



**The Human Security Network
Eighth Ministerial Meeting
Bangkok
1-2 June 2006**

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Chairman's Summary

The Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Human Security Network (HSN) was held on 1-2 June 2006 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Meeting was chaired by His Excellency Dr. Kantathi Suphamongkhon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, and was attended by Ministers and representatives of the governments of the Network countries, namely, *Austria, Canada, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland* and *Thailand*, including *South Africa* as observer.

Opening Ceremony

In his opening statement, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand noted that modern threats to human security come in traditional and non-traditional kinds. He stressed that human security must be enjoyed in concrete ways by people and that, as the importance of human security had gained international recognition particular through the UN World Summit Outcome Document, the HSN must continue to produce concrete results and be clear about its direction and cause of action so as to remain a credible and effective force for providing political impetus to the cause of human security. In this regard, he proposed that the Network explore ways to revitalize its work. In particular, the Network should strengthen its outreach both internally, by deepening awareness of human security, and externally, by promoting partnership with states and groups of states outside the HSN, including through the creation of a network of Friends of the HSN. The Network should also encourage a balanced approach towards both freedom from want and freedom from fear and broaden the scope of its focus into non-traditional threats to human security by addressing “freedom from hazard impact” such as threatening diseases and natural disasters and promoting “freedom from exclusion” through involvement of the public in human security dialogue in order to engage all stakeholders.

Mr. Kim Hak-Su, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) read a message from Mr. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, to the Eighth HSN Ministerial Meeting. In his message, the UN Secretary-General stated that the HSN was an effective advocate of a holistic, people-centred approach to security that embraces the right of individuals

to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair, and that the work of the Network had served to complement the United Nations' work on human well-being. Human security was also highlighted in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, which stresses the linkage between security and development, the commitment of member states to discuss and define human security concept and the need for a coordinated and global approach on human security. He welcomed the Network's inclusion of the issues of health security, such as HIV/AIDS, SARS and Avian Influenza, as well as threats from landmines into the Network's focus.

Also participating as invited guests were representatives from the Government of Japan and UNOCHA/Geneva. A number of representatives from UN agencies and members of the civil society were also invited to attend the meeting as observers. (*List of participants appears in Annex I*)

Thematic Discussions

The theme of the meeting was “*Mobilizing Partnership for Meeting Challenges to Human Security*”. Under that theme, the Meeting reviewed among others:

(1) 12-year evolution of the human security concept

The general view of the Meeting was that the concept has gained wider acceptance by the international community and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document has greatly contributed to further validation of the concept. With regard to paragraph 143 of the Document which encourages UN member States to define the notion of human security in the UN General Assembly, the Meeting was of the view that the notion is still evolving and that it may not be feasible at this time to reach consensus on a universal definition through debates within the General Assembly. However, the HSN could significantly contribute to encouraging dialogues and debates among all sectors, inclusive of those outside the General Assembly, on the multi-dimensional nature of human security. It was agreed that the core principles of human security comprise freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity.

It was further noted that, as knowledge and understanding of the concept of human security has yet to be crystallized, the HSN should continue to promote knowledge and awareness about human security within respective societies and elsewhere. Discussions and debates of the concept could also be important tools to promote awareness, as was the need to build up international networks of stakeholders including the academia.

It was felt that the HSN should be at the forefront of the human security debate and the efforts to bring key principles of human security to light and turn them into action on the ground through concrete projects at all levels. In this regard, a proposal was made that the HSN try to agree on common positions regarding human security issues, and to engage with those supportive of human security. Discussions on human security should also be more policy-oriented and focused.

(2) Implementation of human security-related agenda of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document

The Meeting had an extensive exchange of views on the progresses and challenges with regard to the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, including paragraph 143 thereof on the notion of human security as well as other human security-related issues such as development, responsibility to protect, the newly established Human Rights Council (HRC) and the Peace-Building Commission (PBC). The Meeting highlighted in particular the strategic roles which the HSN could play within regional groups and related international fora/negotiations to advance those issues. The Network encouraged those HSN members who are members of the newly established bodies to exert efforts to promote the cause of human security in those bodies.

Possible joint HSN actions envisaged include, *inter alia*, the following:

On the draft resolution on development follow-up, a view was expressed that the Network should encourage UN Member States to demonstrate greater flexibility to settle the remaining differences, taking into account the needs of developing countries.

The Meeting, recognizing the breadth of the UN Development Agenda, was of the view that the HSN should try to define clear priorities and aspects on which it would focus, taking into account the need to take a balanced approach between interests of developed countries and those of developing countries. It was also suggested that the HSN could emphasize partnership for development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

On responsibility to protect, the Meeting agreed that the fact that responsibility to protect (R2P) was affirmed in the World Summit Outcome Document in a balanced way was important, and that the HSN could consider focusing on promoting R2P in all aspects and clarifying procedures and applications of R2P in conformity with the principles of the UN Charter and international law.

On the Human Rights Council, the Meeting agreed that the HSN should play an active role in ensuring that the HRC become a strong and effective instrument in the promotion and protection of human rights, rid of the politicization and confrontation that had hampered the work of the Commission on Human Rights. HSN members were encouraged to be actively engaged in the HRC, including on the discussion on its modalities, working methods and priorities. In this regard, HSN members agreed to start a discussion on its roles and possible initiatives in the framework of the HRC. It was also proposed that the HSN explore the possibility of having a joint statement at the first session of the HRC to commence on 19 June 2006.

On the Peace-Building Commission, the Meeting agreed to individually and jointly express support for close cooperation between UN Security Council, ECOSOC and the PBC.

In addition, the Meeting took note of the proposals made by some HSN members concerning:

- Giving support to a resolution on reform of the working methods of the UN Security Council, which would, among others, call on UNSC members to refrain from using veto in case of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, and to enhance transparency of UNSC;
- Practical applications of the issue of protection of civilians;
- Support for the adoption of the draft ECOSOC resolution on human trafficking and reflect on programmes to enhance coordination and cooperation on this issue;
- To address a letter of the HSN to the Working Group of the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict.

(3) Implementation of the HSN Second Medium Term Workplan (2005-2008)

The Meeting was briefed by the Chair on activities undertaken during the Thai Chairmanship. The Meeting, in particular, noted with appreciation the HSN Manual on Human Rights Education which was commissioned by Austria during its Chairmanship of the Network and which has now been translated into 10 languages, the latest being the translation into the Thai language by the Government of Thailand. List of activities undertaken by HSN countries appears in Annex II.

(4) Challenges to fulfilling the commitments under the Mine Ban Convention

The Meeting highlighted the threat of landmines to physical security of the people in many countries around the world and the inter-linkage between demining and poverty eradication/people-centred development. While recognizing the primary responsibility of States to fulfill obligations under the Mine Ban Convention including the fulfillment of Art. 5 of the Convention concerning demining deadline obligations, the Meeting also recognized the challenges and obstacles encountered by several developing countries in fulfilling their commitments. In this context, it was noted that raising public awareness continued to be essential to bolster support for efforts to fulfill states' obligations.

The Meeting exchanged views on the HSN's efforts to bring about progress on the universality of the Mine Ban Convention and on the effective implementation of the Convention. It was noted that, while there was good progress on the issue of universality, the HSN should continue working together to encourage more non-Parties to accede to the Convention with a view to promoting the universality of the Mine Ban Convention, for instance, by making possible joint demarches or support regional initiatives to this end.

The Network also recommitted itself to further strengthening national efforts and resources as well as enhancing intra-HSN cooperation so as to be a model for other countries or groupings. The Network emphasized the importance of regional cooperation and explored the possibility and benefits that could be derived from the

creation of region-wide international trust funds for mine-related activities in Asia and Africa similar to the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victim Assistance for the Southeastern Europe Region, which was established by Slovenia in 1998.

The Meeting agreed that the Network conduct closer consultations to consider what it could do to contribute to the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, it was proposed that the next HSN Chair convene an HSN meeting on the margin of the 7th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction to be held in Geneva on 18-22 September 2006 to discuss issues such as possible cooperation among HSN members in an effort to meet the deadline set by the Convention, taking into account real problems which some countries are facing in this regard.

The meeting expressed concern over the anti-personnel mines used by non-state armed groups and the need to address them.

(5) Human security challenges with respect to global health problems such as HIV/AIDS, Avian Influenza, and SARS

The Meeting recognized the continued serious threats to human security posed by HIV/AIDS, Avian Influenza and a possible human influenza pandemic, SARS and other epidemics, including malaria, and the need for increased national, regional and international partnership to effectively prevent and address old and new transboundary health problem challenges.

The Meeting noted with appreciation the efforts undertaken by Thailand to enhance national preparedness against Avian Influenza and other epidemics as well as Thailand's initiative to assist and work more closely with her immediate neighbours in combating the Avian Influenza through increased information sharing surveillance and capacity building, and in formulating national preparedness strategies.

The Meeting also agreed to promote and strengthen cooperation, for example, through advocating the mainstreaming of human security perspectives on health issues at all levels of the planning and implementation of policies and plans to address these problems, regular information sharing as well as sharing of experiences and best practices, supporting and harmonizing national preparedness plans as well as promoting efficient joint rapid containment schemes among countries within as well as outside the HSN.

(6) People-centred development

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand spoke on Thailand's approach to people-centred development in the context of human security. He explained Thailand's experiences, highlighting in particular the "Sufficiency Economy" philosophy of His Majesty the King of Thailand, and cited the success of various Royal initiatives, especially the Doi Tung Development Project which is aimed at promoting crop substitution as a means of alternative livelihood.

The Meeting recognized the need to individually and jointly strengthen partnership to assist each other and countries outside the HSN in realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets as a measure of mutual empowerment and a token of investment in conflict prevention. The Meeting also stressed the connection between development and security and agreed to explore further the issues affecting people including migration and urbanization. Trafficking in human beings was also recognized as a major human rights violation and a heinous form of organized crime that degrades human security throughout the world. The human security perspective would promote a victim-centered, human rights approach to counter trafficking that is imperative for effective protection, prevention and prosecution.

A point was also raised regarding the upcoming ministerial summit on “Armed Violence and Development” to be held on 7 June 2006 in Geneva, which would provide an interesting venue to discuss linkages between human security and development.

The Meeting noted that the private sector had an important role to play in contributing to human security and should therefore be involved in efforts to promote human security. The Meeting took note of the on-going process of drafting a paper on the role of private sector in advancing human security and welcomed the readiness of Switzerland to organize a second seminar on the role of private sector in supporting human security. A proposal was also made on the possibilities of involving representatives of academia and civil society in HSN’s seminars and meeting and to discuss ideas and proposals from academia and civil society.

Human Security Index

The Meeting also heard a lunch talk presentation by a representative of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) of Thailand on the national human security index recently developed by the MSDHS. The presentation, which was aimed at sharing experiences, was followed by an interactive exchange of views among the Meeting participants. A proposal was made by Greece for the continuation of the work on the Human Security Index with each presidency taking up the measurement of a particular aspect.

Dialogue with the Civil Society

The Meeting had a fruitful and interactive exchange of views with representatives from the civil society, most of whom attended the HSN International Symposium on “*Building and Synergizing Partnership for Global Human Security and Development*”, co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the HSN on 30-31 May 2006 in Bangkok, back-to-back with the Ministerial Meeting. The recommendations from the Symposium appear in Annex III.

Proposals on the roles of the HSN made by the civil society during the interactive dialogue include the following. (1) *Environment*: prevention of global environmental impact as a result of human activities, with emphasis on the cross-sectional connection between human security and environmental impact, the

significance of humanitarian assistance, and engagement with the business sector such as the insurance industry in time of natural disasters; (2) *HIV/AIDS*: integration and measurement of human security in existing HIV/AIDS national programmes; (3) *Human rights education*: workshops should be convened to raise awareness on the linkages between human rights and human security through human rights education; and (4) *Small arms and light weapons*: support from governments for dialogues on these problems.

Conclusion and Handover of Chairmanship

To move forward the HSN in a way that enables the Network to make a difference in advocating human security nationally and internationally, the Meeting agreed that the Ministerial-level Meeting should focus on selected key issues of concerns to the international community, and they should be the issues on which the HSN can make a real impact. The Meeting also agreed on expanding the roles of the Troika. Ireland has agreed to take up the Chairmanship after Greece in 2008-2009.

The Ministerial Meeting closed with the adoption of the draft Chair's Summary and the formal transfer of the Chair to Slovenia, as well as a presentation by the incoming Slovenian Chair of the Chair's priorities under its Chairmanship. Under the Slovenian Plan of Action, the Slovenian Chair would carry on regular HSN activities on the basis of the Second HSN Medium Term Workplan and devote particular attention to the following topics on which the HSN might formulate a joint position:

- The Role of the HSN in the Human Rights Council
- Promotion of inter-cultural dialogue through human rights education
- Violence against children and children affected by armed conflicts

Excursion

The Meeting expressed appreciation to Thailand for organizing a visit by the Network members to the Doi Tung Development Project under Royal Initiative in Chiang Rai Province in northern Thailand on 2-4 June 2006. The project is a concrete example of people-centred efforts to promote human security, development as well as human rights by addressing the eradication of opium supply, drug use and rural poverty and the promotion of sustainable alternative development.

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