Presentation for Session I: Evolution of the Human Security Concept

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Allow me to express my honor and privilege to be able to speak to you today at this, the fourth in the continuing Intellectual Dialogue on Building Asia's Tomorrow. At the first meeting of this series on December 2–3,1998, Japan's then-prime minister, the late Obuchi Keizo, announced Japan's adoption of human security as an integral part of foreign policy. In the little over three years since Prime Minister Obuchi's speech, the world has undergone a number of changes—many good and, unfortunately, some bad. Yet, I am pleased to say that the concept of human security has continued to develop and grow in importance within Japan and among the countries of the world. I am sure this fact would make Mr. Obuchi very proud and happy. It is an honor for me to stand before you today and explain the evolution to date of Japan's human security policy.

The working definition of human security, as used by the Commission on Human Security, which was established in June 2001, states, "the objective of human security is to protect the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive threats in a way that is consistent with long-term human fulfillment." While this characterization is not definitive, it is, I believe, a useful starting point for discussion. Indeed, as the terrorist attacks in the United States and recent events in Afghanistan have demonstrated, there is an urgent need to ensure that the objectives of a human security agenda are fulfilled.

Since the collapse of the East-West divide and the end of the cold war, the international community has been engulfed by a wave of globalization. This has been brought about by the liberalization of trade and investment and rapid advances in information and communications technology, and has produced a world in which mass movements of people, goods, money, and information are taking place on a global scale and at lightening speed. Globalization has also entailed some negative aspects, and we now have a heightened awareness of the problems that threaten human lives, livelihoods, and dignity. These problems include poverty, environmental degradation, and international organized crime. Additional problems brought about by regional and domestic conflicts have emerged, such as the danger from antipersonnel land mines and the proliferation of small arms and the involvement of children in armed conflicts. With the emergence of these individual-centered human problems, concepts of security have accordingly been evolving over the past decade, with the concept of state security increasingly challenged, or perhaps one should say complemented, by other concepts, namely, cooperative security and human security. The onslaught of globalization and in particular the adverse affects of the Asian financial crisis have influenced concepts of human security in Asia, and prompted Japan and other countries in the region to seek out a new framework for the mid- to long-term development of Asia. This framework would guarantee the security of all—in particular the socially vulnerable—who have been left behind by the benefits of globalization or especially affected by the repercussions of the Asian financial crisis.

Prime Minister Obuchi's seminal speech in December 1998 expounding the concept of human security as part of the Government of Japan's formal policy was given against the background of the international economy's precipitous trend toward globalization, which had over a number of years promoted the swift economic growth of the ASEAN "tiger" economies. However, globalization and the investment of highly liquid capital were the chief causes of a currency implosion that severely affected Thailand and Indonesia and had repercussions that rippled throughout the region. Events surrounding the currency and financial crises in Asia were the driving force behind Japan's move to highlight the negative aspects of globalization and the need to curb their effect.

In his speech, Prime Minister Obuchi noted that the economic crisis had aggravated the negative aspects of globalization, which had until then been overlooked and which severely threatened the daily lives and dignity

of many people. He urged that with due consideration for the socially vulnerable sectors of the population, new strategies for economic development that value human security with a view to enhancing the long-term development of the region must be developed. It was from this point that the necessity for a support network for the socially vulnerable—the poor, women and children, and the elderly—came to be gradually acknowledged. From December 1998, therefore, the term "human security," which had first been used in the early 1990s by the United Nations Development Programme, officially and irrevocably became a part of the lexicon of the Government of Japan.

In developing a concept for human security in the 21st century, it is important to consider factors that threaten security. Prime Minister Obuchi highlighted nonmilitary threats to security that have accompanied globalization, including infectious diseases, terrorism, and narcotics. In mentioning such nonmilitary threats to our security, Prime Minister Obuchi proved to be remarkably prescient. HIV and AIDS continue to cripple the development of many countries in Africa; tuberculosis is resurfacing around the world, in both developed and developing countries; and the horrific events of September 11, 2001, exhibited beyond doubt the threat to human security posed by indiscriminate acts of brutal terrorism. It is vital that we all understand the diversity of the threat to human security. We can no longer expect that in response to threats to human security a buildup in military force will be sufficient to overcome the enemy. That is the theory of state security. What is required for the 21st century is a clear recognition that the notion that "you are with us or against us" should be supplanted by a transnational esprit de corps among nations, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. Such transnational alliances between government and civil society are surely the most effective method of combating threats to the security of the international community. This was the message Prime Minister Obuchi conveyed more than three years ago.

In Japan's case, the process of developing a concept for human security was built on the dual aims of "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" incorporated in the concept of Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan's focus on nonmilitary education-based methods. In his speech titled "Toward the Creation of a Bright Future for Asia," delivered in Hanoi, Vietnam, on December 16, 1998, Prime Minister Obuchi once again emphasized the importance of human security, this time from the perspective of freedom from want. In Hanoi, Prime Minister Obuchi

announced that Japan would contribute ¥500 million (about US$4.2 million) for the establishment of a Human Security Fund under the United Nations so that concerned international organizations could provide support in a flexible and timely manner to projects in the Asian region. Almost two years later, on September 7, 2000, at the Millennium Summit at United Nations headquarters, then-Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro announced Japan's intention to make a further contribution of about US$100 million to the Human Security Fund, in addition to the cumulative total of about US$80 million it had provided to that point.

Prime Minister Mori also expressed Japan's support for the establishment of an international commission on human security, calling for the deepening of human-centered initiatives. In June 2001, the Commission on Human Security was formally launched and is co-chaired by Ogata Sadako, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Amartya Sen, the first Asian to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. The Commission is fully engaged in vigorous and wide-ranging activities concerning human security. Japan is fully supporting the Commission in its activities, with the aim of achieving a concept and key language that intellectually define the basic situation in the international community at the beginning of the 21st century regarding human security.

Since Prime Minister Obuchi's benchmark speech, which set the standard and laid out the goals for Japan's diplomacy in the 21st century, all prime ministers since have reemphasized the importance of human security as a pillar of foreign policy for Japan. Prime Minister Mori, in addition to his statement at the United Nations Millennium Summit, spoke on the theme of human security during his visit to Sub-Saharan Africa, the first such visit to the region by an incumbent Japanese prime minister. On that occasion, Prime Minister Mori stated in the strongest terms that all measures aimed at human security are based on the premise that each individual human should be valued, and that Japan's peace diplomacy for the 21st century places human security at its core.

Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichiro has also demonstrated his administration's resolve to continue to carry forward Japan's focus on human security. At an international symposium entitled "Human Security and Terrorism—Diversifying Threats under Globalization" held in December 2001, Prime Minister Koizumi stated that he would strengthen efforts to protect human life, activities, and dignity and to focus on ensuring that each and every person was given the opportunity to achieve

their potential. The prime minister also emphasized that it was incumbent on the government to ensure that the concept of human security was made to play an ever more significant role in a diverse and globalized world, in order to deal seriously and directly with all threats to human life, activities, and dignity.

The Commission on Human Security is now charged with the important task of elaborating the concept of human security. The Commission enjoys the strong support of Secretary-General Annan, and the Government of Japan has announced that it will continue to provide maximum support to all efforts associated with human security in the international community.

I myself have a keen interest in the evolution of the concept of human security. In May 1998, I gave a speech at Keio University in which I laid out my own theories of human security and how it should be applied in the new century. My interest in and dedication to this subject has remained unwavering, and I dedicated much of my time to expanding the concept of human security when I served as state secretary for foreign affairs. In my view, the core concerns for ensuring human security lie in enhanced "individual capability," and "freedom" in the process of development and advancement. Indeed, the importance of developing individual potential was a topic taken up very recently by Prime Minister Koizumi at the International Symposium on Human Security held on December 15, 2001. I firmly believe that it is crucial for Japan to help people in all countries and regions, regardless of differences in basic conditions in social, economic, technical, health, and hygiene aspects, to elevate their capabilities and realize their full potential.

It is therefore incumbent on Japan to fulfill its obligations to the international community in helping all people to live free from want, with greater peace of mind, greater stability, and greater prosperity. As a responsible member of the international community, Japan must start to give serious thought to how to respond to the challenges posed by human security issues. It accordingly follows that in establishing a firm future-oriented concept for Japan's peace diplomacy in the 21st century, human security is of vital significance.

In the quest for a new paradigm in Japan's foreign policy, based on the pillar of human security, it is important to consider the perspective of Japan's domestic politics, because, as is the case with any country, for significant change to occur in external policies, a corresponding shift must take place domestically. Japan found that its "one-country pacifism"

doctrine was increasingly challenged by a trend toward a more assertive pacifism, based on universal values. For domestic politics the role of human security has been of great significance in facilitating this transition.

In considering the transition of pacifist sentiment in Japan, I would like to point out that after the conclusion of the Second World War, Japan followed a path of pacifism that was based on the resolve of not repeating the experiences of a militaristic past. Pacifism in Japan evolved into a highly ideological one-country pacifism that repudiated military force, based on deep reflection and contrition for the country's militaristic aggression toward its neighbors. However, with the collapse of the East-West cold war structure, one-country pacifism has been seen to gradually lose its relevance in the face of new realities, and its significance is receding in the minds of the younger generation of Japanese who themselves have had no direct experience of war.

What is now required of Japan is the formulation and projection of a new future-oriented pacifism that enhances and promotes Japan's standing as a responsible member of the international community. In the interconnected and people-oriented 21st century, the nebulous concept of one-country pacifism must be developed into peace diplomacy, where Japan focuses more on individual values. This is a task that the people of Japan themselves can engage in as they enlarge their role at the forefront of the international community based on the pillar of human security.

Thus far I have spoken of the development of Japan's concept of human security as a key axis for its peace diplomacy. I would now like to touch briefly on a few concrete examples of Japan's activities in promoting human security around the world.

Around the time when Prime Minister Obuchi first introduced human security into the diplomatic language of the Japanese government, the countries of Southeast Asia were in the grip of a currency and financial crisis. Hardest hit was Indonesia, which suffered a huge fall in the value of its currency, sparking widespread unrest. Recognizing the gravity of the situation in Indonesia and aware of the country's importance to the stability of the rest of the region, Japan took initiatives to provide Indonesia with grant-in-aid totaling ¥4 billion. Assistance programs included, for example, the construction of two pharmaceutical factories to increase the supply of essential drugs and the purchase of raw materials needed for production of such drugs in order to ensure that supply to the most vulnerable sectors of society could be maintained. This is but one example of a number of assistance programs that were initiated for our neighbors

in Asia in the wake of the financial crisis in order to soften the impact of structural adjustment on the socially vulnerable sectors of society.

Conflict prevention is also a key factor in ensuring human security. In the context of conflict prevention and peace building, an example of Japan's activities is its cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme to promote the peace process in Tajikistan, for which funds from the Trust Fund for Human Security were used to aid the process of demobilization of troops in the Central Asian nation. Activities such as this are designed as community development programs in order to eliminate the divide that separates development programs from conflict prevention–related activities. In addition, in the case of Tajikistan, Japan was instrumental in establishing a women's college in the capital Dushanbe in order to provide an education to those girls and women who had been unable to study during the civil war. In this way, human security as a right for all, including the socially vulnerable, is becoming a reality.

One of the largest threats posed to human security is by infectious diseases. On the initiative of the Government of Japan, at the G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000, three infectious and parasitic diseases, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria were identified by the G8 leaders as representing a severe threat to human security. Since the Okinawa summit, Japan has been active in implementing measures to combat the three diseases, including making donations to the Global Fund to Stop TB and others.

The development and prosperity of the African continent has long been an agenda item for Japan's development policy, and as Prime Minister Mori emphasized on his visit to Africa in 2001, human security in Africa is a factor that will enable the people of that continent to take ownership of their development and realize their full potential in the global arena. To this end, Japan has now organized and hosted three meetings of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), which, through such initiatives as the Tokyo Agenda for Action, have had a positive effect in bringing the potential inherent in Africa closer to fulfillment.

Most recently, and in response to the series of events that began with the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, in January 2002, Japan hosted the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan. This meeting was a fund-raising event that succeeded in raising several billion dollars worth of pledges to help the people of Afghanistan rebuild their shattered country.

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All these and many other programs and initiatives by Japan are contributing to a 21st century in which all people can live with greater peace of mind, greater stability, and greater prosperity.

I would like to sound a note of caution on another issue, however. Recently, the concept of human security has been equated or associated with acts of humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention is a particularly individual-centered activity, allowing as it does for the international community to intervene into the sovereign affairs of a nation, from the viewpoint of supporting the rights of the individual or a group of individuals within that country. The concept of human security combined with humanitarian intervention has been particularly promoted by Canada and its allies in North America and Europe. However, humanitarian intervention—and I stress here humanitarian intervention, and not human security—is a deeply troubling concept for a number of developing nations, which are still embroiled in the process of nation building, the leaders of which are concerned that humanitarian intervention provides a passport for developed nations to meddle in the internal affairs of weaker developing nations. We should be careful that the true meaning of human security is not confused with the more controversial issue of humanitarian intervention.

I have now spoken about Japan's activities to date in developing a concept for human security. A challenge that still faces us is how this concept can continue to be developed and promoted. A valuable resource in this endeavor will be our younger generation, those who will be responsible for the future of Japan in the 21st century. The younger generation already have a developed sense of self and individuality, and, unlike their parents and grandparents, the young have a sense of spiritual satisfaction that surpasses material desires to "catch-up" with the West.

The youth of Japan now actively apply themselves to activities related to human security both at home and abroad. A notable example of this was the many young people who offered their services as volunteers in the relief activities after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake that devastated the city of Kobe. Young Japanese have also volunteered in such places as Kosovo, Macedonia, and Albania as members of nongovernmental organizations, and they have taken an active role in refugee relief activities in these war-torn countries of Central Europe. These admirable efforts by the youth of Japan give a human face to Japan's international humanitarian and relief efforts, and I am sure this trend will only continue to grow in the future.

Health and Human Security

The commitment of the young of Japan is something that we must continue to nurture. Approximately two years ago, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a symposium on human security. This symposium was attended by more than 1,500 young people. Indeed, the international symposium hosted by Japan in December 2001 also saw a similar number of young people in attendance, leaving standing room only for attendees—a phenomenon that while normal on Tokyo's commuter trains, is virtually unheard of in a serious international symposium. What was even more surprising about this incredible attendance at both conferences was the fact that despite the complicated and often-convoluted discussions these young people had come to listen to, over the course of the symposium no one lost interest and left. All of those who attended remained in the hall to the very end, even if they had no place to sit, listening intently to the content and progress of discussions.

While 1,500 is a significant number of attendees for an international conference, and is even more significant when you consider that this degree of attendance has been repeated in similar conferences, I would like to emphasize that this figure represents only a tiny proportion of the many millions of young people living in Japan today. We in this country possess a great resource and potential in our young people. I am sure that the great majority of these people share similar feelings concerning the importance of human security. They are our key to developing and maturing a national concept for human security based on peace diplomacy, and we must now make further efforts to see to it that their potential is harnessed and demonstrated in the international arena.

I hope that my words today have impressed upon you the importance of human security concepts as an operational tool for policy formulation and implementation. As Japan continues to develop its foreign policy for the 21st century, based on peaceful initiatives and active engagement in the international community, I am convinced that human security issues will continue to form a pivotal part of that policy. In closing, I would like to paraphrase a remark made by Prime Minister Obuchi in his speech at the First Intellectual Dialogue on Building Asia's Tomorrow. I believe that we must apply the five Cs to our continuing focus on human security. We must have the "courage" to see to it that human security remains a top priority for the international community. We must nurture "creativity" in the formulation of human security policy. We must view with "compassion" the needs of the socially vulnerable for whom human security can be an elusive target. We must "cooperate" fully with the international

community, including international organizations and civil society, to ensure that human security goals and initiatives are implemented to the greatest extent possible. And, finally, we must have the "confidence" that our endeavors will succeed in realizing a 21st century in which all people can live free from want and fear, in stability, prosperity, and peace of mind.