

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE
Canada's Human Security Agenda

Self-introduction

The end of the Cold War was hailed as the beginning of an era of peace and prosperity. There was a widespread optimism that with the easing of the ideological divide, the world community would be freer than at any time in the past to turn its attention to global problems such as under-development, poverty and the environment. The reality of the recent past has been more sobering: we have seen a wide range of new security threats emerge. These include the proliferation of civil wars and problems such as trans-national crime, terrorism, pollution, international drug trafficking and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and small arms.

In recent decades, armed conflict has also taken a different shape, often rooted in religious or ethnic discord. While the number of armed conflicts between states has declined over the last 25 years, the number of intra-state conflicts has increased. In fact, the overwhelming majority of wars nowadays are fought within rather than between states. The crises in the Great Lakes region of Africa, in Bosnia and Kosovo, in East Timor and

Sudan are only some of the more noted examples in a series of conflicts with tragic implications for the affected populations.

Individuals are increasingly the principal victims, targets and instruments of modern war. The forced exodus, the appalling brutality, the state-sponsored murders and disappearances perpetrated against thousands of innocent people — all of this underscores the fact that in our world, civilians suffer the most from violent conflict. It is a situation with which ordinary people from Sierra Leone to Sudan to Afghanistan are all too familiar. Casualties from armed conflict have more than doubled since the early 90s.

Civilians are paying the heaviest price, from the rise in intra-state conflict and from failed states. They bear the brunt of the new practices of war — for example, the deplorable use of child soldiers or savage paramilitaries. And they suffer most from the inexpensive yet all-too-readily-available weapons of modern war, such as landmines and military small arms and light weapons. Civilian casualties and mass displacement are no longer mere by-products of today's conflicts, but often explicit in the strategy of combatants.

Threats to individual security are not limited to situations of violent conflict. For all its promise, globalization has also shown a dark underside. Trans-national phenomena — terrorism, illicit drugs and crime, environmental degradation and infectious disease, financial and economic instability —

put all of us at risk. Indeed, they have already caused tremendous suffering.

Instantaneous communications, rapid transportation, increasingly porous borders, and rising business, cultural and academic ties have undeniably and unalterably merged all our lives into a common destiny. The security or insecurity of others has become very much our own security or insecurity.

The Concept of Human Security

Canada's promotion of human security is a response to these new global realities. In other words, the goal of human security is to create living conditions characterized by freedom from the pervasive threats to people's rights, safety or lives which I have just described.

Rethinking the meaning of security has been a growth industry since the early 1990s. In large measure these efforts have focused on expanding the list of threats to security to include issues such as the narcotics, the environment, refugees and migration and infectious diseases. To the degree that these challenges are increasingly inter-related, demanding comprehensive integrated responses, broadening the range of threats considered is absolutely essential. From the Canadian perspective, however, more significant than widening the definition of security, what is important is changing its principal focus.

The focus on the safety of individuals raises the question about the relationship between human security and national security. Contrary to some claims, human security and state security are not incompatible. When states act in the security interests of their people, state security and human security are mutually supportive. Building an effective, democratic state that values its own people and protects minorities is central to promoting human security. At the same time, improving the human security of its people strengthens the legitimacy, stability and security of a state. The importance of effective states is clear, for where human security exists as a fact rather than an aspiration, that situation can be attributed in large measure to effective governance.

States, however, are not necessarily guarantors of human security. When states are externally aggressive, internally repressive or too weak to govern effectively, they threaten the security of people. In the face of massive state-sponsored murders, appalling violations of human rights and the calculated brutalization of people, the humanitarian imperative to act cannot be ignored and can outweigh concerns about state sovereignty. Ultimately, state sovereignty is not an end in itself -- it exists to serve citizens and to protect their security.

Human Development

Another important conceptual clarification is the link between human security and human development. The specific phrase "human security" is most commonly associated with the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report, an attempt to capture the post-Cold War peace dividend and redirect those resources towards the development agenda. The definition advanced in the report was extremely ambitious. Human security was defined as the summation of seven distinct dimensions of security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political. By focusing on people and highlighting non-traditional threats, the UNDP made an important contribution to post-Cold War thinking about security.

The very breadth of the UNDP approach, however, made it unwieldy as a policy instrument. Equally important, in emphasizing the threats associated with under-development, the Report largely ignored the continuing human insecurity resulting from violent conflict. Yet by the UNDP's own criteria, human insecurity is greatest during war. One need only look at the Human Development Index to realize there is a strong correlation between underdevelopment and the chances of suffering the direct or indirect effects of violent conflict.

Human security eventually became a very important concept because it focuses on the human costs of violent conflict. Here, practice has led theory. Two initiatives in particular, the campaign to ban landmines and the effort to create an International Criminal Court, on which I will say more in a few minutes, have demonstrated the potential of a people-centred

approach to security. Both measures are practical, powerful applications of the concept of human security.

By focussing on violent threats, human security addresses gaps in existing approaches and suggests new responses. Non-violent threats to human well being, such as poverty, famine, disease, population, natural disasters and environmental degradation, require urgent attention. But the conceptual tools to address them already exist. Think of sustainable development theory and human development theory. Global action plans have also been largely agreed upon, particularly through the World Conferences of the 1990s or, more recently the UN Millennium Development Goals. Progress in these areas now depends principally on a greater infusion and better targeting of resources. The same cannot be said about the insecurity people face due to violence. The need for a conceptual shift towards a people-centred approach to physical safety is clear. Furthermore, in spite of calls more than a decade ago for a “New International Humanitarian Order,” there is no global action plan for reducing people’s vulnerability to violence.

It is sometimes argued that attending to the violent threats that people face diverts funds from the more basic priority of development. But human security and human development are opposite sides of the same coin. One is impossible without the other. Together they address the twin goals of freedom from fear and freedom from want. Human security provides an enabling environment for human development. Where violence or the

threat of violence makes meaningful progress on the developmental agenda impossible, enhancing the safety of people is a prerequisite. Promoting human development is also an important strategy for furthering human security. By addressing the root causes of violent conflict, by strengthening governance structures, and by providing humanitarian relief, development assistance complements political, legal and military initiatives in enhancing human security.

In many ways, the concept of human security attempts to do for the theory and practice of security what human development did for approaches to development. Through the 1950s and 1960s development was defined in narrow economic terms and measured through abstract national figures such as growth in GDP. The notion of human development challenged both the scope and the level of analysis — a broader range of indicators were employed including health and education, and an attempt was made to measure the effects on people rather than states. Similarly, human security attempts to reconceive security by examining a broader range of threats, and by focusing directly on the effects on people.

Canada's human security agenda is ultimately aimed at developing new concepts, adapting diplomatic practice and updating the institutions on which the international system is based, with a view to enhancing the security of all people. While there are obviously wide-ranging implications to adopting a human security perspective, we give emphasis to two

particular dimensions: the protection of civilians in times of war; and the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts.

The Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict

As outlined above, people's safety is most clearly at risk in situations of armed violence. While the international community is generally effective in the provision of material assistance to civilians in war zones it is much less good at providing physical safety. Enhancing their safety involves a broad range of measures for improving legal and physical protection for people, with particular attention to vulnerable groups such as women, children the displaced and the elderly. These measures include the issuing of more robust mandates and the provision of human rights monitors for UN peace support operations, the development of a more humane and targeted approach to economic sanctions, ending impunity by bringing to justice those who perpetrate atrocities, and reducing the availability of small arms, including landmines, that most directly affect the security of people.

Minimizing the impact of violent conflict on civilians underpinned many recent initiatives in Canada's human security agenda such as the elimination of landmines, the creation of an International Criminal Court, the creation and promotion of the Responsibility to Protect concept or defending war-affected children. Let me now discuss some these initiatives separately.

Anti-personnel Landmines Mines

The widespread use of anti-personnel mines has a direct impact on the security of individuals. These weapons last for decades after conflicts end and do not distinguish between soldiers and civilians. Their use has created a humanitarian crisis in dozens of countries – impeding the return of refugees after conflicts end, preventing the use of productive land in some of the poorest countries on the planet and previously killing or injuring as many as 24,000 innocent civilians each year. While contributing only marginally to the security of states, they have a devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of ordinary people attempting to rebuild their lives in war-torn societies.

In December of 1997, the majority of the world's countries joined Canada in our determination to do something about this human security crisis by signing the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction* — the Ottawa Convention. On March 1, 1999, the Ottawa Convention entered into force and by November 2006, 152 states have agreed to be legally bound by it. Furthermore, the number of mine-producing countries has now decreased significantly, from 54 to 12 and world trade in landmines has basically ground to a halt. I am pleased to tell you that none have been exported, legally at any rate, for at least eight or nine years.

The Ottawa Convention serves as a major step forward in addressing the humanitarian crisis caused by anti-personnel mines. However, the establishment of a new global norm was only the beginning. We must continue to ensure the Convention is implemented in an effective manner to ensure that mined land is cleared and returned to communities, that mine victims receive assistance and rehabilitation services and that the global ban on anti-personnel mines is universalized. Canada is doing its part through the Canadian landmine fund, by supporting mine action activities in places like Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique, Central America, Peru and Ecuador.

The International Criminal Court

The creation of the International Criminal Court is another important achievement of our human security agenda. Over the past century millions of children, women and men have been victims of unimaginable atrocities that have deeply shocked the conscience of humanity. In too many cases, these crimes have been committed with impunity, which has only encouraged others to flout humanitarian laws. For this reason, the international community adopted the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998. The Court was created to provide accountability for the most serious crimes of international concern, namely genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The ICC, however, is a “court of last

resort”. In other words, state authorities still have the first responsibility to carry out investigations and prosecutions. This means that the ICC may only take action when States are unwilling or genuinely unable to bring alleged perpetrators to justice on their own.

The ICC, which is based in The Hague, in the Netherlands, was established by an international treaty known as the Rome Statute. The Statute is binding only on those States which formally agreed to be bound by its provisions. Today, 104 countries have become members of the Court. This impressive number, which, we hope, will continue to grow, demonstrates that the majority of the world’s states have chosen to place their confidence in the ICC, an independent, responsible and effective judicial institution. Being a party to the Rome Statute has also become an emblem of a state’s commitment to human rights, humanitarian law, and accountability.

Already the Court is fully functional and working at or near capacity. All of the senior officials of the Court, including its President, Mr. Philip Kirsch, who is former Canadian diplomat and a personal friend, have now been in place for two or three years and staffing is all but complete. After analysing the referrals for jurisdiction and admissibility, the Prosecutor began investigations three cases in Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, Sudan.

While the ICC enjoys widespread international support, you may know that Asia remains significantly underrepresented at the Court. Although many Pacific islands have joined, only three countries have done so in East Asia. These are Mongolia, Cambodia and South Korea. Although Japan is not yet a member, it is expected to join sometime in 2007. For Canada, this is very good news. Japan's membership will bring new leadership to international efforts to replace a culture of impunity with a culture of accountability and will put Japan in a position to provide a strong Asian voice for this underrepresented region.

The Responsibility to Protect

No doubt, the ICC is an important tool to bring perpetrators of atrocities to account. What would be even more valuable, however, are means to ensure that those atrocities do not happen in the first place. Unfortunately, the international community has often failed to respond robustly when civilians were threatened. This was clearly pointed out by the UN Secretary General in his reports on the massacres in Rwanda and Srebrenica, in the former Yugoslavia. Thus, what we need to develop are guidelines to help us decide when, where and how to intervene.

In response to this challenge, Canada launched, in 2000, the independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The Commission's final report, *The Responsibility to Protect*, offered a

constructive new approach based on the fundamental responsibilities of sovereign states to protect their own populations. When they fail to do so, the international community has a responsibility to act. In cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, this responsibility includes, as a last resort, the authorization of force, through the Security Council.

The work of the ICISS was an important first step, but a full discussion about humanitarian intervention should now be encouraged. In fact, such a discussion is indispensable because we will undoubtedly be confronted with new humanitarian tragedies in the future. In the absence of clear rules guiding our intervention, we will certainly be faced with the same questions, the same paralysis and the same lack of preparedness — with the same tragic results.

With hindsight, we now see that Kosovo, where NATO was compelled to take action, was perhaps a turning point in this debate. In cases where human security is imperilled on a massive scale within state borders, as it was in Kosovo, the challenge for all of us is to consider the limits of sovereignty and the need for humanitarian intervention. This is not easy. Intervention is one of the most difficult decisions that leaders can make. It is fraught with complications. It challenges established thinking about the international order. Those who have suffered under colonialism and other outside involvement in their countries might well be sceptical. Yet there can be no doubt that there have been, and undoubtedly will be, circumstances

where the consequences of inaction are unthinkable, and where forceful military intervention will be necessary.

Of course, there are legitimate questions about the purposes, limits and standards for military action on humanitarian grounds. That is why clear and consistent criteria are needed against which the necessity, or not, of humanitarian intervention can be judged and applied. The Responsibility to Protect report was a first attempt at determining what those conditions might be. Needless to say, they must be very demanding, based on fundamental breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law. Let me be very clear on this point. I am not talking about minor violations of human rights. There are other ways to censure such misgovernance. What I am talking about is international intervention to prevent or stop massive human suffering such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or systematic violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

The main challenge now is to put the concept of the Responsibility to Protect into practice. How can we do this? First and foremost, we must continue to work to strengthen the international endorsement of the Responsibility to Protect and to establish it firmly as a new norm of international law. The adoption of the report's language at the UN World Summit in September 2005 was an important step in this direction. More importantly, we should continue to urge the Security Council to negotiate and adopt guidelines for the use of force as recommended by the High Level Panel on UN Reform, as well as by the Secretary General.

In addition, further practical steps need to be taken to strengthen the UN and Regional Organizations' capabilities to respond to civilians at risk of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. This will be done by carefully monitoring escalating crises, advocating for state and Security Council involvement when necessary, and ensuring we have the appropriate means and resources to react to such egregious abuses in a timely manner.

The Peacebuilding Commission

This is one reason why Canada welcomed the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission in September 2005. Reporting to the UN Security Council, this Commission will lead in the re-establishment of order and governance in post-conflict and failed states, allowing the UN to rapidly draw together relevant expertise from across the UN system. A Peacebuilding Support Office (PSO), located within the UN Secretariat, will support the work of the Commission and will also provide capacity for faster and more effective peace-building operations. Let me mention, incidentally, that a Canadian, Ms. Carolyn McAskie, was recently named to the position of Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding and will head this Peacebuilding Support Office (PSO).

At this point, Canada is not a member of the Commission's main body, the Organizing Committee, but our two-year term will begin next year. Yet, we have already started to support the work of the Commission. For example, we have allocated an initial \$10 million to support the work of the Commission through CIDA, our aid agency.

Since the Commission has only recently been created, it is not yet fully clear how it will work in practice. However, Canada has advocated a focused agenda to ensure that any work undertaken will progress smoothly and to ensure that we build confidence in the Commission's work. In these early days, this is very important. In fact, the two initial test cases that have been selected, Burundi and Sierra Leone, fulfill Canada's objectives in this regard.

War-affected Children

Let me now turn to another important element of Canada's human security agenda: the welfare of war-affected children. In the new global environment, it is their security that is frequently most at risk. Too often, children have to pay the heavy price of conflict. The record of the past 15 years is, in fact, grim: around two million children were killed; more than four million children were disabled; more than one million were orphaned; over three-hundred thousand girls and boys have served in armies and rebel groups as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies, labourers and

sex slaves; and more than ten million children have been psychologically scarred by the trauma of abduction, detention, sexual assault and witnessing the brutal murder of family members.

This is why Canada is working both to improve international legal instruments and to ensure compliance with existing humanitarian standards that protect the rights of children. One of the most notorious practices in conflicts is the recruitment of child soldiers. It is a cruel way of recruiting combatants, one that defies all standards of moral behaviour as we have been vividly reminded in recent years during the fighting in Sierra Leone and in the Congo.

Fortunately, we have made considerable normative progress to protect war-affected children. For example, the entry into force in 2002 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts was a big step forward. Amongst other things, it binds signatories to raise the age of conscription and involvement in conflict from 15 to 18 years. Last year, the Security Council also adopted Resolution 1612 which mandates the development and implementation of a monitoring and reporting mechanism to identify the violators and improve accountability. Now that the International Criminal Court is up and running, we also have better means to ensure violators are held to account.

Cities: an Emerging Human Security Challenge

In recent years, Canada has turned its attention to new and emerging human security challenges. One of the most important at the moment is how to improve human security in urban areas.

For many, this may be somewhat counterintuitive. But today, for the first time in history, more than half of the world's population lives in cities. As a result, we now inhabit a planet where urban agglomerations exert independent effects upon peace and security. Think, for example, of cities where conflict is rife. Civilians in those areas are at heightened risk because it is harder to distinguish combatants from non-combatants in densely populated areas.

Even when there is no open conflict, human security problems often abound. Major demographic shifts from rural to urban areas, particularly in the past few decades, have led to the widespread growth of slums within cities and around urban peripheries. Slums are, in fact, among the most dangerous places in the world, something which was clearly recognized by world leaders when, as part of the Millennium Development Goals, they committed to "achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020". As in regions where civil war rages,

children are also more vulnerable in metropolises. Those aged 11-14 years, for example, are often the primary targets of recruitment into armed gangs.

On the positive side, cities are also the first geo-political structures capable of providing human security through social bargain. Mediation, tolerance, and conflict resolution are often preferred in cities as they are the best way to manage relations between the vast numbers of potentially antagonistic different groups in what can be hot, crowded, loud, stressful, and often physically dangerous environments. As they are the level of governance which is closest to the people, cities can therefore be an effective focal point for peacebuilding.

Municipalities with active civil societies and sustainable links between potentially antagonistic communities can help prevent conflict from erupting and spilling over urban boundaries. Such cities can actively oppose violent state policies, as three of them in Serbia (Novisad), Croatia (Osijek), and Bosnia (Tuzla) attempted to do during the Balkan wars of the 1990s. These towns maintained civilian exchanges, held mixed cultural events, and engaged in cooperation projects together, helping to reduce violence in their area.

Canada's Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START)

Now that I have told you about some important international initiatives and recent projects in which Canada has played an important role, let me tell you a bit more about what we do, at home, in order to ensure that we can react quickly when our help and support is needed around the world.

As you know, the speed with which we intervene, together with the right mix of assistance, can be crucial in saving lives in a crisis situation. To better meet the need of responding quickly to international crises, the Government of Canada recently established a Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force, also known as START, which is responsible for gauging the extent of crises and consolidate the Government's response. START will draw together expertise across government and will work closely with counterpart task forces now being formed by partner countries such as the United States, the UK and the EU. To help support those activities, the Government has also committed \$500 million, over a five-year period, to a Global Peace and Security Fund (GPSF), which is administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs. This Fund will support urgent contributions to crisis response operations, as well as measures to ensure lasting human security such as the eradication of anti-personnel mines.

In many ways, START builds upon our recent peacebuilding experience. Complex emergencies of the recent past, such as those in Afghanistan, Haiti or the Balkans, have taught us that civilian and military instruments must work closely together but also that we must have a more effective

working relationship among our civilian instruments. Close collaboration is key. We need to move much more rapidly to put in place a suite of actions, including policing, de-mining or re-establishment of the courts, to protect people comprehensively and enable them to rebuild their lives quickly. START will help us do that.

Of course, the changes we are making at home to better enable us to deal with failed and fragile states need to be mirrored at the international level. As I mentioned when I discussed the Responsibility to Protect, the international community is still not sufficiently well organized to execute complex peace-building operations, nor is there a consensus on when the UN must intervene to deal with an international crisis. Recent UN reports concluded that post-conflict operations have too often been characterized by ill-coordinated and overlapping bilateral and UN programs, preventing the best use of scarce resources. And let me say it again: we need agreement on new rules so that the international community can intervene more swiftly and effectively to protect civilians against massive harm, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, when states fail to carry out their fundamental responsibility to protect their own people.

Rebuilding Afghanistan

I would now like to tell you more about Afghanistan. Canada's activities in this part of South Asia provide an excellent example of our current

approach towards peacebuilding. In government-speak, we call it a “whole-of-government” approach.

What this means in practice is that our military personnel, diplomats, development specialists, civilian police, to say nothing of our experts in human rights, good governance, the rule of law and democracy, all work together to provide the security, stability and assistance necessary for the systematic reconstruction and development of Afghanistan after decades of conflict. For the peacebuilding mission of the 21st century to be successful, this kind of close collaboration is of crucial importance. National government departments can no longer work in silos.

The strategic interests that motivated our engagement in Afghanistan and, for that matter, that of Japan, have not changed. We, along with our allies, have a fundamental national security interest in ensuring that Afghanistan never again becomes a haven for terrorism. To attain this goal, we must help the country to become a stable, democratic and self-sustaining state. The adoption of a constitution and the staging of presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections in recent years are significant markers of positive change that demonstrate not only the determination of the Afghan people but also that progress is possible with focussed and sustained commitment on the part of the international community. These are Afghan success stories in which Canada, and Japan, can also take tremendous pride.

Some of you may not be aware of this, but the greatest concentration of Canadian resources abroad at the moment is directed towards Afghanistan. Canada has made Afghanistan its primary international security engagement and largest recipient of bilateral aid, with a development pledges of nearly \$CDN 1 billion between 2001-2011.

We have also pledged to provide the military forces to assist in the stabilization of Afghanistan until such time as the national Afghan security forces are capable of doing so independently. Canada is playing a leading role for NATO in this critical mission. Over 18,000 Canadian Forces personnel have been deployed in support of our mission in Afghanistan since 9/11. To put things in perspective, this is roughly three times the number of soldiers who have been rotated in Iraq by the Japanese Ground Self-Defence Forces between 2004 and 2006. The current Canadian contingent of approximately 2,500 soldiers is helping to bring security to the Kandahar region.

In assuming command of the multinational brigade headquarters in Kandahar earlier this year, Canada paved the way for the transfer of operations to NATO command in the south this summer. On November 1, command in southern Afghanistan was handed over to the Netherlands. In addition, Canada assumed command in August 2005 of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), whose mission is to help extend the authority of the Afghan government in the province by promoting stability and security, improving local governance structures and engaging in

reconstruction activities. The PRT brings together personnel from National Defence, Foreign Affairs, CIDA, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and other Canadian police forces.

Canada, it should be noted, is not acting alone in Afghanistan. We are part of an integrated international effort, sanctioned by the UN Security Council, which includes the Afghan people, the UN, NATO, multilateral financial institutions, NGOs and over 60 countries, including Japan.

Canadian contributions to date are numerous and varied. Canada played an important role in establishing a mechanism for the cantonment of more than 12 000 heavy weapons. These are the same weapons that were used to destroy much of the country in the previous decades. Canada was also the third largest contributor to the now concluded disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process which supported the disarmament of some 63,000 former officers and soldiers and helped over 53,000 ex-combatants reintegrate into civilian life - a process initiated in February 2003 at the Tokyo donor conference, with Japan as the lead nation and contributor.

Canada continues to be the lead donor for the national microcredit program, which provides very low interest loans to people trying to escape poverty. To date, 190,000 people have obtained such microcredit loans—nearly 75 percent of whom are women and 99 percent of whom have repaid them, with interest. Canada also recently contributed \$5 million to

the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in Kandahar which aims at immunizing over 7 million Afghan children.

Ensuring security for the people is another important challenge, something which Canada recognizes very clearly. As a result, the Canadian Parliament agreed earlier this year to extend Canada's military presence in Afghanistan until February 2009. Al Qaeda, the Taliban and other insurgent groups are still active, particularly in the South, and this compromises both Afghan and international security, including that of Canada and Japan. Afghan authorities are working hard to build capacity across the country, but require continued international support to consolidate gains and address outstanding obstacles and emerging challenges.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that the road ahead is a very long one. Transition takes time and major challenges remain, particularly with respect to security, narcotics cultivation and trafficking as well as weak governance institutions. More must also be done to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular the rights of women and girls and to facilitate economic reconstruction. Many of the treaties, conceptual frameworks and institutions we discussed earlier, such as the Landmines Convention, the Responsibility to Protect, Human Security or the International Criminal Court, will all be useful tools to guide us and help us make progress in places like Afghanistan.

Towards a New Diplomacy

An emphasis on human security determines not only the objectives of our foreign policy, but also the manner in which we pursue those objectives. While this so-called “new diplomacy” is not exclusively linked to our human security agenda, the mixture of powerful ideas, persistent persuasion, public advocacy and partnership with civil society has proven remarkably effective. Developing innovative global partnerships helps link countries, institutions and non-governmental organizations with like-minded objectives. Such coalitions between governments and civil society helped make the campaign to ban landmines a success and were instrumental to progress in adopting the statute of the international criminal court. They are harbingers of the future, demonstrating the power of good ideas and pooled resources.

This is not to suggest that traditional foreign policy priorities such as strong effective multilateral institutions are any less important. Fostering human security has likewise been the motive behind efforts to adapt existing global and regional institutions in order to integrate human concerns into their activities. This is particularly important at the United Nations Security Council. Rather than avoiding engagement, the Council, as the legitimate decision-making body for peace and security, should be actively involved in

setting the rules — and limits — for international involvement in the new, admittedly more complex, situations of modern armed conflict.

At its core, the human security agenda is an effort to construct a global society in which the safety and well-being of the individual is an international priority and a motivating force for international action; a society in which international humanitarian standards and the rule of law are advanced, woven into a coherent web protecting the individual, where those who violate these standards are held fully accountable; and finally, a society in which our global, regional and bilateral institutions — present and future — are built and equipped to promote and enforce these standards.

These are indeed grand objectives, and while the international community has made impressive progress in recent years, daily reports from Sierra Leone, Chechnya, Angola, Columbia or Afghanistan indicate that we are far from achieving these objectives. Much remains to be done in ensuring that states and international institutions place the security of people at the centre of their security agendas.

Thank you for your attention.