

Report
Third Meeting of the Commission on Human Security

Haga Castle, Stockholm
9-10 June 2002

The Commission on Human Security met for the third time in Stockholm, Sweden, on 9-10 June 2002. This followed its previous meetings at Greentree, New York, in June 2001 and in Tokyo, Japan, in December 2001.

The meeting was made possible with the support of the Government of Sweden, which offered Haga Castle as the Commission's meeting venue. The Commission had exchanges with some leading policy thinkers during dinners that were hosted by Ms. Gun-Britt Andersson, State Secretary for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, and by Mr. Jan Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, on 8 and 9 June, respectively.

After the Commission's meeting, a roundtable dialogue was convened by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) on 10 June, to exchange views with Commissioners on the relationships between human security, human rights and democracy. In addition, the Olof Palme Institute organized a public seminar on the 11 June on the theme of Globalisation and Human Rights with Amartya Sen as the keynote speaker and Lincoln Chen and Surin Pitsuwan also participated on the Panel.

Lakhdar Brahimi was not able to attend this meeting since the Emergency Loya Jirga was underway in Afghanistan. The Commission expressed its support of the work being led by him and its wishes for a successful transition in Afghanistan. In addition to the Commission's secretariat, representatives from the Japanese and Swedish Governments, Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), the Rockefeller Foundation and Harvard Kennedy School of Government were present as observers.

Introduction and Update on the Commission's Work

The Co-chairs opened the meeting with a brief introduction and update on the work undertaken since the December meeting held in Tokyo. Central to this process was the number of joint engagements and meetings convened by the Co-chairs with the Secretariat as well as through public forums. They presented the preliminary findings of the core work of the Commission from the two research projects, one on human security in conflict situations led by Sadako Ogata, and the other on human security and development led by Amartya Sen. Moreover research and policy gaps were identified and the next steps towards the Final Report were discussed.

In addition, the Commissioners who participated in various outreach and consultative activities reported on these undertakings. Notable among them was the "Round Table on Transition and Human Security in Central Asia" in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan on 22-24 April 2002, reported on by Surin Pitsuwan, and the "Symposium on Economic Insecurity and Human Security in Africa" in

Cotonou, Benin on 24–25 May 2002, reported by Albert Tevoedjre. Commissioners also reported on a number of human security related events that they participated in as part of the Commission’s commitment to promote public debate on human security.

Mr. Ito, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan made a briefing on the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, to solicit the views of the Commission on the criteria according to which priority areas of the Trust Fund could be decided.

At the conclusion of the two-days of deliberation, decisions were made on the principles and processes of drafting the final report and the dates and venues for the next meetings.

In anticipation of the meeting, the secretariat prepared detailed progress reports on the conflict and development projects and shared selected research papers on topics commissioned under both projects.

1. The Conflict and Development Projects’ Progress Reports

Co-chair Sadako Ogata presented the preliminary findings of the research undertaken through the conflict project and her observations based on the two papers that she disseminated prior to the meeting. In the paper: “Protecting People in Conflict: A Progress Report”, Ogata referred to some key areas of human security concern under conflict situations, identified problems, suggested innovative approaches to effectively deal with these issues and proposed elements that should be further examined in the project. The key areas included: 1) safety of refugees; 2) internally displaced persons (IDPs); 3) identification or recognition of citizenship; 4) women and children; 5) the transition between humanitarian assistance and development; 6) co-existence following conflict; and 7) funding human security. Ogata explained that rapid progress was being made to complete work underway in the project by September 2002. A few more expert meetings would be organized to support the findings of the research, and some further case studies would be conducted, including one on Afghanistan and one on Palestinian refugees.

Ogata also presented in her paper: “Human Security: Convergences Between Conflict and Poverty” her view on how to identify the “convergence” points of these aspects. She emphasized that while more analysis is needed on the impact of development on conflict and vice versa, the inter-relationships between the two domains could provide added value and new directions in the field of human security. Among the elements highlighted by Ogata as key to issues of convergence between conflict and poverty are: a “people-centered approach” focusing particularly on *the excluded*; mutually reinforcing protection (top-down), empowerment (bottom-up) and prevention, ranging from responsive actions to environment-building; a rights-based approach that includes both redressing those rights that are violated and strengthening those that are to be realized. Furthermore, she stated that in the scrutiny of these convergences, the Commission should take a closer look at sudden downturns and inequality overtime, both of which significantly impact on the livelihoods of people. Having listed such ideas, Ogata said that the international community has to take an integrated approach from the perspective of “people-building”.

Co-chair Amartya Sen presented the preliminary findings and his analysis of research undertaken through the development project based on the two papers disseminated prior to the meeting (“Human Security and Development: Examining Some Policy Implications” and “Commission on Human Security: Work Programme towards the Final Report”). He indicated that, following a late start, the development project had worked very hard to ensure that it could provide adequate and necessary background policy research for the Commission.

Sen emphasized the importance of an analytical framework to integrate development and conflict related research findings. Clearly the avoidance of war and related destitution and the removal of economic, social and health deprivations should both be important ends. Moreover, it is quite plausible that each also serves to some extent as a means to the other. The Commission must try to investigate and identify the "links" that exist, which can run in either direction. On the one hand, famines and severe impoverishment are often associated with antecedent military activities and violent encounters. But the relationship in the other direction – from poverty to conflict – is complex. The economic factors underlying political violence and social discontent have to be vigorously searched for and investigated to avoid the temptation to opt for economic reductionism that can result in inappropriate policy conclusions. Sen identified several chains of linkages between poverty and conflict. First, although deprivation may not generate a revolt immediately, their memory can linger in a population and provoke violence later. Second, although the leaders of wars and terrorist groups may be rather well off, the poverty and unemployment creates recruiting grounds for ‘foot soldiers’. Third, many otherwise peaceful people tolerate terrorism because they perceive violence to be part of a fight against global injustice and inequity, a fight that they are not able to engage otherwise because of the asymmetry of political arrangements. Sen also discussed particular human security threats such as HIV/AIDS, economic crises, and endemic deprivation.

Sen raised 8 key policy proposals for consideration: 1) recognizing human security within the framework of human rights; 2) global commitment to schooling; 3) global coordinated action on health security; 4) global equity from the perspective of human security, including the equity of trade and intellectual property arrangements; 5) urgent attention to the trade in armaments; 6) sustainable development as human security; 7) gender equity for human security; and 8) civil society, news scrutiny, and conflict prevention.

2. Key Discussion Points

Commissioners engaged in a general discussion on the substantive policy issues arising from the research in both projects. While broadly endorsing the research underway in both projects, the Commissioners made a number of suggestions to address research gaps and promote an approach that would enable an integrated analysis of the findings in development and conflict areas.

Taking into account its three objectives, the Commission implicitly adopted a broad conceptual understanding of human security to advance its work. The summary below reflects the main discussion points on key policy themes and issues that emerged during the meeting.

2.1 Human security: A conceptual approach

Discussions on conceptual issues built on the approach taken at the Tokyo meeting with general agreement that while the concept should seek to provide a comprehensive and broad framework for human security, the policy recommendations could be focused and specific to select issues. Sen in his background paper and discussion elaborated on Obuchi's definition. Commissioners broadly supported this approach. Human Security was seen as indivisible with the element of dignity emphasized and having a universal dimension. Human security can be understood as the protection and preservation of human "survival" and "daily life" (presumably against premature death, avoidable ill-health, illiteracy etc) and also the avoidance of indignities that can result in injury, insult and contempt as well as the participation and empowerment of individuals and communities. Taking an implicit normative/value based policy approach the concept of human security was seen to include the following elements:

- A clear focus on individual human lives in contrast to the notion of "national security" in the military context.
- An understanding and acknowledgement of the role of society and of social arrangements in making human lives more secure in a constructive way
- A reasoned concentration on the downside risks of human lives, rather than on the overall expansion of effective freedom in general (contrasting with the broader objective of the promotion of "human development").
- A chosen focus on the "downside risk" in emphasizing the more elementary human rights (rather than seeing them simply as a part of the entire range of human rights).
- An emphasis on the participation and empowerment of individuals and communities in achieving human security.

There was strong consensus among commissioners that the role of civil society, including private corporations and NGOs, is one of the most important aspects of human security. Outreach reports from Central Asia and West Africa were commended for showing how consultations can provide opportunities for the voices of the people on human security. Others suggested that the "voices of the poor", regardless of their identity, party affiliations, etc., should be added to the understanding of state security and human security.

Commissioners also debated the importance of understanding not just economic globalisation but also the globalising context and the complex challenges posed for human security. In particular new manifestations of problems and threats (such as those related to violent crime, cross border trafficking in women and children, narcotics and increased migration etc) need to be examined as they are of critical relevance. There was consensus expressed in a number of different ways that human security is complementary to conventional security concepts and that the role of governments remains essential to promote human security domestically and beyond. It was widely considered that strong civil society, improved governance, democratisation and people's participation were key to the promotion of human security at the individual and collective levels.

Commissioners also emphasized the need to promote new forms of partnerships, south-south linkages and resource flows to better promote and protect human security.

2.2 Human security: Deepening the Policy Analysis on Conflict and Development

Exploring the relationships between conflict and development: The Commissioners generally shared the view with the Co-chairs that the relationship between conflict and development is not simple. Although some recent literature draws attention to the presumed links, no comprehensive account on their relationship has been established. Further it was pointed out that the Cold War spawned some of the deadliest long-term international conflict situations and as such recent conflicts should be understood in their historical context and are not necessarily tied to contemporary economic globalisation processes. It was also said that the Commission should attach more emphasis to conflict prevention measures. Discussions focused on how to analyse the relationships between conflict and development without taking a purely sectoral approach or identifying only some categories of people so as not to undermine the plurality and universal dimensions of human security. Arising from this discussion a cyclical model was proposed as a way to incorporate the dimensions or processes of conflict resolution, development and conflict prevention as part of a dynamic continuum. It was argued that various parameters such as exclusion, identity, human rights, gender education and so on could be understood in this integrated cyclic framework.

Key to the issues of integrating development and conflict was the concern with how to ensure that people remain at the center and moreover to determine what categories of people should be a priority focus. This led to a discussion on the idea of the “excluded”. In her paper on convergence, Ogata suggested the Commission’s focusing on *the excluded*, as it cannot attempt to formulate policy recommendations concerning all people. She argued that by targeting the excluded, the Commission is in a much better position to draw out the convergence between conflict and development and to formulate specific policy proposals. Sen indicated not all insecurity is a result of classic notions of exclusion. For example, the economic crises in South Korea, and the terrorist attacks against the “rich” people working in the World Trade Center, are, while being human security concerns, instances of those that did not involve such classic notion of exclusion. Furthermore, while some Commissioners supported the idea of the excluded as a useful way to bridge conflict and development, others, including Sen, expressed concern over the conceptual confusion between the excluded, the marginalized, and forgotten people. Ogata agreed that further examination was necessary on this idea.

Human Security as a Human Right: The proposal to consider human security within a human rights framework was accepted and has been incorporated in the Commission’s research projects. As some pointed out, human rights have been established as a universal norm, having received broad input from philosophers all over the world. Moreover, as Amartya Sen argued, human rights are not necessarily a Western idea as often assumed. It derives from a whole range of interactions between cultures and civilizations and these should be recognized as contributing to the rights discourse and framework so that both the concept and the obligations that arise from rights are accepted universally. The real challenge for the Commission, however, would be to translate the human rights aspects of human security into specific policies related to conflict and development.

Human Security and Global Equity: It was proposed that the Commission reflects on the issue of equity among people within nations and the issue of equity among nations. Sen distinguished

between problems of insecurity (including that of inequality of security in the lives of differently placed people), and problems of uneven and iniquitous sharing of the benefits of growth and expansion. He used the example of the relationships between current patent laws for medicine, its incentive effects and impacts on health security to underscore how global institutions influence decisions that could have negative consequences for the health security of millions of poor people especially in developing countries. Differing views were expressed on the issues related to patent laws and their impacts on health security. Arising from the discussion, Commissioners versed in health issues agreed to work together to incorporate a proposal on the current situation. The problems in the current drug price mechanisms and availability and access of essential treatment for diseases would be a part of the section dealing with health proposals.

Global Coordinated Action on Health: The prospects of survival have been made less favourable in many parts of the world through problems in public health, including the emergence and spread of particular diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, new types of malaria, drug-resistant T.B., and so on. While globalisation, if properly oriented, can greatly help in finding solutions to these problems of insecurity, these maladies are also, to a great extent, ailments of a globalising world. The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS from one country to another - indeed from one continent to another - illustrates the global nature of that challenge. The Commission agreed that the current work on health security has particular relevance and broadly endorsed the proposals in the paper on health and human security.

Multiple-identities: The largely shared view among the Commissioners was that identity issues relate to almost all human security concerns. As Sen pointed out, religious identity is sometimes regarded as the only or dominant identity of some people, ignoring their traditions in other intellectual inquiries, thus negating the rich diversity and plurality of cultures and civilizations. The imposition of a particular identity on people creates a reaction that leads to tension and conflicts between cultures and civilizations. Taking the discussion further, it was reflected that, while people always have multiple identities, all rights and resources are concentrated on one identity as a way to draw people together. This one identity is usually that of the national identity deriving from one's claims to citizenship. The commissioners agreed that this issue should be examined.

Trade in armaments: Sen drew attention to the worrying issue that those who might wish to protect human security were entrenched in the arms business. For example the members of the Permanent Security Council were together responsible for 81% of world arms exports during 1996-2000. He indicated that the Commission should clarify the demands of human security and facilitate public understanding and discussion of such complex problems. Ogata indicated that the Commission should be aware of the significant research and body of information already available on this aspect and should seek to add value to it. At the same time, she stated that small arms from industrialized as well as developing countries have endangered human security and resulted in many conflicts. Discussions, especially in arms exporting countries, could contribute to changing the policies of these countries and might have significant impact on human security situations.

Areas Identified for Further Research:

The Commission identified the need for further research in the area of international migration as,

in its most critical aspects, it creates new insecurities. Forced migration usually results from a combination of causes where both conflict and development issues play a major part. Human rights violations, violence and discrimination are also key to understanding the migration phenomenon. The increased irregular movements of people across borders also creates serious concerns linked to trafficking, the spread of communicable diseases, brain drain, etc. which are of concern from a human security perspective.

Ongoing Research: Existing research underway in both the conflict and development projects, as reflected in the work programme should be reviewed and reflect the concerns raised by Commissioners. It was expected that all research papers would be finalized by mid-September so that relevant findings could be incorporated into the draft Report.

3. Outreach activities and Public Consultations

In addition to roundtable meetings that took place in Central Asia and West Africa, the Commission approved the consultative process proposed for Africa as well as the convening of three possible initiatives at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. A Panel on Human Security and Sustainable Development, a session on human security was put on the agenda of the Inter Parliamentary Union and Public Hearings with civil society was proposed. Other activities included seminars and consultations in Thailand, and possibly in the Middle East as well as other events under consideration.

4. The United Nations Human Security Trust Fund:

The Commission considered the paper on the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund. The representative of the government of Japan provided information on the way the Trust Fund was managed, within present overall allocation of over US \$200 million. There was, however, a need to establish clearer priorities for the better allocation of funds to defined projects. This concern was shared by the Commission, which, nevertheless, agreed to defer its recommendations on this matter, pending clarification of its own policy recommendations. Commissioners also concurred that this issue was part of a broader concern with the need to promote a global commitment for funding of human security.

5. Way Forward to the Commission's Final Report

During the two-day meeting, many comments were made concerning the final report and its possible shape. Commissioners also discussed the various audiences for the Report at the international, regional and national levels. The United Nations Secretary-General, civil society, including corporations and NGOs and governments were identified as significant audiences. Commissioners discussed issues related to language, tone and ideological positions in drafting the Report.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held 8-10 December 2002, in Bangkok, Thailand.

The first draft of the Report would be circulated to the Commissioners by the 8 of November (4 weeks prior to the meeting) for examination. Based on the discussions at this meeting, amendments to the Report would be made between December and January and the second draft of the Report would be prepared for the final meeting of the Commission to be held on 23-24 February, 2003, in Japan. The final version of the Report is to be approved by the Commission at this meeting. Thereafter the Report would go through the usual production processes and be ready for launching in June. The Secretariat is to provide a dissemination strategy for the Report.

6. Financial and administrative issues

Responding to the requests and instructions by the commissioners, the secretariat briefly explained the budgetary and administrative situations of the Commission. The secretariat will prepare regular financial reports and send them to the commissioners. In addition, the secretariat explained the current status of the Commission's web site and public information strategies.