

Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence *The Hague*



Human Security A CCOE Info Sheet

- Provide a general overview about the concept of Human Security (HS)
- Collect and summarize leading organization's perspectives on HS
- Identify shortfalls concerning the concept of HS
- Give an overview of NATO's history concerning HS and point out its approach and present situation
- Collect existing definitions of HS

Introduction

HS addresses the need to protect human individuals and communities against various threats both on national and international levels. HS is to be differentiated from the traditional understanding of security, which focuses on state security with states being the only relevant actors that, by means of power, threaten the security of other sovereign states. The aim of HS is to take all threats that endanger freedom and human rights into account by providing a comprehensive approach.

Currently, there seems to be no common baseline in the field of HS that could be used as a standardized definition. It should be the goal of the international community and NATO in particular to foster a common HS approach.

Stakeholder Overview

In the following graphic, the stakeholders interested in addressing HS as a relevant topic within society are presented. Whenever a policy or project is implemented, all groups should be included in the process in order to take all interests into account. In order for NATO to develop an effective and solid concept of HS, the different perspectives of these stakeholders should be considered.



Figure 1: Stakeholder overview

Leading Organizations



Especially within the stakeholder groups of policy creators, NGOs, experts, and researchers a wide range of relevant findings concerning HS can be identified.

The United Nations

In 1992 the report *An Agenda for Peace* introduced an “integrated approach to HS”¹. In 1994 the topic raised public interest when the *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)* published the *Human Development Report* addressing HS as a comprehensive and future-orientated concept. With the launching of this new concept, the *UN* acknowledged that the general understanding of security had to be addressed from a different perspective due to the end of the cold war and new upcoming security challenges. The concept of security was no longer to be solely “shaped by the potential of conflicts between states” but by constant and sudden threats.²

At this point, the perception of security shifted from a realists’ perspective where states, by means of power, are the only players influencing security towards a broader approach with respect to a complex security surrounding. According to the *UN* report, the two major components of HS are **freedom from fear**, meaning protection against physical violence, and **freedom from want**, addressing poverty.³ Later on the **freedom to live in dignity** is added in the Agenda 2030.⁴ In order to fulfill those three objectives, the *UN* developed four security principles: security should be a **universal concern**, the components of HS are **interconnected**, best addressed through **preventive policies**, and finally, security is a **people-centered** idea. The main criterions of the *UN* approach, including the seven dimensions (threats identified by the UN) of HS and the two implementing approaches **protection** and **empowerment**, are presented in the following figure.

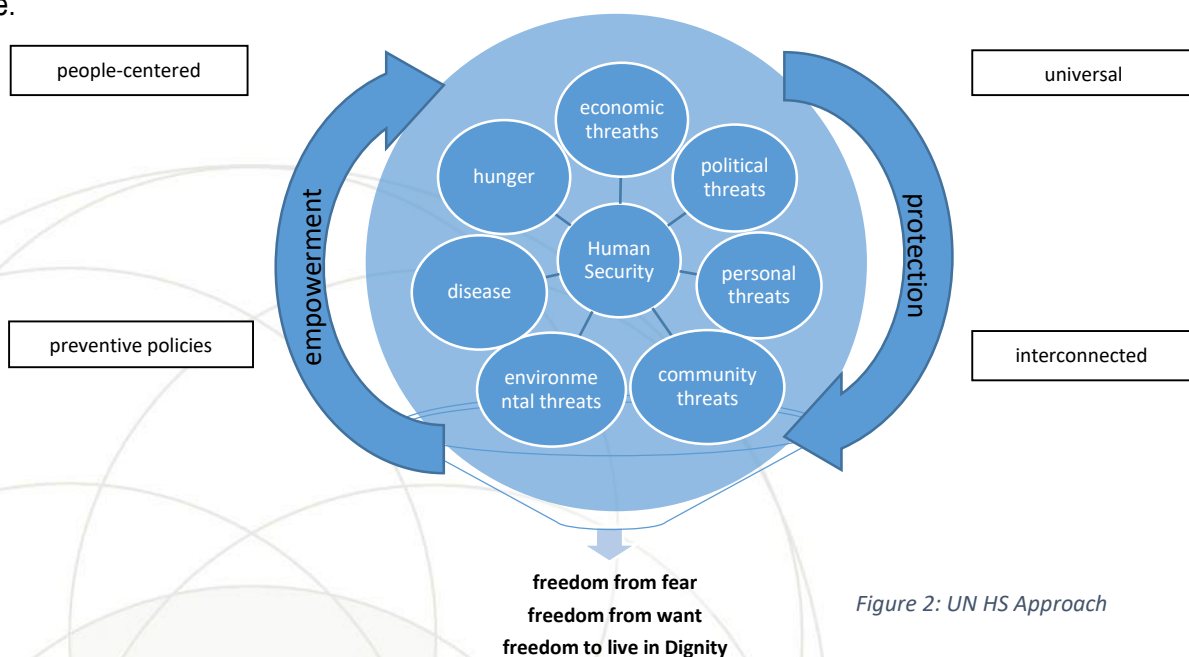


Figure 2: UN HS Approach

¹ UN. Boutros-Ghali. *An Agenda for Peace*, 1992. Chapter I, para. 16.

² UNDP. *Human Development Report*, 1994, p.3.

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=human+security+approach+un&view=detail&mid=5055D5A53AE7086B44775055D5A53AE7086B4477&FORM=VIRE>



Since the *Human Development Report*, UN agencies adopted the concept of HS and new departments within the UN were created to address the topic in particular. The most important UN bodies which contribute to the development of the HS concept are:

Figure 3: UN Institutions focusing on HS

UNSSC (United Nations System Staff College)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established 2002 - centre for training and knowledge management within the UN system - goal: trains to implement the 2030 agenda through the HS approach⁵
UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established 1965 - goal: to eradicate poverty while protecting the planet and helping countries develop strong policies, skills, partnerships, and institutions so they can sustain their progress⁶
UNTFHS (The UN Trust Fund for HS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established in 1999 by the Government of Japan and the UN Secretariat - goal: financing activities that lead to practical actions at the country level ⁷
UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established in 2004 - goals: underscore the importance of HS for all, respond to different situations of human insecurity, develop practical tools and disseminate lessons learned, and foster collaboration ⁸
CHS (Commission on HS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established in 2001 - goal: to achieve “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” ⁹ - first report: HS Now in 2003
UNHCR (United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established 1950 - goal: saving lives, protecting rights, and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people¹⁰ - addresses HS with regards to refugee protection

⁵ UNSSC. Courses, 2019, available at: <https://www.unssc.org/courses/implementing-2030-agenda-through-human-security-approach-october-0/>

⁶ UNDP. Mission, 2019.

⁷ UN. HS at the UN, 2012, p.15.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ CHS. HS Now, 2003, p.153

¹⁰ UNHCR. About, 2019.

In 2003 the CHS defined the objective of HS as following:

“ [Human Security seeks] to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.”¹¹



The UN further published the report *A More Secure World* in 2004 at the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which highlighted the need for more international cooperation in the fight against security threats.¹² In the report *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, which was launched in 2005, the focus is on the role of development as a factor that enhances security.¹³

In 2012 the adoption of *General Assembly resolution 66/290* was a milestone for the advancement of HS and for the first time a definition for greater understanding was formulated:

“The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential.”¹⁴

The European Union

Several components of HS are included in the *European Security Strategy* (ESS) from 2003, but the most important EU document concerning Human Security is *The Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities*, published in 2004. It is proposing a HS doctrine for Europe. According to this report, HS refers to:

“[the] freedom for individuals from basic insecurities caused by gross human rights violations”¹⁵

¹¹ CHS. HS Now, 2003, p.4

¹² UN. *A More Secure World*, 2004, available on: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/602/31/PDF/N0460231.pdf?OpenElement>

¹³ UN. *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, 2005, available on: https://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/larger_freedom_exec_summary.pdf

¹⁴ UN. Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 66/290 on HS, 2012, 2/20.

¹⁵ EU. *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe*, 2004, Summary

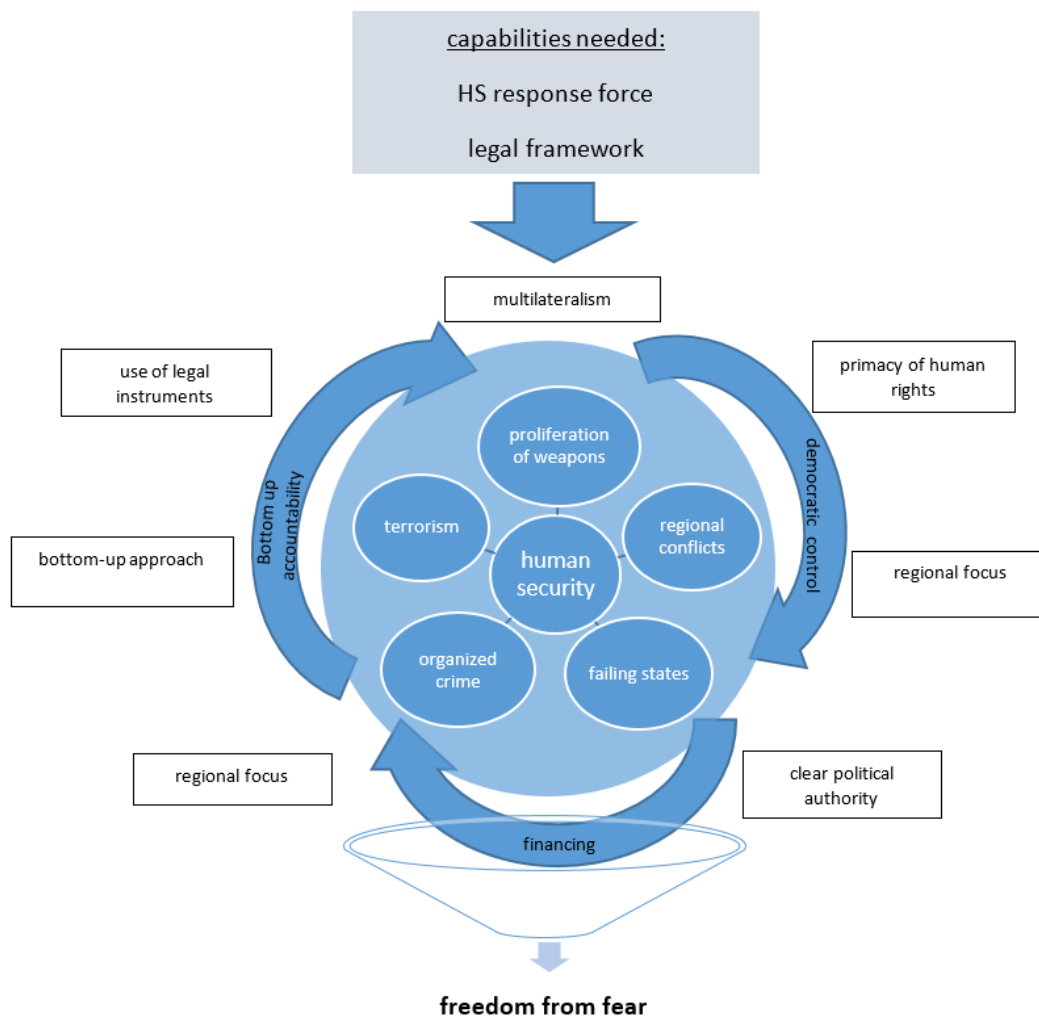
The following figure summarizes the basic HS aspects as identified in *The Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities*. To compare the approach to the UN concept of HS, it is designed with the same template.

The main difference in the EU's concept is that it solely aims to achieve **freedom from fear**. It, therefore, is a more narrow approach that concentrates on severe physical insecurities.¹⁶ Furthermore, the focus of the concept is on developing capabilities to achieve this **freedom from fear**. This includes implementing a new **legal framework** and **The Human Security Response Force** to guarantee civil and military capacity to act.¹⁷

Neither the new legal framework nor *The Human Security Response Force* has been operationalized up until today.



Figure 4: EU HS Approach 2004



¹⁶ Ibid., p.8

¹⁷ Ibid., p.21

In 2007 the *EU* published the *Madrid Report*, which contains methods to institutionalize HS in the context of the *European Security and Defence Policy* (ESDP). In contrast to the *Barcelona Report* it recognizes that both freedom from want and freedom from fear are essential to people's wellbeing:



“Human Security is about the basic needs of individuals and communities in times of peril. It is about feeling safe on the street as well as about material survival and the exercise of free will. It recognizes that ‘freedom from fear’ and ‘freedom from want’ are both essential to people’s sense of wellbeing and their willingness to live in peace.”¹⁸

During the Libya crisis in 2011, the *EU* failed to implement a HS policy, and it is an example that shows that there is a gap between the theoretical doctrine in the *Madrid Report*, and the operationalized development of HS in the *EU*. In addition the *EU* faces significant differences concerning the commitment towards HS. While the *Parliament* and the *Commission* support the advancement of HS.

The most recent document, the *Global Security Strategy* published in 2016, still mentions HS as a principle that needs to be fostered and supported together with other approaches like peacebuilding and reconciliation, but it is not particularly named as a (or the) central approach.¹⁹ The *European Commission* is currently sponsoring the human security online course created by the London School of Economics.²⁰

The *EU* clearly follows the basic ideas of HS, even though the term itself has not been a central component of its strategy since 2011. The *Treaty of Lisbon* acknowledges, like *UN* policies, that the traditional understanding of security as it was applicable during the cold war is no longer relevant. The *EU* also focuses on people/communities and not solely on the security of states and supports an integrated approach taking all relevant threats into account.

¹⁸ EU. A European Way of Security, 2007, p.3.

¹⁹ EU. Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe, 2016.

²⁰ <http://humansecuritycourse.info/>

National Governments

Three examples of governments that promote HS on a certain point of time national and international level are *Japan*, *Canada* and most recently *Great Britain*. They are supporters of the *UN* approach towards HS, but differ concerning their focus and the regency of their involvement in the topic.



Figure 5: HS Approach National Governments

Country/Government	Focus and Involvement	Definition of HS according to Focus
Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on freedom from fear - founding of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) - HS was the defining doctrine until the election of the conservatives in 2006 	-“believing that our interpretation is precisely giving the most added value to the concept of human security – by complementing the existing international agendas that are already dealing with the promotion of national security, human rights and human development.” ²¹
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on freedom from want - Japan is contributing to the UNTFHS financially and was the initiator for establishing the CHS - promoting national and international engagement with the concept of HS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Japanese government states that it is important to go beyond protecting human life in conflict situations ²² - Japan will focus its development cooperation on people — especially those liable to be vulnerable, and provide cooperation for their protection and empowerment so as to realize human security and mainstream the concept even further in the international community.²³
Great Britain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the ministry of defence focuses on HS in military operations - JSP 1325 provides direction for how the military can support individuals facing vulnerable situations as well as providing traditional collective security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HS is an approach to national and international security that gives primacy to human beings and their complex social and economic interactions. It represents a departure from traditional security studies which focus on the security of the state. The state remains a central provider of security but needs to be complemented with an understanding that human security deprivations interact with national security.²⁴

²¹ <http://humansecuritycourse.info/module-1-the-concept-of-human-security/canada-and-r2p-approach/>

²² Takasu. International Conference on human Security in a Globalized World, 2000, available on: https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human_secu/speech0005.html

²³ MOFA. Japan's Official Development Assistance White Paper, 2008, available on: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000406629.pdf>

²⁴ JSP 1325 Pt 1 (V1.0 Jan 19), p.viii, 2019, available on: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/770919/JSP_1325_Part_1_2019_O.PDF



In *Canada* the terminology was shelved in 2006, the budget was reduced, and *Canada* dropped out of sight as a promoter of the concept removing all mention of HS from official documents.²⁵ As for *Japan*, HS is still a basic point of the *Development Cooperation Policy*, and the country continues to invest in *UN* projects.²⁶ *Great Britain* just recently implemented the approach throughout the *Department of State* with the publication of the *JSP 1325*. The policy focuses on personal security and “considers how the military can contribute to the empowerment and access to equal rights for women and girls; the prevention of conflict and human rights violations and the protection of women, men, girls and boys from human rights violations such as rape in conflict, abduction and forced recruitment of children and human trafficking.”²⁷

Think Tanks and NGOs

In the field of HS, there are a number of different think tanks, networks, and NGOs which contribute to the shaping of the HS landscape. The most important players are listed in the table below. Since HS is a very inclusive term and covers every topic related to the protection of individuals and communities, it has to be considered that many NGOs (Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, etc.) support the HS concept without actually using the specific term.

Figure 6: HS Approach NGOs and Think Tanks

Institution	Focus and Involvement	Definition of HS
Human Security Centre (HSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - international, independent, not-for-profit foreign policy think-tank based in London - engages with other organizations to tackle security threats - produces a wide range of publications that cover HS 	according to UN definition
Human Security Network (HSN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - association of 12 countries - promoting the concept of HS as a feature of national and international policies - in particular within the United Nations and in cooperation with academia and civil society 	according to UN definition
Japan Association for Human Security Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - academic association forum based on individual membership - publishes the Journal of HS Studies and hosts annual conferences 	according to UN definition

²⁵ Canadian Global Affairs Institute. Should Canada Revisit the Human Security Agenda? 2016, p.1

²⁶ MOFA. Japan's Official Development Assistance White Paper, 2017

²⁷ JSP 1325 Pt 1 (V1.0 Jan 19), 2019, p.2.



Friends of Human Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide an informal forum for United Nations Member States as well as relevant international organizations to discuss the concept of human security from different angles to seek a common understanding of HS and explore collaborative efforts 	according to UN definition
Human Security Collective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - coordinating dialogue between civil society, policy shapers and other actors to enhance alternative approaches to security - encouraging and supporting practitioners to document, analyse and disseminate their security alternatives - providing a secure platform for human security interaction on a non-profit basis - Interface function between state organizations and civil society 	according to UN definition
The Advisory Board on Human Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - independent body composed of 13 international experts known for their breadth of knowledge and deep commitment to HS - advises the UN Secretary-General - provides strategic vision and guidance to the UN Human Security Unit in its management of the UNTFHS 	according to UN definition

Other important institutions covering security aspects without referring to the specific HS term. Due to that their fields of action are listed below to show the parallels to HS as defined by the UN.

Figure 7: Relevant NGOs concerning Human Rights and Security

Institution	Focus and Involvement	Fields of Action
The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responds to help people affected by armed conflict - respond to disasters in conflict zones, because the effects of a disaster are compounded if a country is already at war 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - addressing Sexual Violence, Building Respect for the Law, Cooperating with National Societies, Economic Security, Enabling People with Disabilities and Physical Rehabilitation, Health, Helping Detainees, Forensic Sciences, Humanitarian Diplomacy, Mine Action, Restoring Family Links, Migrants, Refugees,



		Asylum Seekers, Water and Habitat and Working with the Corporate Sector ²⁸
Human Rights Watch	- investigates and reports on abuses happening in all corners of the world	- addressing Arms-related Challenges, Human Rights Abuses linked to the Economic Activities of Businesses, Children's, Women's and Disability Rights, Environment, Free Speech, Health, International Justice, LGBT Rights, Migrants and Refugees, Terrorism and Torture and UN issues ²⁹
Amnesty International	- help fight abuses of human rights worldwide through research and campaigning	- addressing Armed Conflict, Arms Control, Climate Change, Corporate Accountability, Death Penalty, Detention, Disappearances, Discrimination, Freedom of Expression, Indigenous People, International Justice, Living in Dignity, Refugees, Asylum-Seekers and Migrants, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Torture and UN issues ³⁰

²⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross. What we do, 2019, available on: <https://www.icrc.org/en/what-we-do>

²⁹ Human Rights Watch, 2019, available on: <https://www.hrw.org/about-us>

³⁰ Amnesty International, 2019, available on: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/>

Tools and Methods of HS

In general, the *UN* follows two approaches when it comes to the implementation of HS policies concentrating on **protection** and **empowerment**.

In 2016 the *UN* published a handbook for HS, which includes examples of the application of the HS approach. According to the handbook “the strength and appeal of HS as an operational tool for analysis, implementation, and impact lies on the following components:”

1. **People-Centered** (people at the center of analysis and action, Human Security)
2. **Comprehensive** (Human Security addresses the full range of human insecurities faced by communities)
3. **Coherence** (is needed between different interventions to avoid negative outcomes)
4. **Contextualization** (HS as a universally broad and flexible approach that adapts to varying insecurities in different countries, regions, and communities)
5. **Partnership and Collaboration** (the development of an interconnected network of diverse stakeholders)
6. **Emphasis on Prevention** (early prevention to minimize the impacts of threats)
7. **Greater Resilience and Sustainability** (dual policy framework resting upon the two mutually reinforcing pillars of protection and empowerment)
8. **Benchmarking, Evaluation and Assessment** (providing a comprehensive and contextual account of peoples’ concrete needs and the factors endangering their survival to analyze and evaluate)³¹

The *UN* published the steps to be followed when developing a HS programme in the *Human Security Handbook* in 2016:

Figure 8: *UN. Developing a HS programme, p. 13*

Phase	Goals and tasks
Phase 1: Analysis, Mapping and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish participatory processes and collectively identify the needs/vulnerabilities and the capacities of the affected community(ies). ➤ Map insecurities based on actual vulnerabilities and capacities with less focus on what is feasible and more emphasis on what is actually needed. ➤ Establish priorities through needs/vulnerabilities and capacity analysis in consultation with the affected community(ies). ➤ Identify the root causes of insecurities and their inter-linkages. ➤ Cluster insecurities based on comprehensive and multi-sectoral mapping and be vigilant of externalities. ➤ Establish strategies/responses that incorporate empowerment and protection measures. ➤ Outline short, medium, and long-term strategies/outcomes even if they will not be implemented in the particular programme. (Outlining strategies at different stages with the community is an important foundation for sustainability.) ➤ Establish multi-actor planning to ensure coherence on goals and the allocation of responsibilities and tasks.
Phase 2: Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementation in collaboration with local partners. ➤ Capacity building of the affected community(ies) and local institutions. ➤ Monitoring as part of the programme and the basis for learning and adaptation.
Phase 3: Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are we doing the right thing as opposed to whether or not we are doing things right? ➤ Does the programme alleviate identified human insecurities while at the same time avoiding negative externalities? ➤ Deriving lessons learned from failures and successes and improving the programme.

³¹ UNTFHS. Human Security Handbook, 2016, p.8-10



According to the *UNTFHS*, the following measures are available to enforce the HS concept practically:

Figure 9: *UNTFHS. Examples of Strategies and Capacities Needed for Addressing Human Insecurities, Human Security in Theory and Practice, 2009.*



Human security components	Strategies to enhance protection and empowerment	Capacities needed
<u>Economic security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assured access to basic income ➤ Public and private sector employment, wage employment, self-employment ➤ When necessary, government financed social safety nets ➤ Diversify agriculture and economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Economic capital ➤ Human capital ➤ Public finance ➤ Financial reserves ➤ Diversified agriculture and economy
<u>Food security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Entitlement to food, by growing it themselves, having the ability to purchase it or through a public food distribution system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Diversified agriculture and economy ➤ Local and national distribution systems
<u>Health security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Access to basic health care and health services ➤ Risk-sharing arrangements that pool membership funds and promote community-based insurance schemes ➤ Interconnected surveillance systems to identify disease outbreaks at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Universal basic education and knowledge on health related matters ➤ Indigenous/traditional health practices ➤ Access to information and community-based knowledge creation
<u>Environmental security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustainable practices that take into account natural resource and environmental degradation (deforestation, desertification) ➤ Early warning and response mechanisms for natural hazards and/or man-made disasters at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Natural resource capital ➤ Natural barriers to storm action (e.g. coral reefs) ➤ Natural environmental recovery processes (e.g. forests recovering from fires) ➤ Biodiversity ➤ Indigenous/traditional practices that respect the environment
<u>Personal security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rule of law ➤ Explicit and enforced protection of human rights and civil liberties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coping mechanisms ➤ Adaptive strategies ➤ Memory of past disasters
<u>Community security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explicit and enforced protection of ethnic groups and community identity ➤ Protection from oppressive traditional practices, harsh treatment towards women, or discrimination against ethnic/indigenous/refugee groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social capital ➤ Coping mechanisms ➤ Adaptive strategies ➤ Memory of past disasters ➤ Local non-governmental organizations or traditional organisms
<u>Political security</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protection of human rights ➤ Protection from military dictatorships and abuse ➤ Protection from political or state repression, torture, ill treatment, unlawful detention and imprisonment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Good governance ➤ Ethical standards ➤ Local leadership ➤ Accountability mechanisms

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A Critical View on the HS Concept

To implement HS as a NATO concept, to be aware of the approach's shortfalls. The following passage lists the main voices of criticism.



Vagueness:

The most mentioned weakness of HS is that it is, in the eyes of many scholars, experts and policymakers, too vague.

Roland Paris, Professor of International Affairs and former foreign and defence policy advisor to the Prime Minister of Canada, criticizes that “existing definitions of human security tend to be extraordinarily expansive and vague, encompassing everything from physical security to psychological well-being, which provides policymakers with little guidance in the prioritization of competing policy goals and academics little sense of what, exactly, is to be studied.”³²

Lack of Feasibility and Inclusiveness:

Many Critics of HS argue that, just like its predecessors, the concept sounds good in speeches but extremely difficult to implement or put into practice. It is often accused of not providing a straight solution to the problems. Instead, it outlines a framework that lets people establish the solution themselves.³³ *Lawrence Freedman*, who is teaching at King's College in London, writes that the field risks losing a clear focus because any threat or insecurity is nowadays referred to as a security problem.³⁴

Arbitrariness:

Another point of criticism is that it is unclear by which criteria threats are included in the concept of HS. One cannot recognize a clear pattern by which interests and threats are analyzed to determine whether they are 'qualified' to be labelled as threats to HS or not. As *Alkire* states, some criteria are predictive, some perceptive and others are simply pragmatic, which makes it hard for building up a framework that is neutral and measured by an objective and standardized benchmark.³⁵

Lack of Actuality:

Nowadays, the risks of interstate conflict are getting higher, especially in *Russia, China, and North Korea*. The human security agenda offers no solutions in dealing with these kinds of classic state-centered security problems. Even though state-centered security threats are not more important than human security challenges, they attract political attention and consume most of the diplomatic and financial capacities.³⁶

Additionally, asymmetric and hybrid warfare is much more difficult to control, and critics argue that the HS approach “offers at best a partial response to the security threats posed by these terrorist groups and their sympathizers.”³⁷

³² Roland Paris. *Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?* 2001, p.88.

³³ *Journal of Human Security Studies*, Vol.9, No.1, p.24.

³⁴ Alkire, *A Conceptual Framework for Human Security*, 2003, p.22.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Canadian Global Affairs Institute. *Should Canada Revisit the Human Security Agenda?* 2016, p.3.

³⁷ Ibid.

Lack of Need:

Some question if the concept of HS is redundant as human safety and initiatives for promoting human rights have been addressed in the international community long before the advent of the concept. With the founding of the *International Committee of the Red Cross* in the 1860s, a platform to discuss and find consensus about security issues that affect individuals has been created. Proponents of human security responded that the concept was a convenient and useful way to group together and collectively push the wide array of people-centered initiatives.

Regarding all different points of criticism, the most striking one is that we lack a common and generally accepted definition of what HS is, which threats are addressed by it and how it can be operationalized in practice. Basically, all institutions dealing with HS (or in a broader sense with human rights, humanitarian development and freedom) want the same thing: security and freedom for all human beings. Even though this is an important interest, which is pursued by many influential organizations, there is no chance of making a difference if there is no common ground to start from. Moreover, the term needs to be redefined according to the increasing influence of hybrid warfare including cyber threats and other electoral interventions into security.

NATO and HS

In 1949 *NATO* was founded as an international military alliance of national forces that aimed to protect territorial integrity, political independence and security.³⁸ In that time, the only possible threat to sovereign states were other states and the only threat potential was seen in military attacks, which could only be repelled by military means.

After the cold war, the source of threat for *NATO* vanished and the organization had to define a new understanding of security to justify its existence. With the *Declaration of the North Atlantic Council* (NAC) in 1990, changes in the security environment were addressed and *NATO* decided to adapt to these. The alliance's *New Strategic Concept* acknowledges that "the risks to allied security that remain are multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional, which makes them hard to predict and assess."³⁹

From that point on, *NATO* developed a much broader understanding of security, which is in line with the *UN* approach that was developed around the same time. The basic difference is that *NATO* did not explicitly use the term HS. Nevertheless, *Secretary-General Solana* argued in 1994 that "a security policy which is not constructed around the needs of people and humanity will risk the worst fate - being ineffectual."⁴⁰

³⁸ NATO. The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949, Art. 4.

³⁹ NATO. The Alliance's New Strategic Concept, 1991, para. 8.

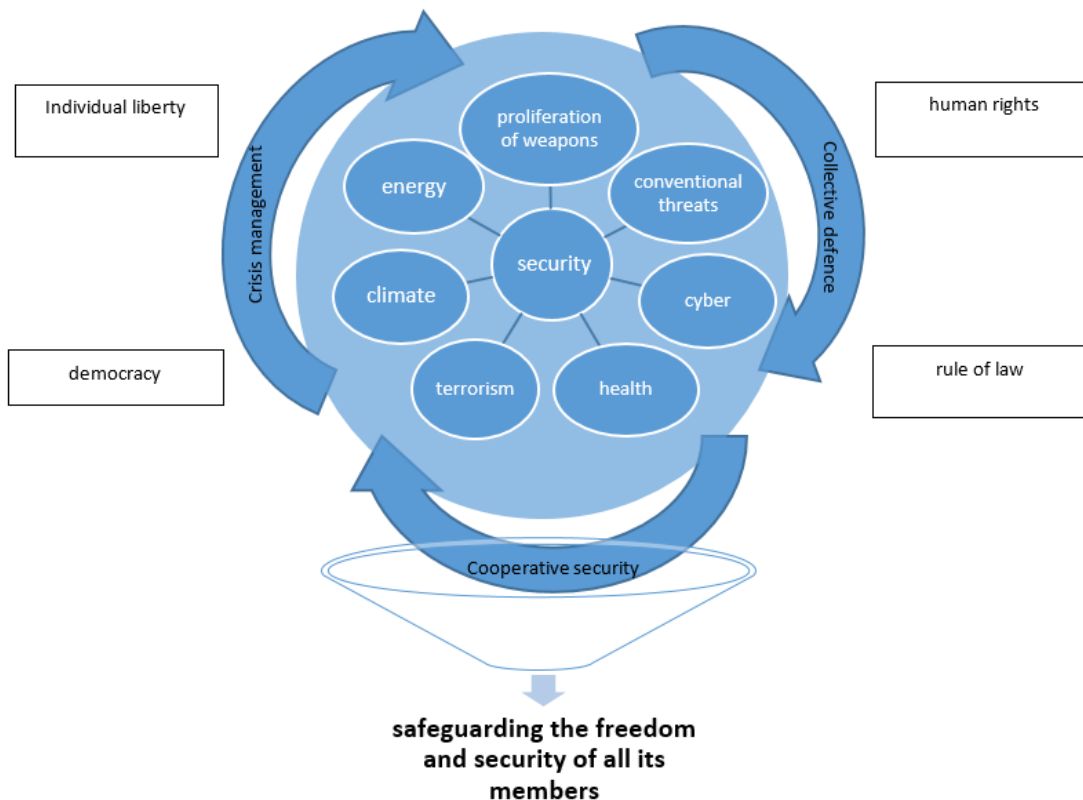
⁴⁰ Solana. Securing Peace in Europe, 1998, available on:
<https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s981112a.htm>.



The latest *Strategic Concept*, which was published in 2010, names the safeguarding of “freedom and security of all its members by political and military means” as the overarching goal of NATO’s security approach.⁴¹ The principles NATO is following to achieve these objectives are **individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law**.⁴² The following figure points out NATO’s security approach by referring to the security threats mentioned in the *Strategic Concept 2010* which are being addressed by means of three core tasks: **collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security**.⁴³



Figure 10: NATO HS Approach



Currently, NATO is making efforts to adopt the term HS . Especially by promoting the relevance of protection of civilians as the main point on the NATO agenda, the alliance is implementing the main ideas of HS. One important step towards a common use of the HS term is the supporting of the creation of a NATO accredited Centre of Excellence for Human Security. Currently, the British administration is in the run for building up such an institution based on the success of the *Human Security Advisers Course* which is training on Women, Peace and Security, Children and Armed Conflict, Human Trafficking, Protection of Civilians, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Cultural Property Protection.⁴⁴ In the JSP 1325 the *British Ministry of Defence* took the first step to implement HS throughout the Department of State.

⁴¹ NATO. *Strategic Concept*, 2010, p.6.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 7-8.

⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mod-to-establish-centre-of-excellence-for-human-security>

Joint Service Publication 1325 is a statement of policy for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and additional UNSCRs on women, peace and security (WPS), children in armed conflict (CAAC), Protection of Civilians (POC) and human trafficking into military activity.⁴⁵

Within the *Civil-Military Centre of Excellence* in The Hague HS related aspects are being addressed through the work of *The Concepts, Interoperability and Capabilities Branch*. These Cross-Cutting topics are Women, Peace and Security, Children and Armed Conflict, Cultural Property Protection, Building Integrity, and Protection of Civilians. HS could function as an umbrella term for these Cross-Cutting Topics to achieve more coherence.



Conclusion

The findings of this info sheet are summarized in this section. Hereby, the security understanding of NATO, *Amnesty International*, *Human Rights Watch* and *The International Committee of the Red Cross* will also be taken into account to show that even though these organizations have not adopted the HS approach (yet), they share the basic interests of the concept.

Not only UN bodies but also the investigated think tanks and NGOs which are addressing HS directly mention the *UN* definition of Human Security as a basis for their work. They have different areas of responsibility and focus on varying aspects of HS as one can see in figures three and six, but they do not question the validity of the *UN General Assembly resolution 66/290* from 2012.

Amnesty International, *Human Rights Watch* and *The International Committee of the Red Cross* have a very broad field of action which is described in figure seven. Even though the three organizations have different priorities, it is recognizable that they also cover the seven security threats listed by the *UN*.

The *EU* made attempts to distance itself from the *UN* approach by publishing the *Barcelona Report* in 2004. As the schemes show, the concepts of the *EU* and *UN* differ in many aspects. Nonetheless, the *EU* applied the main pillars 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear'. The variations in the two concepts are mostly due to the *EU's* decision to focus on the freedom of fear aspect of HS, which later on was revised in the Madrid report. The document acknowledges the *UN* approach as predominant and right.

The government of *Canada* focused on the 'freedom from fear' aspect of the *UN* HS concept between the late 90s and 2006. It is not evident that the Canadian approach was incorrect content-wise. Rather a combination of budget cuts, change in government, a shift in international policies in the context of the War on Terror and a decision to support US policies, caused HS to disappear from Canadian laws and policies.⁴⁶

NATO's security approach can be seen as a more detailed concept which is focusing on four (political threats, community threats, disease and environmental threats) of the seven threats the *UN* described as essential dimensions of HS in the global *Human Development Report 1994*.

⁴⁵ JSP 1325 Pt 1 (V1.0 Jan 19), p. ii, 2019, available on:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/770919/JSP_1325_Part_1_2019_O.PDF

⁴⁶ <http://humansecuritycourse.info/module-1-the-concept-of-human-security/canada-and-r2p-approach/>

According to the research conducted about the security understanding of the different stakeholder groups, it is evident that the *UN HS* approach as it is formulated in *General Assembly resolution 66/290* serves as a common baseline:

“The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular, vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential.”⁴⁷

The problem is that the international community lacks communication and a platform where the different interest groups come together to discuss relevant HS issues. A joint discourse is needed and should be supported to define a common position and allocate different focus areas to the respective suitable organization.



Possible Course of Action

For *NATO* to contribute to the *UN HS* approach and to define the term with regard to *NATO's* role in the international community of states, it is important to understand that HS for *NATO* will not work without state security in the classic way.⁴⁸ Furthermore, *NATO* needs to focus on what is relevant for the organization. Therefore, it might be best not to generalize the term but break it down to what is reachable by military and political means within *NATO's* mission to guarantee freedom and security.

Most importantly, it is necessary for *NATO* to collaborate with other leading organizations that address HS, the two most relevant being the *UN* and *EU*. Provided that global players with the *UN* as a leading organization succeed in creating an exchange platform where the concept of HS can be approached systematically, *NATO* could fill the gap that occurs in the concept of HS when it comes to state-centered conflicts. *NATO* has with its modern defence posture that includes a range of effective weapon systems, infrastructure, and most importantly, a well-trained military force, the chance to support and promote HS within and beyond its member states.

⁴⁷ UN. Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 66/290 on HS, 2012, 2/20.

⁴⁸ CHS. HS Now, 2003, p.6

Additional Information and References

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