Chapter 1
The Concept of Human Security:
Historical and Theoretical Implications

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1. Introduction

The concept of human security has drawn great attention among scholars as well as practitioners since the publication of Human Development Report 1994 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). While it is regarded as a reflection of the new security environment of the post-Cold War world, a large number of scholars are skeptical of the validity of the concept. They argue that it is too vague to be examined academically or it should not blur the importance of traditional security agendas. What is characteristic is that while major military powers like the United States pay little attention to discussions on human security, middle rank powers like Canada take advantage of linking their foreign policies with the concept of human security. The latter includes the government of Japan, which has made efforts to set up a fund for human security. Some commentators find paradoxical human security being advocated by governments, as the concept is intended to go beyond national boundaries; others simply point out that the concept is used for the purpose of national interests.

This chapter does not simply present the measures that governments and international organizations have been conducting under the heading of human security, as if there is a sufficiently coherent and substantial “human security” policy. Instead, the chapter examines historical and theoretical implications of the concept of human security. By locating the concept in historical and theoretical contexts, it seeks to identify the merits and demerits of the use of the concept.

The first section looks at the historical background of the concept of security in
order to examine the reason why the post-Cold War world needs a concept like human security. The second section more specifically analyzes the concept of human security by focusing on UNDP’s Human Development Report 1994. The next demonstrates the way the government of Japan makes use of the concept as a case study of the use of human security by a government. By so doing, the chapter identifies the purpose and the possibility of the concept of human security beyond superficial debates about whether human security renovates the traditional security paradigm or whether it is too idealistic to discuss human security.

2. Historical Background of the “Traditional” Concept of Security

“Security” in the political sense is not an old term. In the discipline of international relations the term means “national security” or the protection of the state from external threats. This particular meaning emerged from practices of international politics after the First World War. The term itself may convey more general meanings including safety of individuals from violence or crimes, religious peace of mind, and financial measures to sustain a certain standard of living. Therefore, speaking of security in its political sense, we may add the adjective, national, to clarify the context. Literally, “national security” points to the security of the state at least to the extent we identify the state as “national.” This is what is referred to as the “traditional” concept of security in the discipline of international relations.

However, even the political connotation of the term is not purely confined to the “national” level, as shown by the use of the term at such regional levels as “Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe” or “Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific.” As the “traditional” concept of security is not the only or original meaning of the term “security,” national security is not the only political meaning of the term. Military measures and foreign policies to secure the independence of a state are not exclusive components of the term “security.” The dominance of national security discourses in the discipline of international relations is a result of the very modern recognition that the safety of a nation is the supreme mission for policy makers.

“National security” is a metaphorical expression. The object of security in other
meanings is each individual, as individuals may be content with being secure. A nation cannot “feel” secure, because it is not a tangible entity. The idea of security of a nation is based on an analogy between a human being and a nation, which is a result of the “anthropomorphism of nations.” It is nationalism in the modern era that made it possible to conceive of a nation as a living entity, thereby making it an object of protection. For instance, security of a state mechanism possessed by a king before the modern era was not perceived as “national” security. The concept of “national” or “traditional” security was derived from the progress of national identity in modernization.

Given the historically contingent character of the “traditional” concept of security, it is necessary to examine it in a historical context. This chapter attempts to do so by highlighting three aspects of modern politics, democratization, internationalization and socialization, which enabled national security to be perceived as “traditional.”

First, democratization and constitutionalism in the modern era gave governments a new role of maintaining domestic order and security, which prepared for the modern political notion of security. For instance, in Britain after the Glorious Revolution, the protection of the fundamental rights of nationals through the restriction of the king’s power constituted a pillar of constitutionalism. Social contract theory dictated that government should be responsible for protecting individual rights, because that is the very reason why it was established. The basic premise developed in the modern era, as laissez faire political economy and utilitarianism led to minimization of the role of government or the political thought of the “night watch state.” What is important is that the minimized state was not a weak state. The state responsible for domestic order and security must have sufficiently coercive power to discharge the mission. The state’s governmental power must be strong enough to overwhelm any other domestic groups to protect the rights of nationals. The essential state mechanisms include well functioning police and military powers. The idea of the state responsible for security of nationals corresponds to its modern role in a system of constitutional government and in the eruption of democratic and nationalistic movements after the French Revolution.

Second, in the course of democratization the role of the state was extended to what I characterize as socialization of security of nationals. The minimized state based upon laissez faire economy advanced capitalism, but also nurtured mass anti-capitalistic
movements. The influence of liberal democracies was seriously cut due to the rise of communist powers after the Depression. As a result, the welfare state doctrine to take care of social and economic lives of nationals was introduced. In the post-1945 world, even in Britain and the United States, let alone other industrial countries, it was widely held that governmental cares must cover social security of nationals.

This process of socialization of security of nationals shows a certain important change. To maintain economic goods like oil and food became an indispensable policy of the state in the twentieth century. Such a policy might be interpreted as a measure to reinforce state power, but it was also pursued for social security of nationals. It is noticeable that in the process of democratization and constitutionalism, economic and social security came to be recognized as an inalienable right of nationals. This applies to the next point on internationalization as well.

Third, what we understand as the “traditional” concept of security was a result of internationalization of politics in the modern era. The balance of power was the dominant theory of foreign policy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was believed to be most effective to stabilize international society where states pursue national interests without super-state authority. Under such a circumstance, war was an inevitable institution to adjust the balance of power. Under the premises of the balance of power, the concept of security was contingent. Major Powers bargained for territorial gains; small states were simply objects to be bargained for in the overall framework of the balance of power. In other words, national security of each state was not an absolute goal in international society.

The idea of collective security in the twentieth century demonstrated a change in the normative structure of international society. National security of each state was now the common goal that the entire international society ought to maintain. The idea was founded upon the premise that every state was responsible for every state’s security. Although the idea collapsed at the time of the Second World War and the United Nations remained virtually ineffective since its establishment, during the Cold War the two superpowers were expected to be responsible for security of other states in their own camps. The so-called bipolar system showed the two facts in the twentieth century. On one hand, the principle of national self-determination and sovereign equality established the premise that national security of each state should be respected. On the
other, no state other than the superpowers can maintain national security independently and therefore national security of each state is maintained in international systems of alliances. This is what I call internationalization of national security.

The process took place in the economic and social fields. The establishment of various international agencies like WHO (World Health Organization), UNICEF (UN Children’s Fund), WFP (World Food Programme), UNDP (UN Development Programme), UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) indicate that the post-1945 world extended the concern for economic and social lives of people internationally. Bilateral or multilateral aids between states expanded and created the notion that international agencies and industrial states are somehow responsible for economic and social security of developing states. Now social security is not an exclusively national term; it has international dimensions.

I argue that these three aspects surrounding the modern concept of security more or less prepared for the emergence of human security discourses. In other words, the idea of public authorities responsible for political, economic and social security of people at the national as well as international level is the historical usher of the concept of human security. I shall next look at this point by focusing on the discourse on human security in the post-Cold War world.

3. The Appearance of the Concept of Human Security

It is pointed out that the concept of human security was often mentioned before 1994, as the end of the Cold War ushered in the moment for re-examining the “traditional” concept of security. However, it was UNDP’s *Human Development Report 1994* that really made human security a common currency among scholars and practitioners of international affairs. Advancing the discussion on “capability” introduced by Amartya Sen and *Human Development Report 1993* which first mentioned the concept of human security, the 1994 version provided a systematic explanation of it. It should be noted that the concept is therefore foremost understood as a tool for discussing a particular type of development. The reason why this chapter looks at the *Report* from a political perspective is its influence upon discussions in the discipline of international relations and its use by policy makers.
According to the *Report*, human development is defined as “a process of widening the range of people’s choices.” And human security means “that people can exercise these choices safely and freely - and that they can be relatively confident that the opportunities they have today are not totally lost tomorrow.” The latter is “a critical ingredient of participatory development.” If given the opportunities to meet their most essential needs and to earn their own living, people will set themselves free and ensure that they can make a full contribution to developments of themselves, their local communities, their countries and the world. In this way, the *Report* explains that the concept of human security advanced from the perspective of development with special reference to its four characteristics: Universal concern, interdependent, ensured by early prevention and people-centered.

A “more explicit definition” of human security is provided by two main aspects: “safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression,” and “protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the patterns of daily life.” Quoting the US Secretary of State reporting to his government on the results of conference in San Francisco in 1945 that set up the United Nations, the *Report* emphasized that the two freedoms, “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want,” were recognized at the founding of the UN. The *Report* deplores, however, that the concept of security has been linked only to “freedom from fear.”

The *Report* then insists on making “a transition from the narrow concept of national security to the all-encompassing concept of human security.” It is a change from “an exclusive stress on territorial security to a much greater stress on people’s security” and “from security through armaments to security through sustainable human development.” More specifically, human security is considered in seven main categories: Economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. Economic security requires jobs to secure an assured basic income. Food security means that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic foods. Health security is to provide healthy environment and health services to meet the challenges of poor nutrition, infectious diseases, and so on. Environmental security is concerned with lack of access to clean water, deforestation, salinization, air pollution, natural disasters, and so on. Personal security is to protect human lives from threats of various kinds of violence by states and other groups. This includes categories
like crimes, industrial and traffic accidents, threats to women, abuse of children. Community security is about threats like oppressive practices and ethnic clashes in traditional communities. Political security means the protection of human rights and democratization. Furthermore, as “global human security,” the Report refers to unchecked population growth, disparities in economic opportunities, migration pressures, environmental degradation, drug trafficking and international terrorism.\textsuperscript{10}

The concept of human security supplies “early warning indicators” to signal “the risk of national breakdown.” Such indicators consist of deteriorating food consumption, high unemployment and declining wages, human rights violations, incidents of ethnic violence, widening regional disparities and an overemphasis on military spending. The Report exemplifies Afghanistan, Angola, Haiti, Iraq, Mozambique, Myanmar, Sudan and Zaire (currently Democratic Republic of Congo) as countries in various stages of crises. It calls for determined national and international actions including preventive and curative development to support processes of social integration. The standpoint of the Report to emphasize preventive actions is derived from the recognition that long-term developmental aid is more crucial than short-term humanitarian assistance. As a result, human security is considered to demand “policies for social integration.”\textsuperscript{11}

Now we may observe that this comprehensive concept of human security discussed by UNDP is so broad that it lacks conceptual clarity and covers too diverse topics. On the other hand, it has the advantage of systematically understanding various international assistances in order to provide an overall conceptual map for coordination. This gives rise to the view commonly shared by both supporters and critics that human security is opposed to state-centric “realism” and challenges the “traditional” concept of security. It is true that characteristics of human security mentioned in the Report are intended to be distinct from state-centric views. However, they do not necessarily challenge the state. The examination of the concept of human security in historical and theoretical contexts would prove it.

First, it should be pointed out that the concept of human security has the historical and theoretical tradition, which was one of the pillars of international norms after the Second World War. The Report explains that “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” are the two ingredients of human security, and both were among four freedoms that US President Franklin Roosevelt addressed in 1941 as the objectives of the Second
World War. In the same year Roosevelt made public the Atlantic Charter together with
British Prime Minister Churchill by highlighting only “freedom from fear” and
“freedom from want” out of the four freedoms. The Report was correct to say that the
two freedoms were fully recognized at the establishment of the United Nations. The two
were the justifications for the Second World War on the side of the united nations allies,
which is the reason why the UN set up the Economic and Social Council, departing
from the precedent of the League of Nations. While it would be also correct to say that
the “traditional” notion of security is mainly concerned with territorial and military
affairs, we can find a gradual expansion of economic and social security needs at the
international level as a result of democratization, socialization and internationalization
in the twentieth century.

Second, the Report corresponds to previous theoretical frameworks in various
academic discussions. For instance, the perspective of the Report is well understood as
the advocacy for economic and social human rights in contrast to civil and political
human rights. In the field of Peace Studies, Johann Galtung introduced the concept of
positive peace as the absence of structural violence in opposition to the concept of
negative peace as the absence of war. In fact, the Report emphasized that positive peace
in addition to negative peace is a matter of security. In other words, the aim of human
security advanced by UNDP is to shift more focus from political concerns to the
importance of economic and social issues. As the first point suggests, this perspective
was persistent throughout the period of the Cold War.

Third, the contrast between “traditional” security and human security is described
as the contrast between “defensive” and “integrative” concepts; they are not
necessarily contradictory. For instance, the Report warned against the high ratio of
military spending to education and health spending in Iraq and Somalia. This showed
that human security demands a well-proportioned and integrated pursuit of various
security measures, and “traditional” territorial and military concerns are simply located
in a broad context of human security. It would be fair to say that the Report did not
sufficiently make an effort to show it, which is understandable because the Report was
prepared by a UN agency for development. Still, given that the Report identifies
“threats from other states” as threats against human security in the category of “personal
security,” the elements of “traditional” security are incorporated within the context of
human security.

Fourth, while human security is not a state-centric idea, the subjects of security measures are governments and intergovernmental agencies. The Report seems to be addressed to officials in governments and intergovernmental agencies. The conclusion drawn from the perspective of human security is that the state should decide on policies not for the state, but for people, and not only for people in a state but for people in the world. This does not mean that the Report ignores private organizations and individuals. Nevertheless, human security is not advocated somewhere outside the sphere of states; it is addressed to the states that adjust their policies to new needs.

Fifth, the concept of human security understood in the historical context does not appear to revolutionize the established order and values, but rather strengthen them systematically. That is why the Report characterized human security as the “integrative” concept that demands “policies for social integration.” Such policies do not deny the sovereign states system upon which the UN relies; they seek to reinforce it. While pluralistic values to respect diversity of states and other actors in international society would be the foundation of such policies, strengthening the function of states is the major course of human security. It is this “integrative” perspective of human security that aims to provide a systematic and comprehensive view for coordinating various international activities.

In spite of this relation of human security with the “traditional” international system of sovereign states, this chapter does not intend to underestimate the contribution of the Report. Instead, it insists that the concept of human security should not simply be understood as a radical and revolutionary idea against state-centrism or as a catchy word in tandem with discussions on the “decline of sovereign states.” Its importance resides in its integrative and comprehensive perspective to revitalize the values of post-1945 international society and reconstruct a strategy to coordinate various international aid activities of governments and intergovernmental agencies corresponding to contemporary needs.


UNDP’s concept still constitutes the core of our understanding of human security.
However, its tone was not shared perfectly by all who discuss human security. For instance, among the governments that like to refer to human security, the government of Canada under the leadership of former Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy emphasized the military aspect of human security, so that it could defend “humanitarian intervention” like the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999.\textsuperscript{13} The governments of the United States and Great Britain that led the 2003 Iraq war do not speak of human security, but it would not be absurd to speculate that their logic of justifying Saddam Hussein’s inhumane regime by war is an unexpected extension of Axworthy’s position on human security.

Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen’s Commission on Human Security defined that human security is “to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment.” By intentionally using these broad and ambiguous words, the Commission states that “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.”\textsuperscript{14} In short, human security includes what we have understood as humanitarian aid, peace operations and sustainable development. It does not introduce something new. It reiterates the importance of what we understood as important under the heading of human security.

We are then told that human security does not oppose national security. It does not exclude any method to protect people including use of force. So what is the point of referring to human security instead of other concepts, if it includes almost everything? The answer lies with the concept’s broadness and ambiguity.

It was symbolic that UNDP’s \textit{Report} emphasized the importance of early prevention as the essence of human security, then UNDP was able to present development as a topic of security. It actually advocated shifting international resources in the post-Cold War era from defense to developmental aid. Human security as a broad concept reiterates the importance of development while downgrading the need for traditional national security spending under the heading of security. Human security was used to discuss better allocations of limited resources of international society. It was
intended to introduce a perspective to coordinate various international activities in a certain manner. It had to be broad so that it could cover divergent issues. Its ambiguity never promised a final answer to practical problems, but that is not the point. What human security shows is that we need a broad concept in order to discuss how to coordinate various competing activities of international society.

When Boutros Boutros-Ghali introduced “peace-building” in the paradigm of UN peace operations, his intention was almost the same as UNDP’s intention to introduce human security.\textsuperscript{15} Boutros-Ghali included social and economic development as a topic of peace-building in addition to demilitarization, the control of small arms, institutional reform, improved police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights and electoral reform.\textsuperscript{16}

This illustrates the importance of discussing human security in the context of peace-building and vice versa. Whether the US government likes human security or whether the government of Japan does not clearly distinguish between human security and peace-building, it is crucial to admit that we live in a world where we have so many divergent complex problems and where we need to think and act according to such broad concepts as human security and peace-building.

In the next section, I will use Japan to illustrate how the concept of human security was introduced in the language of national policy makers and will identify its actual uses in the contemporary world.

5. The Japanese Government’s Interest in Human Security

What this chapter calls democratization, socialization and internationalization of security in the twentieth century have been conspicuous among industrial countries. This applies to Japan among others. As its military power is constitutionally constrained, Japan naturally constructs security policies to cover not only military affairs but also economic and social affairs. The oil crisis in the 1970s accelerated the moment for Japan to develop a broad security perspective. The concept of “sogo-anzenhoshou” or “comprehensive security” emerged.\textsuperscript{17} The scope of “comprehensive security” corresponded with that of human security in the sense that both are intended to cover economic and social security concerns in addition to military ones,\textsuperscript{18} although the
The concept of comprehensive security does not address “human-centered” perspectives.

Considering such an experience, it is not surprising that the government of Japan takes notice of the appearance of the concept of human security and introduced it favorably as a guiding principle of its foreign policies. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), “Japan emphasizes ‘Human Security’ from the perspective of strengthening efforts to cope with threats to human lives, livelihoods and dignity as poverty, environmental degradation, illicit drugs, transnational organized crime, infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, the outflow of refugees and anti-personnel land mines, and has taken various initiatives in this context. To ensure ‘Human freedom and potential,’ a range of issues needs to be addressed from the perspective of ‘Human Security’ focused on the individual, requiring cooperation among the various actors in the international community, including governments, international organizations and civil society.”

The reference to human security by Japan did not appear until after the Asian financial crisis. At an international conference held in December 1998, Prime Minister Keizo Ouchi remarked:

The current economic crisis has aggravated those strains, threatening the daily lives of many people. Taking this fact fully into consideration, I believe that we must deal with these difficulties with due consideration for the socially vulnerable segments of population, in the light of “Human Security,” and that we must seek new strategies for economic development which attach importance to human security with a view to enhancing the long term development of our region….While the phrase “human security” is a relatively new one, I understand that it is the key which comprehensively covers all the menaces that threaten the survival, daily life, and dignity of human beings and strengthens the efforts to confront those threats….To support Asian countries in this economic crisis, we have pledged and steadily implemented contributions on the largest scale in the world. With Human Security in mind, we have given, as one of the most important pillars of our support, assistance to the poor, the aged, the disabled, women and children, and other socially vulnerable segments of
population on whom economic difficulties have the heaviest impacts.\textsuperscript{20}

Obuchi mentioned human security on his visit to Vietnam in the same month, and pledged to contribute 500 million yen (US$ 4.2 million) to the establishment of the “Human Security Fund” under the United Nations.\textsuperscript{21} Obuchi and his Foreign Minister continued to mention human security in the Japan’s national Diet and the UN General Assembly.\textsuperscript{22} The topic of human security was discussed at several international conferences hosted by the government of Japan and raised by Japan at summit meetings.\textsuperscript{23}

Yukio Takasu, Director-General of Multilateral Cooperation Department of the MOFA, explains the Japanese interest in human security by stating that:

The Japanese understanding of human security is very similar to the comprehensive and inclusive concept advocated by UNDP. I believe that Japan’s experience since the end of the Second World War in promoting prosperity and the well-being of its people through economic and social development makes it particularly well-prepared to advocate such a broad concept of human security. We are confident, moreover, that this is the direction in which the world will be heading in the 21st century.\textsuperscript{24}

Takasu continues to link human security to Japanese foreign policy by emphasizing that “Human security is not a brand-new concept. While the ultimate responsibility of a state is to protect its territory and safeguard the survival and well-being of its people, sound governments have long pursued human security as part of their national policy.” While admitting that “the level of attention and high priority accorded to human security internationally these days are a reflection of several developments,” he adds that:

I must hasten to add that the role of government will not diminish in a human-centered century. Human security efforts will not replace national security arrangements - the protection of territory and the life and property of the people remain the responsibility of government. While national
security is prerequisite for ensuing security - that is, the survival and dignity of the individual - it is not the only requirement. Even if a state becomes rich and strong, there is no guarantee that the individuals who live in that state will be safe and rich. The role of government is to provide a foundation or environment that will enable individuals to take care of themselves and to develop their capabilities without undue restrictions.\(^{25}\)

It is evident that the Japanese government took advantage of the possibilities of human security by linking it to the international position of Japan. The central role of governments for human security provides Japan with a new mission. MOFA's *Diplomatic Blue Book 2000* referred to the concept of human security as an overall principle for Japan to tackle such broad international problems as global environmental issues, terrorism, transnational organized crime and drugs, protection of human rights and promotion of democratization, healthcare, international cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear power and science and technology and international emergency assistance for natural disasters. The Human Security Fund established by the Japanese contribution to the UN has initiated projects ranging from the Human Dignity Initiative Project carried out by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Medical Training Project in Tajikistan, designed by UNDP, the Tokyo International Conference on Semipalatinsk, to the Emergency School Rehabilitation in Decane, Kosovo, carried out by UNICEF with a Japanese NGO. Japan also earmarked 6.6 billion yen for the Fund from the Fiscal Year 1999 supplementary budget to assist the rehabilitation of Kosovo and the return of refugees, as well as the rehabilitation of East Timor.\(^{26}\) The Japanese government sponsored “the Commission on Human Security.”\(^{27}\)

Considering its political aspects, some characteristics of Japanese interest in human security follows.

First, the Japanese use of human security was derived from practical considerations. To rescue Asian countries from the financial crisis was not only “human-centered,” but also in accordance with national interests of Japan. It is crucial for Japan’s economic recovery to keep strong markets in Asia. It is also important for Japan’s political leadership that it shows concerns over the plight of Asian countries.
Second, it goes without saying that the government of Japan has no intention to imply a decline of nation states by referring to human security. What is crucial is to create effective governmental systems. The government of Japan expressed its willingness to conduct human security measures, but demanded due respect for such efforts. Human security in this sense is not an idea of universal cosmopolitanism: it is simply international at best.

Third, it seems that the Japanese interest in human security was developed from its previous Official Developmental Aid (ODA). While Japan does not violate the principle of non-interference, ODA would not simply be beneficial to host-governments or power holders and Japanese firms. Human security accords perfectly with the orientation that the government of Japan insists it keeps in ODA projects.

Fourth, the soft image of human security creates no obstacle for Japan. Due to the constitutional constraints and historical disadvantages, Japan has difficulty in earning a good reputation in international cooperation concerning “traditional” security issues such as participation in peacekeeping operations. Human security is apparently expected to enable Japan to compensate for weakness in the “traditional” security field. The “incumbent” permanent members of the Security Council established their status in the “traditional” security field, and Japan might be a leading force in a newly recognized field called human security.

Fifth, as human security needs the subject of providing security and the object to be secured, the government of Japan seems to presuppose an uneven relationship between Japan and people in other (developing) countries. Of course, the government of Japan is not ready to commit itself to really comprehensive security measures for people throughout the world. Still, Japan does not only assist international agencies working for human security, but also wants to implement human security measures by itself, recognizing that it is on the side of providers of security.

Sixth, despite the above points, the Japanese government has yet demonstrated any strategy of human security. “Traditional” security measures have usually been conducted according to certain “strategies,” however, the Japanese advocacy of human security still lacks a coherent strategic vision to coordinate various policies.

By pointing out these aspects, this chapter does not intend to criticize the Japanese use of the concept of human security. It should rather be taken for granted that
6. Concluding Remarks

Human security has not gained ground in countries like the United States. This especially applies to the post-9-11 social environment in the US. With the expanded interest in military affairs, human security tended to be understood as an even more unclear notion, if not irrelevant. This has affected the government of Japan, too. Since September 2001, the Japanese government has not simply emphasized its commitments to human security. Japanese foreign policy makers seem to be preoccupied with how to keep up with the military actions of the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq as the US’s major ally. They also seem to be mostly worried about the security threat from North Korea.

However, it is a matter of course that the change of focus in the diplomatic discourses does not mean that human security has become less important. As this chapter has suggested, human security has been introduced because our contemporary world needs comprehensive approaches to security. This need remains unchanged. The concept of human security as well as that of peace-building should not be praised or devalued as a result of short-sighted preoccupation with changing international events. The contents of human security may not be exciting enough, but it should not be a victim of those who only look for fashionable phrases to advance their narrow interests.

Notes


7 Ibid., p. 24.

8 Ibid., pp. 22-23.

9 Ibid., p. 24.

10 Ibid., pp. 24-37.

11 Ibid., pp. 37-40.

12 Ibid., p. 24.


16 Ibid., p. 19.


Ibid.
