

Approaching Human Security

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ABSTRACT

Approaching Human Security advocates the necessity of embracing an integrated approach to security in order to ensure that humanity survives and flourishes. Human Security requires the utilization of the tools of science and the values inherent in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It incorporates multiple dimensions of human activity, such as culture, economics, politics, and military deployments and doctrines. Additionally, the article highlights several areas that require change. These include the current economic focus on perpetual growth rather than recognition of the requirement of harmony with the natural world, the dominant paradigm of national security that is excessively focused on nationalism and militarism, the requirement of heightened levels of international cooperation to address pandemics and the elimination of nuclear weapons and other issues that cannot be successfully addressed at a national level. The article explains why an integrated approach to Human Security is both morally compelling and practically necessary.

Keywords: human security, integral approach, human rights, militarism

Aproximación a la Seguridad Humana

RESUMEN

Aproximación a la seguridad humana aboga por la necesidad de adoptar un enfoque integral de la seguridad para garantizar que la humanidad sobreviva y prospere. La Seguridad Humana requiere la utilización de las herramientas de la ciencia y los valores inherentes a la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos. Incorpora múltiples dimensiones de la actividad humana, como la cultura, la economía, la política y los despliegues y doctrinas mili-

tares. Además, el artículo destaca varias áreas que requieren cambios. Estos incluyen el enfoque económico actual en el crecimiento perpetuo en lugar del reconocimiento del requisito de armonía con el mundo natural, el paradigma dominante de seguridad nacional que se centra excesivamente en el nacionalismo y el militarismo, el requisito de niveles elevados de cooperación internacional para abordar pandemias y la eliminación de las armas nucleares y otros temas que no pueden abordarse con éxito a nivel nacional. El artículo explica por qué un enfoque integral de la Seguridad Humana es tanto moralmente convincente como prácticamente necesario.

Palabras clave: seguridad humana, enfoque integral, derechos humanos, militarismo

应对人类安全

摘要

应对人类安全 (Approaching Human Security) 倡导有必要采用一项综合的安全方法，以确保人类生存和繁荣。人类安全要求利用科学工具和《世界人权宣言》中固有的价值观。它结合了人类活动的多个维度，例如文化、经济、政治、以及军事部署和学说。此外，本文还强调了几个需要变革的领域。其中包括：当前将永久增长作为经济重点，而不是承认与自然世界和谐相处这一要求；过度关注民族主义和军国主义的国家安全主导范式；需要提高国际合作水平以应对大流行；以及消除核武器和无法在国家层面成功解决的其他问题。本文解释了为何“就人类安全采取综合方法”在道德上具有说服力并且在实践中是必要的。

关键词：人类安全，综合方法，人权，军国主义

The current paradigm through which the most influential nations pursue security is incapable of addressing several dynamic threats to the survival of modern civilization. Currently, the focus through which security is primarily sought is

based on nationalism with an emphasis on military power.

The first duty of the state—to protect and serve its citizens—today cannot be adequately met by this approach. It cannot address threats of environmental degradation or the person-

al health and well-being of people. In fact, it is an approach that exacerbates adversity rather than encouraging the cooperation necessary for sustainable living and development.

A more practical approach could rest on two foundations:

1. Hard science in understanding and living in harmony with the natural world and thus honoring and protecting its regenerative processes; and,
2. Policies and practices in accord with the values inherent in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which protects the inherent dignity of being human.

Realistic solutions require an appreciation of the current actual undeniable existential global threats of climate change, pandemic disease, and nuclear weapons, as well as the everyday impact on people looking for protection from scarcity, disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social discord, political oppression, and injustice. The allocation of resources, both economic and intellectual, to protect the territory from aggression and to advance perceived national self-interest primarily by military means is disconnected from solving either causes or conditions of current insecurity.

A comprehensive approach that refocuses energy, resources, and metrics of success on human beings and the natural and social environments in which we live is needed. Human security is the integral principle necessary to organize this practical and realistic

approach. It is implicit in the Sustainable Development Goals but not yet in the actual security policies of major nations. Human security recognizes the need for an approach integrating multiple dimensions of human activity, such as culture, economics, politics, and military deployments and doctrines.

The budgets of the most powerful and influential states express the ideas and beliefs through which they pursue security which rests largely on the ancient Roman maxim that peace is achieved best by the preparation for war. It is a grossly reductionist and thus inaccurate approach. It is pursued through several obviously contrary doctrines: the pursuit of both strategic stability and military advantage.

It creates and institutionalizes adversity while cooperation based on shared interests, best served through diplomacy and the rule of law, is marginalized. It ignores the many contemporary successes in finance, business, culture, communication, science, technology, trade, law, religion, medicine, transportation, and education, for example. These have been achieved best by incorporating the fact that modernity increasingly reflects a borderless world where common interests are best advanced by cooperation or at least rule-based competition. With nuclear weapons, the reductionist approach codifies the worst of human inventions that place the future of humanity at risk every minute of every day, making total annihilation a distinct possibility if other avenues of social discourse fail.

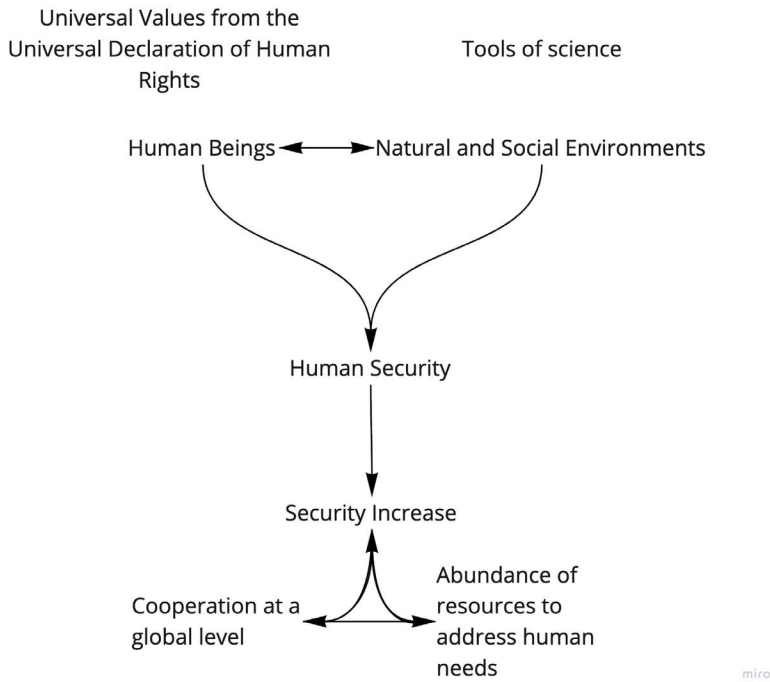


Image 1. Holistic approach toward human security. Elaborated by the author.

Economic development that destroys nature is unsustainable. Social inequities will generate further conflicts. How we pursue security should reinforce progress in creating a global culture of peace and the pursuit of global common goods and promptly end the daily risks that could lead to the annihilation of humanity.

The current dominant military approach to security has reached economic allocations that stretch the imagination. Moreover, the costly improvement of some ordinances, such as nuclear weapons or the systemic application of AI to warfare, weaponization of space, and creation of new technologies of destruction like nano weapons, poses a paradox of improved means to unimproved ends: the more the weapons are improved, the less security is

obtained.

A human security approach will not only enhance cooperation amongst nations, but it will also provide far more security within nations by addressing disrupting threats and freeing up both intellectual, organizational, and economic resources needed to address human needs.

While social instability grows from increasing gross inequalities of wealth and opportunity, physical threats to civilization remain inadequately addressed. These threats can only be met at a level that transcends nation-states and requires cooperation at a global level. These threats are global in nature. These threats require realistic responses, not mythical or ideologically driven distortions.

The utilization of the tools of science coupled with the universal values inherent in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the underlying ethical and moral principles of all major faith traditions opens a pathway to a sustainable flourishing future.

This integral and comprehensive approach to security is capable of galvanizing the best values, skills, aspirations, and practices of individuals, nations, and cultures. Because it is both morally coherent and practically viable, it has the potential to be inspiring. Human security is a necessary ideal with the power to generate change.

Challenges posed by pandemic diseases, climate change, weapons of mass destruction, and emerging threats arising from new technologies, such as cyber, nano, and space, are rapidly expanding. All of these are amenable to verifiable, empirical approaches that employ scientific tools and require global cooperation. But we must have a principled theoretical shift to generate the necessary changes in policy, and that change must be systemic and holistic.

To disconnect the regenerative processes of the natural world from our economic system is not realistic. To focus security on the state rather than people is illogical. To fragment the approach from security to sustainable development is dysfunctional. Security is a multifaceted, many-level right of all people, and it involves all aspects of human activity. Just as our personal health involves how we sleep, eat, and interact with one another, just as our bodies are

integrated systems, so is our security. Human Security is the integral principle called for today.

Presently, the geo-political landscape is framed by notions of sovereignty. The planet and many present threats do not recognize national borders. Humans create these borders. We create nations to serve human needs—both physical and psychological. We create cities, counties, and regions to identify and meet our needs, and we create institutions to address those needs. The basis, legitimacy, and stability of sovereign states do not come from the bureaucracies or family heritage of leaders of states but from the mandate of those who are governed. States express the moral and practical agency of people.

Today the requirements of that agency can only be met at a cooperative and global level in addressing the most pressing existential threats. Thus, global cooperation to meet the first requirement of every state to ensure the safety and well-being of its citizens is required. The state is an expression of an idea. It is a legal entity that we create, distinguishable from natural entities and systems. Natural living systems such as trees and forests, ants and ant colonies, or fish in schools are not created by human ideas. States are. We create states based on ideas expressed by words. Framing concepts have an enormous influence on human behavior.

The planet can be understood as one integrated living system. Humanity can be understood as one species in a web of life. We require a new set of ideas in accordance with this understanding.

An integral approach to Human Security is rooted in our best science and recognizes that human beings are social entities that require meaning and values in their endeavors. Humans need enabling environments to grow in our most ennobling and fulfilling values. Policies to fulfill human security needs appropriately must be both practical and morally coherent. Moral

coherence requires peaceful approaches amongst peoples and nations and a proper recognition of the requirement of harmony for many cultures as well as many species.

Given how many endeavors have recently gone global, bringing security into coherence with human needs is not only within reach; it is both morally compelling and practically necessary.

References

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