The Transformation in the Concept of National Security: From Traditional to Human Security

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Abstract:

Human security is a non-traditional dimension of national security. The emphasis is more on the individual. In this age of globalization, human security puts emphasis more on the individual rather than on the security of the state. As such, the concept challenges the notion of traditional security. The concept of traditional security seeks to defend states from external aggression and to protect a state's boundaries, institutions and values. Thus, it focuses on the development of military capabilities. The first time the concept of human security appears in 1994 by the UNDP. The 1994 UNDP's human development report has defined human security as "safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. Human security is protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life. It is an assurance of protection in jobs, in homes, or in communities". This concept developed to cover more areas includes: Economic Security, health security, environmental security, food security, political security, Personal Security and community security.

Key words: National Interests, National Security, Human Security, Health Security, Environmental Security, Food Security, Political Security, Community Security, Personal Security, Economic Security Freedom from Fear, Freedom from Want, Traditional Security, Non-Traditional Security.

INTRODUCTION

After the Second World War we have seen how the developed countries have enhanced their military capabilities. This was possible only where the state enjoyed economic and social stability. This perspective does not fulfill the ambition of developing state because these countries lack national unity and socially cohesive society. Within the state, there are different groups operating for different goals and their security issues are not the same. Such countries lack effective institutional capacities to provide peace and order. After the fall of the Soviet Union, it became clear that military security was not the sole guarantor of protecting the territorial integrity of the state. Hence, economic power became more important as it could fulfill the requirements of common men, women, children and workers. Hence, the state territorial sovereignty cannot solely depend upon the traditional national security such as military aggression. For individuals in self-preservation and economic well-being are important for survival. Therefore, it is necessary to take the holistic view of the security. Both traditional and non-traditional threats have to be addressed by the state. In view of this, traditional national security or comprehensive national security based on the development of political, economic, and military capabilities has to be complemented by social, technological and environmental strands.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT

The quest for a nation's security in an international environment characterized by uncertainty is truly speaking unsuitable. Today one cannot imagine of absolute security. At best, one can discuss 'relative' or 'partial' security. It is thus important that we have to live in 'relative' to 'partial' insecurity. In practice the actual point in between (with

absolute security and insecurity as two ends of the wide spectrum) at which any Defence Policy is based in turn determined by a wide variety of complex variables. These together constitute what has been variously termed as 'National Interests' for any country which goes on to constitute the essence of National Security.

Generally, it assumed that the security of a nation is more concerned with protecting its way of life, its social and economic institution being and preserving internal harmony. In military terms, it implies defence against territorial aggression from which ever direction it may be land, sea, air and now even from space. Security relates to all aspects of nationalism and internationalism.[1]

Redefining 'security' has recently become something of a 'cottage industry'.[2] However, scholars are more concerned with redefining the policy agendas of nation-states than with the concept of security itself. The parameter of defining security is more varied and has to take into account such issues as human rights, economics, the environment, drug traffic, epidemics,

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[1] B.M. Jain, "South Asian Security: Problems and Prospects", New Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, 1985, p.2.

[2] See Lester Brown Redefining National Security, Worldwatch Paper No .14 (Washington, DC, 1977); Jessica Tuchman Matthews, "Redefining Security', Foreign Affairs, 68 (1989), pp. 162-77; Richard H Ullman, 'Redefining Security', International Security, 8 (1983), pp. 129-53; Joseph J. Romm, Defining National Security (New York, 1993); J. Ann Tickner, 'Re-visioning Security', in Ken Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', Review of International Studies, 17 (1991), pp. 175-97; Ken Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', Review of International Studies, 17 (1991), pp. 313-26; Martin Shaw, 'There Is No Such Thing as Society, Beyond Individualism and Statism in International Security Studies', Review of International Studies 19 (1993), pp. 159-75; John Peterson and Hugh Ward, 'Coalitional Instability and the New Multidimensional Politics of Security: A Rational Choice Argument for US-EU Cooperation'. European Journal of International Relations, I (1995), pp. 131-56; ten articles on security and security studies in Arms Control, 13, (1992), pp. 463-544; and Graham Allison and Gregory F. Treverton (eds.) Rethinking America's Security; Beyond Cold War to New World Order (New York, 1992).

crime, or social injustice, besides traditional concern with security from external military threats. In addressing such a pertinent problem one is faced with a vital issue of the protection of the values of which people or groups of people and the nature and magnitude of those values that are threatened. As a result, some attention has been devoted to conceptual issues as such.

Identifying the common elements in various conception of security is useful in at least three ways: First, it facilitates asking the most basic question of social science 'Of what is this an instance?'.[3] Second, it promotes rational policy analysis by facilitating comparison of one type of security policy with another. And third, it facilitates scholarly communication by establishing common ground between those with disparate views. Perhaps scholars from different schools have more in common than is generally acknowledged.[4]

In many ways in Arnold Wolfers looked at the term national security as an Ambiguous Symbol'. But Wolfers still discussed and examined the concept. As he was, however, concerned about the ambiguity of 'national security', as the following passage indicates:

It would be an exaggeration to claim that the symbol of national security is nothing but a stimulus to semantic confusion, though closed analysis will show that if used without specifications it leaves room for more confusion than sound political counsel or scientific usage can afford.[5]

What really Wolfers' refer to the concept of national security not only as a policy objective but also as the means for its pursuit, i.e., national security policy. In the discussion that

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3 The credit goes to James Rosenau for this phrase.

4 See Kell Goldmann, 'Im Westen Nichts Neues: Seven International Relations Journals in 1972 and 1992', European Journal of International Relations, I (1995), pp. 245-58.

5 Arnold Wolfers, "National Security" as an Ambiguous Symbol', Political Science Quarterly, 67 (1952), p. 483.

follows, Wolfers' definition will be examined in the context of more recent literature.

These concepts are subject to a set of criteria summarized by Oppenheim: (1) concepts should be operational in the broadest sense, although this should not be interpreted as requiring quantification. (2) concepts that establish definitional connections with other terms are to be preferred. (3) concepts that draw attention to the theoretically important aspects of the subject matter that might easily be overlooked are desirable. (4) concepts should not preclude empirical investigation by making true 'by definition' what should be open to empirical inquiry. (5) concepts should remain reasonably close to ordinary language. 'Ordinary language', however, does not necessarily mean the way most people would define the term, but rather the 'set of rules they implicitly follow when applying it to a given situation.'[6]

Oppenheim's approach is quite different from Barry Buzan and Richard Ullman's approaches. Although Buzan believes in exploration of the concept of security, his analysis includes both conceptual analysis and empirical observations. For example, Buzan was in favor for the empirical proposition that security at the individual level is well-connected to security at the level of the state and the international system.

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6 Oppenheim, 'Language', pp. 297-309. See also Felix E. Oppenheim, Political Concepts: A Reconstruction (Chicago, 1981). For criticisms of this approach, see William E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse, 2nd edn (Princeton, 1983), and Richard E. Little, 'Ideology and Change' in Barry Buzan and R.J.Barry Jones (eds.), Change and the Study of International Relations: the Evaded Dimension (New York, 1981) pp. 30-45. Regardless of whether one accepts the criteria suggested here, it is necessary to identify some criteria for conceptual analysis. Barry Buzan's contention that security is 'weakly conceptualized' and 'underdeveloped' would be more telling if he were to identify criteria for distinguishing between weak and strong conceptualizations or between undeveloped and fully developed concepts Barry Buzan, People, States and Fear. An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era, 2nd edn (Boulder, Co, 1991), pp. 3-5.

His insistence that 'security cannot be examined isolated at any level'. His justification for mixing conceptual and empirical analysis is that 'the search for a referent object of security goes hand-in-hand with that for its necessary conditions'.[7] Understating the concept of security is a fundamentally different kind of intellectual exercise from specifying the condition under which security may be attained. Indeed, conceptual clarification logically precedes the search for the necessary conditions of security because the identification of such conditions presupposes a concepts of security.[8]

TRANSFORMATION TO HUMAN SECURITY CONCEPT

Human security is a non-traditional dimension of national security. The emphasis is more on the individual. In this age of globalization, human security puts emphasis more on the individual rather than on the security of the state. As such, the concept challenges the notion of traditional security. The concept of traditional security seeks to defend states from external aggression and to protect a state's boundaries, institutions and values. Thus, it focuses on the development of military capabilities.

As such, in the year 1994 the concept of human security was first advanced in the Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The 1994 UNDP's Human Development Report is milestone document in the field of human security.

Mahbub ul Haq first drew global attention to the concept of human security in the 1994 UNDP's *Human Development*

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7 Buzan, People, State, pp. 20-1,26, See also, Barry Buzan, 'Peace, Power and Security: Contending Concepts in the study of International Relations', Journal of Peace Research, 21 (1984), pp. 109-25.

8 The elaboration of hypotheses presupposes, logically, a conceptual framework in terms of which clear hypotheses may be formulated'. Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, Power and Society: A Framework for Political Security', pp. 130, 133.

Report. This report is of vital significance that sought to influence the United Nations (UN) 1995 World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen. The 1994 UNDP's human development report has defined human security as "safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. Human security is protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life. It is an assurance of protection in jobs, in homes, or in communities."[9] It is argued that the scope of global security should be expanded to include threats in seven areas:

1. **Economic Security:** The real security issue is economic. Economic security needs an assured basic income for individuals. This income should come usually from productive and remunerative work. It is expected that the government should form a publicly financed safety net. In this sense, only about a quarter of the world's people are presently economically secure. The economic security is a serious problem in developing countries. The concern for economic security also affects the developed countries. Weak economy causes unemployment and it ultimately leads to political tensions and ethnic violence. Today, unemployment is the biggest threat. Creating job prospects will bring in real economic security.

2. **Food Security:** Food security assures that all people at all times have access to food. People should have both physical and economic access to basic requirements of food. According to the United Nations, the overall availability of food is not a problem. The problem arises because of the poor public distribution of food and a lack of purchasing power. The past record shows that the food security problems have been dealt with both at national and global levels. However, their impacts have

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9 United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Report", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1994, p. 22.

been limited. According to UN, the key is to tackle the problems relating to access to assets, work and assured income which is related to economic security. The key to food security lies in economic security.[10]

3. **Health Security:** Health security aims to guarantee a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. In developing countries, the major causes of death are infections and parasitic diseases. These kill approximately 17 million people annually. In an industrialized country, the major killers are diseases of the circulatory system, killing 5.5 million every year. The United Nations report shows that in both developing and developed countries, threats to health security are usually greater for poor people in rural areas, particularly children. The causes of ill-health are malnutrition and insufficient supply of medicine, lack of clean water or other necessary factors that are conducive to sound health.[11]

4. **Environmental Security:** Environmental security aims to protect people from the short and long-term ravages of nature. Pollution is caused by man-made threats in nature. Pollution results from degradation of the natural environment. In developing countries, lack of access to clean drinking water resources is the greatest of all environmental threats. In industrially developed countries, major threat is air pollution. Global warming, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, is another environmental security issue. Efforts are being made all over the globe to secure the planet from pollution.[12]

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10 United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Report", 1994, op.cit; pp.23.26.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., pp.23-26.

5. **Personal Security:** Personal security aims to protect people from physical violence, whether from the state or external states. It protects them from violent individuals and sub-state actors. It is necessary to protect the young and the female from domestic abuse, and the young in particular from predatory adults. For many people, the greatest source of anxiety is crime, particularly violent crime. Industrialization and urbanization have led to the increase in violent criminal activities in many ways.[13]

6. **Community Security**: The aim of community security is to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships and values. It is to protect people from sectarian and ethnic violence. Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups, are often threatened. Fifty per cent of the countries of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic strife. The United Nations declared 1993 as the Year of Indigenous People. The aim was to highlight the continuing vulnerability of the 300 million aboriginal people in 70 countries. Most of these groups face a widening spate of violence.[14]

7. **Political Security:** Political security is concerned with whether people live in a society that honours their basic human rights. The recent survey conducted by Amnesty International points out political repression, systematic torture, ill treatment or disappearance is still practiced in 110 countries. Human rights violations are most frequent during periods of political unrest. These violations continue repressing individuals and groups. It has been observed that governments, too, try to exercise

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13 Ibid.
14 United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Report", 1994, op.cit;

control over ideas and information. Terrorism has assumed global proportions in the recent decades.[15]

These seven core areas of security have been merged into two categories of freedom: freedom from fear and freedom from want. Food, health, pollution, free atmosphere are the wants of humanity. Violence against individuals and groups from different forces, disparity and organized crime and violence are the fears from which namely needs to be liberated. In an ideal world, each of the UNDP's seven categories of threats need adequate global attention and resources. Yet attempts to implement this human security agenda have led to the emergence of two major schools of thought on how to best practice human security- "Freedom from Fear" and "Freedom from Want". The UNDP 1994 report has originally argued that human security requires attention to both freedoms from fear and freedom from want. Recently, divisions have gradually emerged over the proper scope of that protection. The differences are mainly over what threats from which individuals should be protected, and over which are the appropriate mechanisms for responding to these threats. Besides securing the territorial integrity of the state, security of the people is today's need.

(I) Freedom from Fear: This school seeks to limit the practice of human security to protecting individuals from violent conflicts while recognizing that these violent threats are strongly associated with poverty, lack of state capacity and other forms of inequities.[16] This approach believes that limiting violence is a realistic and manageable approach towards human security. Thus, emergency assistance, conflict prevention and

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15 Ibid.

16 Human Security Centre, "What is Human Security?" [available at http://www.humansecurityreport.info/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=24&itemid=59]

resolution and peace-building are the main concerns of this approach.

(II) Freedom from Want: This school advocates a holistic approach in achieving human security and argues that the threat agenda should be broadened to include hunger, disease and natural disasters. The threats to hunger, diseases and natural disaster are inseparable concepts in addressing the root of human insecurity.[17] They kill far more people than war, genocide and terrorism combined.[18] Different from "Freedom from Fear", it is focus on development and security goals.

The theme of human security is to insure "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" for all human beings. In recent years, the concept has gained significance in policy-making and research fields. This concept was included in the development studies, international relations, strategic studies, and human rights documents. Thus, human security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities. The exponents of human security do not confine themselves to the analysis of traditional concept of national security but look beyond it.

The key premises of the 1994 UNDP's human development report are: (a) joint focus on "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want", and; (b) emphases on universality, interdependence, prevention, and people centeredness. These formed, and continue to shape, human security debates. For example, Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary General, in his address on "International Workshop on Human Security in

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17 C. Schitteccatte, "Toward a More Inclusive Global Governance and Enhanced Human Security, in A Decade of Human Security", Global Governance and New Multilateralism's edited by: S.J. Maclean, D.R. Black and Timothy M.Shaw, A Sage Publishing Limited,New Delhi, 2006, p.131.
18 C. Schitteccatte, "Toward a More Inclusive Global Governance and Enhanced Human Security, in A Decade of Human Security"; op.cit.

Mongolia" at Ulaanbaatar in 2000 gave a comprehensive definition of human security:

> "Human security, in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfill his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment—these are the interrelated building blocks of human—and, therefore, national—security".[19]

HUMAN SECURITY AS CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

The concept of development was earlier associated with just economic growth emphasizing on National Income Growth. Pursuing this old fashioned development, traditional security concept was suitable. But after 1970, it was observed by development thinkers that only growing national income was not only the factor that could bring prosperity to all citizens with equity and justice. It is now widely believed that this is a very inadequate characterization of development. Though, average per capita incomes are one important means to achieve such progress, but is not the criteria. Not only does average income fail to capture distribution across households, but it also may not be a good indicator of many important aspects of human well-being, such as people's health, education or their security. A series of alternative objectives have been put forward, one of the earliest being the PQLI (Physical Quality of Life Index). Prof. Amartya Sen has suggested that the

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19 Annan, Kofi, "Secretary-General Salutes International Workshop on Human Security in Mongol", Two-Day Session in Ulaanbaatar, 8-10 May 2000. Press Release SG/SM/7382, [available at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2000/20000508.sgsm7382.doc.html].

development objective should be the enhancement of people's capabilities, or the opportunities open to people of being and doing a variety of things.[20] UNDP's *Human Development Report* defined the objective succinctly as enlarging people's choices in a way which enables them to lead longer, healthier and fuller lives.[21]

Therefore, there is need for humanistic approach to development. The human security approach not only focuses on equitable and pro-poor economic growth but also highlights the importance of human rights and the provision of adequate social services that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood, and dignity. The demands of human security are only partly addressed by improving economic growth, which usually benefits the most able or the better placed. People who cannot achieve the lowest level of security are the ones who survive in abject poverty, who fall victim to sudden crisis, or who are caught in the middle of violent conflicts. For these reasons, they are excluded from development. The losses of human capital to these horrible situations are increasing at alarming speed.[22]

Thus, Human security and development are the most frequently used terms of the contemporary times because of the following factors that shaped human society:

- Human security and development are interdependent. Without human security

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20 A. Sen, "Development as Freedom," Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999.

21 The first UNDP Human Development Report stated that "The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative and defined human development as a process of enlarging people's choices." See UNDP, Human Development Report, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1990.

22 F. Fouinat, "A Comprehensive Framework for Human Security," in R. Picciotto and R. Weaving (eds.), Security and Development: Investing in Peace and Prosperity, Routledge, New York, 2006, pp. 74-75

development is impossible. In the same manner for human security, development is essential.

- The interconnected concept of human security and development has undergone changes in meaning through the extension and comprehensive inclusion.

- The concept of security was introduced as security of territory from external aggressions. It was a protection of national interests. It was more related to the nation.

- Human security is concerned with the security of individuals.

- Human security is concerned with the two catch phrases 'Freedom from fear' and 'Freedom from want.' It is a people centred security. It is security with a human face.