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"Different perceptions of what is a threat are often the biggest obstacles to international cooperation. In fact, all of us are vulnerable to what we think of as dangers that threaten only other people" - Kofi Annan

INTRODUCTION

The concept of human security emerged in the mid 1990s but human-centric arguments have existed for far longer, championed by the political philosophy of liberalism. The purpose of this concept is to emphasise the desirable human conditions for people to be secure, focussing particularly on the nexus between development and conflict and the growing

humanitarian norm. These issues can have serious effects from local to global level which, many liberals argue, are not being addressed by the dominant state-centric position.

This paper will examine the logic behind the assumption that human security is the focal point of all security concepts. It will be argued that the ultimate aim of all security is the provision of a safe living environment for the individual which is primarily facilitated by good governance; therefore the provision of human security is dependant on traditional security and the associated sub-disciplines. The wider concept of security and its various sub-disciplines will be examined first, focusing on the relationship with human security. The second part will examine how to provide the security required by individuals to conduct their lives relatively free from suffering and danger.

WHAT IS SECURITY?

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'secure' as; "(1) certain to remain safe and unthreatened. protected against attack or other criminal activity. (2) feeling free from fear or anxiety". This introduces the important notion of perception of threats sometimes dominating over an objective assessment of actual exposure to risk. This is evident across the field of security studies where different scholars, schools or practitioners have adopted definitions of security based on their limited agenda and ideology. It also prevails at the level of every individual who, as Kofi Annan observed, will have their own perspective of security threats based upon their circumstances. This is perhaps best articulated in Peter Hough's definition; "If people, be they government ministers or private individuals, perceive an issue to threaten their lives in some way and respond politically to this, then that issue should be perceived to be a security issue". The spectrum of potential threats is as diverse as life itself, ranging from direct violence (from low-level crime to inter-state war) to health issues (pandemics to environmental threats) and everything in between.

To facilitate the study of these issues and, hopefully, produces solutions to tackle the threats,

security studies is sub-divided into a number of categories. Schultz, Godson and Quester's key work, Security Studies for the Twenty-First Century, identified five main areas based mainly on geographical perspectives, from national to global. Collins expands on these with sectors based on specific referent objects, which can be applied at various levels and are generally accepted as the principal sectors for analysis within the academic literature:

Military.

Regime (replacing political).

Societal.

Environmental.

Economic.

Human security is not considered as a separate sector but a concept that resides within all sectors; the individual is consistently the bottom line of all analysis.

A brief history of human security

Since the Treaty of Westphalia, 1648, the concept of state sovereignty and national security, attained through military means, has been dominant. The Dumbarton Oaks Conference of 1944 and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) championed the concept of primacy of the individual, stating, "Freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people". The bi-polar cold war period reinforced national-military security as the dominant concept, where realist ideas prevailed and "violent conflict where seen as perennial features of inter-state relations". The end of the cold war gave birth to new hopes amongst the idealists that a new era of wider security issues was imminent, "ushering in a new paradigm in which inter-state violence would gradually become a thing of the past and new communitarian values would bring greater cooperation between individuals and human collectives of various kinds".

It was during this period that the landmark document was published that established human security as a legitimate concept; the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) 1994 Human Development Report. This re-emphasised the dual ideas of "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" as complimentary not contradictory approaches to achieving Human Security. Despite this two independent schools of thought established round these means to human security; the narrow school latched onto the former idea; focussing on threats of violence, whilst the broad school adopted the later concept; focussing principally on threats arising from underdevelopment. There is certainly a clear requirement for human security - it is estimated that 800,000 people a year lose their lives to violence and about 2.8 billion suffer from poverty, ill health, illiteracy and other hardships. To address this, the UNDP's 1994 report suggests seven areas of interest for human security: Economy (unemployment);food; health;environment; person (crime); community (ethnic violence) and political repression.

The effects of failure to secure these areas have been observed in many regions of the world; humanitarian tragedies from mass starvation to genocide. Associated large scale migrations into neighbouring areas increase the pressure on (usually limited) resources, raise tensions with indigenous communities and lead to further problems, perpetuating the security crisis. The difficult part of this analysis is identification of the protector – from a Western, developed world perspective it is quite straightforward; the state assumes responsibility for providing all aspects of human security. Within the developing world this is often not the case, indeed according to Amnesty International, around half the world's countries still have repressive regimes which disregard basic human rights. This presents the first of two problems with these means to human security – the role of the state.

The other contentious area is the justification for humanitarian intervention in states that cannot or will not provide these basic requirements for their populations. The groundbreaking 1999 NATO led humanitarian operation in Kosovo was an illegal breach of Article 2(7) of the UN Charter, the non-intervention principle, but was widely accepted as 'legitimate' on the basis of Just Cause. This led to the creation of a set of principles for military intervention by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. Whilst such ventures reflected the aims of the narrow school, the broad school's objective - emancipation of all the worlds' people - has remained somewhat neglected.

"Today it is impossible to separate security and development". In an attempt to reconcile these positions, the focus of human security has moved to the nexus between violence and development, taking political violence as the dependent variable ('effect') and human development as the independent variable ('cause'). This helps understanding of causality, and can then be used to establish a policy framework for crisis management and prevention as shown in figure one.

The primacy of human security?

The critical school and liberalists would argue this new doctrine usurps the state-centric realist arguments. Realism has a deep rooted historical legacy that cannot be ignored but it fails to address a variety of threats that can undermine the state and, under the spotlight of a humanist approach, it is ambiguous concerning its interest in the protection of people. As General Beach commentated, "Protecting citizens from foreign attack is certainly a necessary condition for the security of individuals but it is far from a sufficient one". The narrow school would argue that human security is vital as, "far more people have been killed by their own governments than by armies from abroad", whilst the broad school will focus on the fact that, "hunger, disease, and natural disasters kill far more people than war, genocide, and terrorism". Whilst this threatens realism as the dominant concept, human security does not offer a sufficiently robust theory in itself, within the contemporary context and simply adds a normative dimension to the wider debate. The broad concept in particular, due to its extensive exclusivity, "has so far proved too all-embracing to be helpful in policy development". Political decision makers are unwilling to accept critical approaches which "reject scientific methodologies", and prefer intellectual concepts to practical solutions.

It can be argued that both state and human centric concepts are required for a better

understanding of security. Whilst Human Security as a concept has some way to go in consolidating its foundations, it has served to re-focus attention on human-centric issues within the prevailing security framework. Some notable progress has been made; the Ottawa treaty, prohibiting anti-personnel landmines, and the development of the International Criminal Court have been cited as major achievements but their true impact is far less significant. There is some suspicion in the realist camp that human security as a separate discipline has been created by scholars and NGO's with their own self-interested agenda and supported by 'middle nations' (Canada, Japan, Norway, etc) with limited economic or military power seeking greater representation and influence within the international system.

The prevailing state-centric perspective of national security within a functioning democratic state, the ultimate provider/ protector of all security, is represented in figure two. This highlights the relationship between security sectors and the central aspect the individual person has - the ultimate referent object - but this does not mean human security dictates the agenda.

The current obsession with counter-terrorism within many western states presents an interesting insight to the philosophy of traditional security. It could be argued that the effort devoted to this area is driven by human-centric considerations; such attacks will only directly impact on a small number of individuals and does not seriously threaten socio-economic or political system. The fear of attack and perceived insecurity within the minds of the wider population, perpetrated by the media, is entirely disproportionate to the likely effect. But, like most issues, this has been securitised by the governing executive for reasons of national interest; Cynics would argue it was as a rationale for military interventions (Iraq and Afghanistan). At the very least it is an attempt to secure political power; any successful attack that is perceived by the electorate as avoidable could terminate their regime. Therefore significant high profile legislative and military policies are being implemented at the expense of economic security and (liberals will argue) wider human rights.

THE PROVISION OF HUMAN SECURITY

Traditional means for human-centric ends

Outside of the wealthy developed states are the real concerns of human security – the majority of the world's population living in poverty and constantly exposed to the threats of violence, hunger and disease. If it is accepted that the desired levels of security cannot be provided by the state, is it possible for the international system to provide and what means does it have to do this? Recent research, corroborated by several organisations operating in the field across the globe, concludes that the priority of people in the developing world is security over development. Freedom from fear has traditionally been tackled through the deployment of a military task force such as Op PALLISER – the UK intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000. Freedom from want is more problematic for traditional security tools; military intervention can only set the conditions for other means and actors to address development related issues. Returning to Manunto's model, figure three illustrates the application of various means by the international community to achieve such security. The initial crisis can be managed by military intervention and the deployment of aid organisations; however the underlying cause – bad governance – must be addressed by a program of nation building and security sector reform,

ultimately resulting in a functioning government. This last stage is extremely complex and difficult to achieve without creation of and investment in dedicated international 'human security' organisations with the tools to achieve such aims. As identified by Elworthy and Rifkind, "force of arms is not sufficient to establish peaceful order...unless the tiresome, difficult and unglamorous work of rebuilding peoples lives has been done, no amount of coercion or high level diplomacy will produce a lasting peace".

Returning to the 'war on terror' (or any form of transnational crime), it is evident that traditional means are having to rapidly evolve, forming new partnerships to function successfully in the globalisation changes world. As Aravena noted, "Only the ability to act jointly will enable states to recover their abilities to generate a legitimate order capable of building a world free from threats of fear". But these means are currently only providing short term solutions and their "heavy-handed methods can feed fundamentalism"; according to Demos, "new thinking and new approaches are needed... (that) address the full range of factors that fuel cycles of violence". They propose a number of mutually supporting programmes familiar to human security, the aim of which is to break the vicious cycle of violence and restore respect. It remains to be seen whether these initiatives can have any effect on deeply ingrained ideological hatred – no western government will risk employing human security measures alone to deter domestic attacks.

It's all about the North

A key weakness of human security is identifying who is responsible for implementation? The current international system is dominated by the few nations in the North with large economies and strategic reach. The UNSC P5 also reflects this and their decisions are almost always based on self-interest. There has been a positive trend of declining global political violence over the last half century and particularly since the end of the cold war, due to a surge in UN sponsored peace missions and stabilisation of colonial wars. But all of these depend on the political will of a small number of Northern states to sanction and, more importantly, resource. The mixed success of 'humanitarian' interventions over the last two decades has resulted in expeditionary missions involving significant troop deployments from Northern nations generally limited to hard security objectives such as Iraq, Afghanistan or Georgia – upstream intervention of threats to domestic security. In a world dominated by realpolitik, powerful states will contribute to development with strings attached in specific areas which contribute to their wider economic or national security goals.

A good example of this reality is global climate change, which the UNDP has described as, "the defining human development issue of our time." But despite the gravity of this issue, the rich Northern nations contributing most to the problem continue to ignore the plight of the developing nations that will be most effected. As Archbishop Tutu observed, "leaving the world's poor to sink or swim with their meagre resources is morally wrong. Unfortunately that is precisely what is happening". Once again economic self-interest of the North is dictating the global outcome.

Despite pledges from developed countries such as the UK to adopt an 'ethical' foreign policy, the burden of enduring military operations has left no capacity or appetite for humanitarian interventions in areas of little national interest. The world's only superpower, the USA, has

shown minimal concern for the humanitarian agenda and its international security objectives merely facilitate its domestic security policy. A human security doctrine for Europe was proposed in 2004, utilising a 15,000 strong human security response force drawn from military and civilian capabilities. Despite being regarded as a "model of clarity and good sense", this report has been hijacked by a failure to ratify the European constitution. Furthermore, the missed opportunities of the past 15 years, "question the ability of the EU to ever act coherently and effectively".

Caroline Thomas contends, "Increasing economic polarisation and widespread poverty lead many people to wonder in whose name the current global governance architecture is working". She proposes a radical 'alternative pathway', based on the "centrality of human security over liberalisation, policy changes in favour of redistribution and wider participation of states in global governance institutions". There is little chance of the Northern power brokers compromising their supremacy within the international system to back this policy. Paul Rogers' incisive analysis contends that sustainable development is critical to maintaining global security situation in the future and he is scathing of the Northern powers attitude. "If there is no change in thinking, Western security policy will continue to be based on the narrow and misguided assumption that the status quo can be maintained, an elite minority can maintain its position, environmental problems can be marginalised and the lid can be kept on dissent and instability." Eight years later, there is still little evidence of states implementing the human security agenda in any meaningful way.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the security of the individual is the theoretical aim of all aspects of security, and is morally justified as such. In practice societal pressures take precedence; a critical mass of the population can influence the executive through political means (or by constituting a threat to regime security), with the media playing a major role in this populist context. State-centric traditional security has proven to be the best method for achieving human security within the developed world; however realpolitik will not address the security of the majority in the developing world where there is no national interest or media fuelled pressure from the electorate. Whilst the human security movement is also driven by a degree of self-interest, it is vital in highlighting the plight of the huge global population vulnerable to violence and underdevelopment. Recent history has demonstrated both the value and problems of international humanitarian operations; quality of life has improved and conflict reduced but the inadequate structures and methodologies of traditional means have also been exposed. The contemporary obsession with Islamic terrorism has resulted in a lack of will and capacity for future humanitarian missions and the global economic crisis will further impact overseas aid programmes. Buzan was correct in his observation that, "the idea of security is easier to apply to things than people". In a world driven by free market capitalism and populist politics, all security really boils down to the national interests of the powerful developed nations, as dictated by their societies.