating foreign policy through the lens of human security is to analyze how any foreign policy initiative either helps or hinders the security of a given people's lives and livelihoods. In any such analysis, there may be a distinction between what people subjectively feel they need to be secure and what an objective analysis of the roots of their insecurity would suggest. Human security should incorporate both of these threads: what people perceive to be threatening and an objective analysis of the sources of the threats to people's security.
- How people define their own security is critical. Different groups will conceive of security in different ways. Indeed one group's sense of security may be at the expense of another group. These conflicting perceptions must be factored in to the analysis of the appropriate action to be taken. Secondly, people's perceptions of insecurity often do not fit the traditional definitions of 'threat' or insecurity in foreign policy. Two recent surveys undertaken in Sri Lanka, and mentioned during the course of our discussions, illustrate this point. In ranking their concerns, displaced Sri Lankans named employment, water, education and food as their most pressing concerns. War ranked last. Thus traditional notions of military security were far from first on their list. Policy makers working with a 'human security' lens must, to the extent possible, encourage, consult, listen to and work with the people, to find out their perceptions of what would make their world more secure. Civil society is an important conduit for such an exchange of views between governments and the population at large.
- Conceptually and strategically, human security can usefully be linked to both human development and human rights. Ensuring one often serves the ends of the other. But while they overlap, they are not synonymous. Threats which may rank high in human security terms may be marginal to, or difficult to articulate in the language of, either of these other two humanitarian principles. On the other hand, including human rights as part of the human security agenda not only places the political impetus of human security into a long established international law tradition around human rights, but it provides an international foundation for challenging states which create insecurity for their own people.
- Human security highlights changing and/or contested conceptions of the relationship between 'security' and 'the state'. In particular, a militarized conception of state security grounded in the Cold War is being challenged. First, because many threats are non-military in either their source or solution. Second, because some forms of human insecurity are the direct result of actions taken by the military or state itself against its own population (internally displaced persons, human rights abuses and intra-state armed conflict).

- It should be noted that human insecurity may also be caused by *the absence of a state* capable of coping with basic threats to individual safety, let alone other threats to collective security (e.g. disease, environmental problems, warlords, drugs, terrorism, etc.). Using a human security lens to consider any given problem thus should not be seen as 'anti-state'. In some contexts, the application of the human security lens may result in a call for the financial and technical support of a given state, that is capacity-building, as a first priority. It may also mean bolstering the private sector, through trade agreements and economic development. Neither state-building nor trade should be seen as outside the potential tools that can be used to secure people's lives and livelihoods.
- Forcible humanitarian intervention was seen by most participants as a last, but legitimate, resort in securing people's lives, when the most extreme forms of human insecurity are observed.² There was much discussion about the issue of intervention and use of force in the name of human security, and the conditions under which it could be considered legitimate. All agreed that such a principle, forcible humanitarian intervention, was a profound departure from past practises with regard to state sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- Finally, a human security lens is best applied in a pro-active, preventative rather than reactive way. As such, it was argued by several participants that the current bureaucratic structure and culture of foreign ministries and multilateral organizations such as the UN can often become an impediment to the goal of human security.

In sum, there was consensus that human security has the potential to be a profound and long term shift of perspective in Canadian foreign policy. A number of issues and problems with the concept were discussed and are summarized in the following sections.

3. Human Security: A Western Agenda?

As suggested above, human security is spurred by the post-Cold War human rights regime and may be closely tied conceptually to a human development paradigm. If this is the case, human security suggests a broad agenda rooted in a particular ideological framework, linked closely to liberal notions of human rights and democracy, and committed to broadening the range of actors beyond states to civil society.

² There is some debate in the academic literature about the term 'intervention' and its meaning. We use the term 'forcible' to distinguish non-consensual, military intervention (for example NATO in Kosovo) from non-forcible, consensual intervention – such as humanitarian aid, normally consented to by the government in question. Thus, forcible humanitarian intervention means both that military force is used, and it occurs in a country which has not consented to the intervention. While making these theoretical distinctions, it should be noted that in reality, the exact line between aid and military work, or consensual and non-consensual (particularly where extraordinary pressure is applied on a government to consent to having an international team of military troops enter a sovereign territory – Indonesia and E. Timor are prime examples) is often blurred. For a discussion of the use of 'forcible humanitarian intervention', see Oliver Ramsbotham, 'Humanitarian Intervention 1990-5: a need to reconceptualize?' *Review of International Studies*, 1997, 23, 445-468.

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.

4. The Practice of Human Security: The Need for Early Action

Participants widely agreed that a key priority in the practice of human security is increasing emphasis on (and resources devoted to) prevention of conflicts which threaten human security. This is particularly true in situations of mass violence. Human security entails increased attempts to avert conflicts in other parts of the world, thereby preventing human suffering. Too frequently the 'old' Cold War policy was war by proxy; a new people-centered approach to security requires that we address the causes of conflict and take preventative measures through such means as pre-conflict peace-building.

Participants considered why human security is often invoked post-conflict, despite the 'early warning' mechanisms which exist. It was suggested that it is difficult for states to mobilize resources prior to civilian casualties and subsequent calls for action often result in disagreement amongst states about the best way to force rogue states to comply with conflict prevention measures. Finally, issues of national sovereignty, international law, and lack of access often block the efforts of outside states to prevent conflict within or between states. The international law needs to be clarified in this respect. It was also argued that UN resources such as special representatives are not mobilized in a proactive, timely or effective way, and the UN bureaucratic machinery is generally 'mismatched' with changing ideas of pre-conflict peace-building and human security. International institutions are still learning how to deal with the post- Cold War order and learning the most effective means of allocating resources. Reform and streamlining of the UN machinery remains a crucial step in improving conflict prevention, and thus human security.

In considering the 'division of labour' required by human security, one participant concluded that while humanitarian aid and services should be delivered by civilians in pre-conflict and post-conflict peace-building situations, they may require protective services from military forces. The extent to which military activity and NGO intervention can be combined, and under whose auspices (public or private), in potentially incendiary situations has been debated by Janice Gross Stein and others, but more academic work needs to engage this question of the hard-edged side of soft power.⁴

One participant argued that peace-building requires a broader and more flexible mandate from international organizations. Peacekeepers are often too limited in the range of activities deemed acceptable by their mandates. Partial solutions to these problems may be found in creating a UN 'standing' peace-building force, which would integrate military and civilian roles, while broadening the mandate to enable it to use force where appropriate. Global initiatives to reduce the overall number of tools of war, be they

⁴ Michael Bryans, Bruce D. Jones and Janice Gross Stein, *Mean Times: Humanitarian Action in Complex Political Emergencies – Stark Choices, Cruel Dilemmas*, Report of the NGOs in Complex Emergencies Project, *Coming to Terms*, Vol 1, No. 3, Program on Conflict Management and Negotiation, Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto, January 1999. The authors discuss the controversial use of private security forces for humanitarian purposes, in the absence of 'a consistent and predictable willingness to fill the security gap', on the part of the international community (NATO, EU, OAU).

nuclear weapons, small arms or landmines, should be also be seen as important elements in the pro-active human security agenda.

Finally, some participants suggested that there are moral and operational dilemmas and trade-offs which those who advocate human security as a pre-emptive strategy must address. Populations under pressure do what they must to survive and to bring about profound social change: sometimes their actions are inconsistent with the principles of human security. For example, in seeking to ban child soldiers and small arms, would we have applied this principle to the armed students of the Soweto uprisings? In thinking about operational trade-offs, the negative impact of the redirection of development assistance into peace-building programs needs to be considered. One participant suggested that peace-building in conflict zones is expensive, uncertain, ineffective and takes away resources from development situations where they work (i.e. primary need scenarios in the worst off countries). Human security highlights the moral and political dilemmas which are created by having different values, limited funds and virtually unlimited need.

5. Human Security and the Use of Force

Minister Axworthy has suggested that Kosovo is a 'concrete expression of this human security dynamic at work' and that NATO's air campaign 'should serve to dispel the misconception that military force and the human security agenda are mutually exclusive'.⁵ Such statements endorse the precedent of the use of force in human security practice. More recently, the question of the protection of civilians, through forcible intervention by the international community, has been taken up by the Secretary General of the United Nations and Minister Axworthy at the September 1999 UN General Assembly.

Participants engaged in an animated discussion on whether the use of force was consistent with the ethos and agenda of human security. In particular, participants considered whether the intervention undertaken in Kosovo accorded with the principles of human security. There was agreement among most of the participants that human security, under certain circumstances, entails the use of force. To restore human security to the population of a failed state may require forcibly intervening in the sovereign affairs of states. All of the participants agreed that the engagement of a military alliance in such an intervention is a profound departure from past international practise and needs further analysis by the academic community.

Five key problems, fundamental to the relationship between the use of force and human security, were raised as potential foci for future study:

⁵ See 'Kosovo and the Human Security Agenda - Notes for an Address by the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs', to the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Relations, Princeton University, April 7, 1999.

- Kosovo can be seen as the displacement of the security or safety of one group of people for another. Some argued that the intervention in Kosovo was premised upon bringing insecurity to the Serbians in Kosovo, in order to remove insecurity for the Albanian Kosovars. Given the number of conflicts in which two hostile and violent factions can find security only in the insecurity of the other, the question of how to employ force to ensure the long-term security of *both* sides must be addressed. There may be a contradiction inherent in such practice.
- Kosovo can also be seen as the failure of human security as a preventative strategy. To what extent does the potential use of force by a military alliance undermine the preventative side of human security? This question needs to be considered in light of human security becoming, as one participant said, a new '*raison d'être*' for NATO in a post-Cold War world, and the implications for the UN.
- The practice of human security to date has been focused on military activities and issues (forcible intervention, small arms, mines, etc.); further, as one participant suggested, the UN Security Council resolution passed with respect to Kosovo was framed, in part, in the 'old' language of bringing a traditional peace to Kosovo, and there was little mention of human security.⁶ The successful implementation of human security may be hindered by a continuing emphasis on military notions of peace and security.
- Considering the precedent created by NATO in sidestepping the UN Security Council, the question is raised of how other, potentially arbitrary and misguided interventions into states, in the name of 'democracy' and 'human rights', can be avoided if the principle of non-intervention is eroded, and the safety check of the Security Council is ignored. On the other hand, if Security Council members have veto power, how will any forcible humanitarian intervention be approved by its members?
- One critical issue is the role of the United States in the use of force. Given only the US has the power and ability to undertake large scale military interventions, the issue of US unilateralism and human security should be analyzed both as a problem and a solution.

It was also acknowledged that human security is not synonymous with forcible intervention, as some critics seem to think. Rather forcible humanitarian intervention is but one extreme point on the human security spectrum of possible actions.

⁶ While this resolution does, at one point, speak of the 'humanitarian tragedy taking place in Kosovo', it states first and foremost, 'Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security', and further, 'Determining that the situation in the region continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security...'. UN Security Council Resolution 1244, June 10, 1999. (S/Res/1244)

As an important point of contrast, a couple of participants compared the situation in Kosovo with the impact of economic sanctions against Iraq on infant mortality. According to some reports, the sanctions and war have resulted in deaths of 500,000 children under the age of five.⁷ The combination of sanctions and the demolition of infrastructure through bombing have created a public health crisis, indirectly killing civilians, most frequently the young, the old and the sick. These policies have serious consequences for the human security of Iraqi citizens, and therefore require consideration by policy makers concerned with human security.

In summary, there was considerable debate on whether human security was compatible with the use of force. On one hand, human security may include obligations to citizens of other countries, and to fulfil such obligations may require forcible military intervention. On the other, such an intervention results in civilian casualties of the kind that human security seeks to avoid, and sets profound new precedents for military activity. Where human security involves the use of force, a host of issues worthy of further consideration are raised.

6. Human Security: A New Role for International Organizations

Participants considered human security and its relationship to the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly. The Security Council has proven largely ineffective in dealing with humanitarian crises caused by military conflict and this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. While the broader UN framework has proven more sympathetic to the human security agenda, effective action to deal with crises is hindered by the bureaucratic structure of the UN itself. The development and humanitarian aspect of human security will be aided by large-scale institutional reform of the UN.

The Kosovo intervention calls into question the role of the Security Council in the international order, particularly in view of the implications of a regional military organization (NATO) undertaking forcible humanitarian intervention outside of the UN

⁷ United Nations, *Report of the Second Panel Established Pursuant to the Note by the President of the Security Council of 30 January 1999 (S/1999/100) Concerning the Current Humanitarian Situation in Iraq*, Annex II of S/1999/356, 30 March 1999. The Report notes that in the aftermath of the Gulf War, "The under-five child mortality rate increased from 30.2/1000 live births to 97.2/1000 during the same period [between 1989 and 1997]." In other words, it tripled. The report also notes that "Results of a nutritional status survey conducted on 15,000 children under 5 years of age in April 1997 indicated that almost the whole young child population was affected by a shift in their nutritional status towards malnutrition." This August, UNICEF released a report titled *Child and Maternal Mortality Survey 1999: Preliminary Report (Iraq)*. The press release (CF/DOC/PR/1999/29) dated 12 August 1999 states "Ms Bellamy [Carol Bellamy, head of UNICEF], noted that if the substantial reduction in child mortality throughout Iraq during the 1980s had continued through the 1990s, there would have been half a million fewer deaths of children under-five in the country as a whole during the eight year period 1991 to 1998. As a partial explanation, she pointed to a March statement of the Security Council Panel on Humanitarian Issues which states: "Even if not all suffering in Iraq can be imputed to external factors, especially sanctions, the Iraqi people would not be undergoing such deprivations in the absence of the prolonged measures imposed by the Security Council and the effects of war."

apparatus. The Security Council has been marginalized on new security issues by a lack of political will to be involved and by an already over-committed capacity. This vacuum, has been filled by 'coalitions of the willing' and regional actors; a development which is profoundly unsettling for both supporters outside of, as well as many working within, the UN. This feeling may reflect a broader tension in the United Nations between proponents of human security/ human rights/ humanitarian intervention on one side, and those who wish to preserve the ascendance of sovereignty, non-use of force and non-intervention in the internal affairs of states on the other.

It was argued that the Security Council is increasingly problematic in the post-Cold War era. Moreover, the case was made that the great power veto is a serious obstacle to the practise of human security. It was also noted, however, that the veto was a condition for the Great Powers accepting the UN system as a means to avoid conflict. Since negotiated reform of the Security Council is seemingly impossible, change will need to come through evolving practices. Canada, with its current seat on the Security Council may want to consider ways of pushing this evolution forward.

Finally, it was noted that there are several underutilized tools available to the Security Council, such as the Genocide Convention. While the Security Council could draw authority from this Convention, it is necessary to clarify the definition of genocide, to expand the range of atrocities covered under the Convention, and to clarify the tools which may be used to prevent genocide before the Security Council can effectively implement this Convention.

Human security is more compatible with the broader UN framework than it is with the institution of the Security Council. This is in part due to the influence of Secretary General Annan, who is a 'norm entrepreneur' and an energetic proponent of the idea of human security within the UN. Human security may continue to take root in the UN with the range of reforms currently being implemented. Annan has introduced new innovations in the UN, such as the 'inner Cabinet' and various interdepartmental groups aimed at promoting greater cooperation. With shrinking budgets and increasing demand for services, the UN has three options: to cut operations, to spread the work thinner, or to 'work smarter' by employing networks rather than hierarchies, cutting down time spent in meetings, implementing new information technologies into the workplace, changing the working culture of the UN, and increasing available resources by collecting outstanding peacekeeping debts and overdue member contributions. Implementing such changes will require political pressure and strong leadership.

Secretary General Annan has made international civil society a key partner in the UN, particularly with respect to human security. This partnership is now structured around 'the Ottawa model' and shifting alliances which are issue and time-specific. Global civil society input is also a central part of promoting human security. While NGOs have little involvement in traditional military issues such as security and disarmament, they have considerable influence in policy discussion, policy making and implementation in areas related to human security. Some states are resistant to the increasing role of global civil

society, which they consider bypassing the legitimate actors and processes, i.e., states and the traditional inter-state system. The UN system already has made strides in incorporating civil society into its policy-making process, but this could be built even further.

In advancing the human security agenda internationally, increasing emphasis is put on 'coalitions of the willing': like-minded coalition partners which may include states, NGOs and other international organizations. Where possible, the UN has begun to rely on these: they are both useful and necessary.⁸ These partnerships benefit from the greater knowledge and interest of the regional organizations while addressing their lack of resources through UN funding. When and how successful 'coalitions of the willing' are depends on the issue, area and state-to-state interests. Canada's initiative, growing out of the *Lysøen Declaration* with Norway, to create a 'Human Security Network, involving eleven countries and nine prominent NGOs and international organizations', could be another very useful vehicle for a global human security agenda.⁹

In brief, the possibilities for advancing human security within the Security Council were considered somewhat limited. One exception to this was the possible use of the Genocide Convention from which the Security Council might draw legal authority to intervene in cases of genocide. Human security has a more receptive audience in the broader UN framework due in part to the General Secretary's support and to 'coalitions of the willing'. Prospects for implementing the human security agenda would be improved with reform of the UN institutional machinery, particularly in the area of conflict prevention.

7. Human Security and International Law

It was argued by one international law expert that, over the last fifty years, international law concerning human rights generally, and humanitarian intervention specifically, has laid down a strong legal framework within which the political agenda of human security may find important lessons and develop. In other words, the political project represented by the human security agenda may be built on the already existing precedents within international law.

It was pointed out that a fundamental tension of the UN Charter was the conflict between the rights of territorial integrity, sovereignty and non-intervention on one hand, and

⁸ See for example: "An Agenda for Peace: Preventative Diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping" (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992; A/47/277-S/24111, 17 June 1992.); also, "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations" (A/50/60-S/1995/1, 3 January 1995). The Supplement talks at some length about coordination, the trend towards the establishment of informal groups of Member states to support the work of the Secretary-General, and cooperation with regional organizations in five areas: consultation, diplomatic support, operational support, co-deployment and joint operations.

⁹ *World View*, 'Special Edition', Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, September, 1999, p. 3. (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canada-magazine).

human rights as articulated the Preamble of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the other. During the Cold War, territorial integrity was privileged; in the post-Cold War era, however, human rights law is gaining increasing prominence. The most recent shift is in part a response to two events: the genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda. From these events followed the implementation of the International War Crimes Tribunal, the push towards the formation of an International Criminal Court, and the British detention of General Pinochet.

A further key event in the shift towards the privileging of human rights is the intervention in Kosovo, as discussed above. Clearly NATO violated the norms of territorial integrity and non-intervention set out in Article 2 of the UN Charter. In addition, NATO rejected the terms of Article 53, that no enforcement action shall be taken under regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council. It is significant that this intervention was justified on the basis of human rights.

There are several legal foundations for humanitarian intervention in international law, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a number of UN conventions, and the many regional declarations on human rights (particularly those articulated by the European community). In addition, there is a vast body of jurisprudence on human rights built up during the Cold War, as well as the contribution of ECOSOC during that time, and the ratification of treaties dealing with human rights. The human rights aspects of the UN Charter are gaining greater recognition and importance in the international community. Political change is 'catching up' with developments in international law, and intervention in support of these laws becomes possible in a way it was not during the Cold War. The culmination of all this activity is that the international community has come to accept human rights, even if it is still unsure about what these rights entail or how they should be implemented.

While there have been many positive developments in international human rights law, there remains ambiguity regarding the international legal right of forcible humanitarian intervention. That such a right exists is agreed upon by some and rejected by others. The jurisprudence in this area is mixed: take, for example, the advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice on the legality of nuclear weapons, in which the Court ruled that, with respect to weapons of mass destruction which do not distinguish between military and civilian populations, such weapons do not contravene international law where they are absolutely necessary for self-defense.¹⁰ In this way, the Court reverted to the traditional state-centered value system, rather than the human rights of non-combatants.

Participants highlighted a tension between humanitarian intervention, international law and international society, and the conflicting obligations which each entails. This conflict is often resolved through state practice. Historically, the practice of the international

¹⁰ For a discussion of this case see: Peter H. F. Bekker, 'Advisory Opinions of the World Court on the Legality of Nuclear Weapons', *ASIL Insight*, American Society of International Law, No. 14, 1996.

community has been that the norms of sovereignty and non-intervention trump human rights. This has been the basis for international order for the past 300 years. Increasingly, however, there may be an acceptance that intervention in cases of humanitarian crisis is legitimate.

Conclusions/ Summary

Human security remains a contested concept in both theory and practice, although several areas of consensus did emerge around possible definitions and a basic agenda for human security, in practise. A majority of participants agreed that human security can be thought of as a paradigm shift, a changing lens that gives policy makers a new perspective in their policy making process. Foreign policy which works within the human security framework is foreign policy which takes into account the multifaceted security needs of individuals and communities in a contextualized and culturally sensitive way. In this sense human security is not a set of universally and uniformly applied policy options.

Several specific suggestions were made as to what might constitute the core components of such a lens. Securing people's lives and livelihoods could be taken as the central goal – where both objective and subjective perceptions of the sources of insecurity are analysed. Secondly, human security, as a collective responsibility, requires the participation of a wide range of actors including individuals, communities, civil society, states and international organizations. Thirdly, security must be defined in terms broader than a militarized conception of state security. Fourthly, the state in any given region can be both be an obstacle to, and a vehicle for, creating the conditions for human security: thus the role of the state (and the market) must be incorporated into the analysis. Forcible humanitarian intervention was seen by most participants as a last, but legitimate, resort in securing people's lives, when the most extreme forms of human insecurity are observed. Finally, in applying this lens, it is necessary to do so in a preventative, pro-active way.

While consensus did emerge around definitions and a basic framework for human security, in practise, it also became clear that a thorough theoretical analysis of the term is lagging far behind. As Minister Axworthy has noted, the practice of human security has led theory.¹¹ This is a clarion call to the academic community, particularly those involved in international relations theory, to address the thorny theoretical questions posed by human security (many of which were raised during the course of this symposium): is human security a northern/ neo-colonial/ paternalistic concept? With its strong relationship to human rights, is human security a categorical imperative which demands consistent application? Could such a foundation be abused by powerful states? If, on the other hand, we accept that human security, applied as a lens, "will differ in different contexts", do we risk the charge that the lens is applied only when it is convenient or beneficial for Canada to do so? Will such an approach create inconsistencies in Canadian

¹¹ Lloyd Axworthy, "Foreword", *Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World*, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada. April 1999.

foreign policy? Is the use of force and the possible death and injury of one group of civilians, in order to protect another group of civilians, an unavoidable feature of forcible intervention in the case of internal warfare? Is such an outcome consistent with the principles of human security?

Finally, the role of the international community must be addressed, both in terms of international law and organizations. While humanitarian intervention in the sovereign affairs of other states has an uncertain status in international law, recent actions of the international community may indicate a shift towards greater acceptability of humanitarian intervention. While the scope for implementing human security through the Security Council remains limited, the prospects for human security in the broader UN framework are more encouraging due to the emergence of 'coalitions of the willing' and the support of the Secretary General. Institutional reform of the UN machinery would improve prospects still further. Broad consensus emerged around the need for increased emphasis on conflict prevention and some general suggestions for addressing this difficulty were made. Ultimately, the prevention of conflicts should be central in the strategy for securing and maintaining the human security of populations around the world.

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