

## 6. UN: EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UN, MEMBER STATES AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO PROMOTE HUMAN SECURITY

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**The concept of Human Security is increasingly recognized as the leading policy framework for responding to the security-development-human rights nexus and for ensuring an effective policy of structural and systemic prevention by the international community. From an early stage, the UN, like-minded governments and regional organization worked closely with CSOs to develop the concept. This allows embarking on the next logical step of fostering effective UN/governments/CSO partnerships in order to operationalise the concept.**

In 1994, UNDP articulated the concept in its Human Development Report as a fundamental conceptual shift in thinking about security. It heralded a change from “an exclusive stress on territorial security to a much greater stress on people’s security”. The concept was promoted by a group of states from all regions with a leading role played by Canada and Switzerland establishing the Human Security Network (Canada Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade 2004). In a second initiative, Japan, with UN backing, set up the independent Commission on Human Security. The UN established an Advisory Board on Human Security within the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations OCHA 2006). Japan also initiated the establishment of a UN Trust Fund on Human Security. In its comprehensive report *Human Security Now* issued in May 2003, the Commission defined the concept as a new security paradigm that aims to achieve both “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” by the protection of individuals and communities and seeking ways to empower them to act for themselves (Commission on Human Security 2003).

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The Human Security discourse has led to new initiatives in civil society to support corrective policy and action on urgent issues of human security. As an example, the Crisis Management Initiative set up by former President Ahtisaari, in its Paper entitled *Empowering People at Risk: Human Security Priorities for the 21st Century* (Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005) rightly perceived human security as a call to cooperative action, inviting multiple constituencies into new partnerships to activate the synergies between the human rights, human safety and human development agendas. The human security discourse also induces new approaches to arms control and disarmament which are more inclusive and open to the involvement of civil society by shifting from the traditional framing of issues in terms of threats to states to those being more concerned with the security and well-being of people living within states.

A breakthrough is the first-time mentioning of the concept of Human Security in a world summit document (UN General Assembly Summit Outcome Document 2005) committing all Member States to develop the notion of “human security” and linking it to individual security and development in recognizing that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want (para. 143).

The recognition of the “responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” represents a breakthrough in the long-standing efforts at the international level to advance the concept. On 20 September 2005, the Security Council, in its first-time thematic debate on the role of civil society in conflict prevention and the pacific settlement of disputes, for the first time referred explicitly to the so-called “Arria-formula” expressing its intention to strengthen its relationship with civil society (United Nations Security Council 2005).

### 6.1 The context of UN/Government/CSO cooperation in the area of human security

The UN has entered the new millennium expressly recognizing the growing need and opportunities for

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close cooperation with civil society. The Millennium Summit itself was preceded by an NGO Forum at UN Headquarters, which played a crucial role in shaping the Millennium Development Goals. Effective international prevention and human security strategies need to adapt to new multi-actor governance structures and include new actors as partners for prevention and development. As UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared in 2004: “partnership with non-governmental organizations is no longer an option, it is a necessity”. Prevention and human security strategies must be open to ‘new forms of government’, in particular ‘soft’ forms of cooperation, regulation and provision of public services.

A large number of conflicts originate in the community. Without the community, its representatives and locally based NGOs, those causes could not be addressed. Multi-track diplomacy offers a response to the problems faced in traditional approaches to the prevention and resolution of conflict, namely the sidelining of those who are most intimately involved. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed a special Panel of Eminent Persons on UN-Civil Society Relations. Its recommendations cover a wide range of measures to strengthen the inclusion of civil society in international governance, and specific steps to create effective *multi-stakeholder partnerships*. Some key proposals are to develop an innovative transnational policy with horizontal and thematic-specific multi-stakeholder networks and partnerships on clearly defined topics and activities.

To make progress in forging effective UN partnerships with civil society in specific bodies and/or on central global issues, in particular on human security, the UN can draw on the experience of what former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans called a “new breed of peace and security-focused international NGOs” (Evans 2005, p. 121). The new nature of violent conflict and intra-state wars victimizing civilians on an unprecedented scale has placed CSOs in a unique position to assume different roles in prevention, de-escalation, resolution, rehabilitation, and reconciliation. CSOs are indispensable to create and cultivate a culture of prevention in the international community that helps to engrain human security as a policy concept buttressed

by the necessary multi-stakeholder capacities (Barnes 2005; Barnes 2006).

### 6.2 The Global Partnership

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) represents a network of nearly 1000 peace and prevention-oriented NGOs. It is playing a key role in the formation of a human security and a knowledge-based regime of prevention and peacebuilding. With global CSO participation, GPPAC is becoming a driving force for effective UN/government/CSO partnerships in the promotion of human security. As GPPAC emphasized in its 2005 Global Action Agenda (GPPAC 2005a; GPPAC 2005b), CSOs can contribute to making UN, government and state structures more responsive to human security and to strengthening international capacities for effective conflict prevention, in particular through participation in the UN processes, policy dialogue, monitoring and advocacy.

The Group of like-minded States on Conflict Prevention was set up on the initiative of Germany and Switzerland in December 2004 with the aim to emphasize conflict prevention and human security as a central priority of UN reform, to engage Member States in a dialogue with civil society and GPPAC prior to the September Summit and to advance this agenda in a systematic follow-up. Member States and the UN Secretariat made extensive comments on the GPPAC documents, thus contributing to a genuine multi-stakeholder contribution on conflict prevention in the Summit preparations. The Group prepared a specific Input paper in preparation of the Summit with the first explicit endorsement of the concepts of the Responsibility to Protect as an emerging norm and of Human Security by such a wide group of representatives from all regions (Wolter 2007, p. 292).

### 6.3 The challenges of operationalising human security through effective UN/ Government/ CSO Partnerships

To give specific guidance to promote human security and effective conflict prevention, the 2006 Progress Report of the UN Secretary-General on the prevention

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of armed conflict (United Nations 2006), underlining the partnership approach, was prepared after broad consultations with a wide range of actors working on prevention of armed conflict. It contains a set of recommendations to operationalise the culture of prevention and the responsibility to protect and to fill the gaps in effective system-wide cooperation for prevention and in financial commitments of Member States. The report wholly endorses a specific “Responsibility to Prevent” as part of the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect, and calls on the entire international community to more explicitly embrace and implement it. It invites Member States to develop a “national infrastructure for peace” and welcomes the progress made by the international community to act “as a concert of national and international actors” in addressing sources of tensions and strengthening the infrastructure of peace.

Regarding collaboration with civil society, the report calls on new and existing organs of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council, to explore more systematic engagement with civil society (para. 71 and 107), and it explicitly applauds the close cooperation of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict with the United Nations.

To make human security a coherent policy framework, the international community has to move from political declarations to formal commitments and concrete action. The Global Action Agenda of GPPAC, the GPPAC Midterm assessment and the post-summit paper (GPPAC 2005c) contain specific recommendations and priorities for change, directed at the United Nations. The UN should:

- establish regular contact points between UN Resident Coordinators/Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and relevant local, regional and international actors to develop complementary strategies, including through regular consultation with CSOs
- fully utilize the potential of civilian peacebuilding missions and the potential of community-based peace

monitors and mediators, and cooperate with local and international civil peace groups

- create interlocking systems of peacekeeping capacities so the UN can partner with relevant regional organizations and civil peace services to increase rapid response capacity and protective accompaniment of vulnerable groups.

In a truly multi-stakeholder process, the international community should now engage in prioritizing a practical human security agenda for concrete political action to enhance physical security of peoples supported by an efficient implementation repertoire that is both inclusive and open to full participation of civil society, local communities and recipients.

### 6.4 The way forward: frames and structures for consultation and cooperation on human security

Kofi Annan invited “Member States to consider innovative means to intensify the dialogue with civil society, for example by inviting civil society representatives to provide regular briefings to pertinent bodies” (United Nations 2006, p. 29). Some steps towards this objective could include the following.

1. The Security Council should continue its thematic debates on conflict prevention and the role of civil society. In addition, it should initiate similar debates on the concept of Human Security and its operationalisation, inviting CSOs to participate and present specific options for cooperation with the Council.
2. The General Assembly, as mandated by the 2005 Summit, should develop the notion of human security linking it to individual security and development. As the overall responsible body of the organization it should take a more active and forward-looking role in advancing human security, i.e. by establishing an open-ended Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding as suggested by the Secretary-General (United Nations 2006).
3. The Peacebuilding Commission, as part of its thematic discussions on advancing a peace

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infrastructure to help post-conflict societies on their path towards lasting peace, should include regular debates on the relationship between human security, structural prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding. In addition, in its deliberations on country and regional level the Commission should include a review of the fulfilment of human security conditions. CSOs should have the right to make substantial policy proposals.

4. The UN Secretariat, given the horizontal and generic character and wide-ranging policy implications of the Human Security concept, should upgrade the Human Security Unit currently based in OCHA to a full-fledged inter-departmental and agency-coordinating unit, possibly with inter-agency focal points and consultation mechanisms with civil society and regional organizations.

Peace agreements brokered by the UN should promote human security by addressing issues of good governance and equitable development within a participatory framework (GPPAC 2005a, p. 12).

5. All UN bodies should strengthen both formal and informal cooperation with CSOs in the field of security and peace (GPPAC 2006) with the aim to develop effective policies and the toolboxes of operational, structural and systemic prevention and lasting peacebuilding processes and of effective indicators and means of assessing and making visible the successes of peace work and the prevention of violent conflict.

### 6.5 Final remarks: shaping the UN/CSO Partnership

Effective UN/CSO partnerships will help to enhance civilian crisis response and peacebuilding and strengthen existing and developing new frameworks for human security centred, integrated policies of the international community as a multi-stakeholder exercise in order to operationalise, implement and monitor the pursuit of effective prevention and peacebuilding. The United Nations, building on the 2005 Summit and the progress made by the relevant UN bodies in promoting

human security, should convene a special summit meeting to adopt the measures listed below as a comprehensive Global Action Plan on Conflict Prevention and Human Security.

### 6.6 List of measures to be taken

1. Mainstream conflict sensitive and preventive approaches into country assistance strategies.
2. Make capacity building for prevention and peaceful conflict resolution a top priority for all actors: (a) enhance coordination of the UN system with IFI's in conflict prevention capacity building (b) consolidate and widen the Joint UNDP/DPA Program on Building National Capacity for Conflict Prevention; (c) support the proposal for a 10 year Action Plan for Capacity Building of the African Union on Prevention and Peacekeeping; (d) create civil society-initiated regional centres and robust partnerships to monitor potential conflicts and respond in time through preventive diplomacy and cross-border initiatives; (e) strengthen local capacities and culturally appropriate strategies for conflict prevention and resolution through autonomous and self-directed local, national and sub-regional networks.
3. Strengthen early-warning capacities of the UN, and of regional and sub-regional organizations.
4. Create focal points for prevention and peacebuilding in UN Country teams and establish advisory councils involving local civil society.
5. Develop multifunctional integrated peace operations with priority for the protection of civilians and vulnerable groups; create a Standing UN Peace Force comprising both civilian police and troop units recruited on a voluntary basis.
6. Establish human security as a guiding principle for domestic and foreign policy with an integrated approach and pooling of resources for prevention and peace-building, with consultation mechanisms with civil society and regional organizations.
7. Develop a timetabled plan to reduce military budgets and direct more resources to address the causes of conflict and to promote human security; promote peace planning and respective resource allocation on a global level.

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8. Implement with local communities integrated programs of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation; prioritize security sector reform and Weapons for Development programs.
9. Negotiate a comprehensive arms trade treaty for conventional weapons.
10. Provide coherent financing of operational conflict prevention and peacebuilding: review progress of the Peacebuilding Commission and its fund for peacebuilding and, if necessary, redirect focus on conflict prevention; and mandate a special donor meeting on conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The suggested integrated strategy for fostering effective UN/governments/CSO partnerships to promote human security would constitute an important building block for establishing an international peace infrastructure with the necessary multi-stakeholder capacities for effective structural prevention and ensuring human security. Such a strategy would permit the international community to work towards ‘constructive pacifism’ to fulfil the responsibility to protect and to prepare for peace: *si vis pace, para pacem* by creating sustainable conditions for human security (Senghaas 1995).