

**Bringing the daily concerns of people into policymaking resulting in tangible improvements
in people's lives and enhanced state-society collaboration**

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Human Security for All campaign (HS4A) Webinar

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Dear colleagues,
Honored Delegates of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my sincere pleasure to join you this afternoon.

I'm especially grateful for the opportunity to provide an overview of human security and its contribution not only as an important framework for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals but as a powerful and lasting approach to build stable and resilient societies.

For many, our world today is an insecure place, full of threats on many fronts.

Despite enormous investments in promoting peace and stability, violence and conflicts continue to undermine every aspect of the human family, driving millions of people from their homes and woefully undermining the transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda.

Similarly, every week, we are confronted by the devastating consequences of climate change. When natural disasters hit, their impact is direct and perilous, threatening every facet of what it means to enjoy human security, from the loss of social and economic security to the menace that comes when daily routines, personal networks and community bonds are broken.

And while scientific progress has been beneficial in some areas of the human experience, the solidarity we had hoped to be the hallmark of the IT revolution has been hijacked by misinformation and growing divisiveness, breaking kinships of unity and solidarity from the local, to the national, regional and the global.

Tragedies, when they overlap, can grow exponentially, spilling into all aspects of our lives, destroying entire communities, and crossing national borders.

As defined by the United Nations General Assembly, human security is a people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific, and prevention-oriented approach to strengthen the protection and empowerment of people faced with widespread and cross-cutting challenges.

At its core, human security is rooted in the notion that threats to people's survival, livelihood and dignity are seldom singular in nature.

Rather, a mix of factors come together to generate situations that are often complex, interlinked and cascading.

In such a world, operating within narrow silos is ineffective, flawed, and costly.

Instead, what is required is a holistic and integrated framework that brings together all key stakeholders from governments and parliamentarians to civil society – including those responsible for local planning, public financing, access to social services, rule of law, and good governance.

Moreover, human security is premised on the recognition that long-term sustainable results are more likely to be generated by activities that go beyond responding to an immediate crisis and instead address the root causes and the evolving dynamics behind current and future risks and challenges.

As such, human security underscores the need for joint analysis, planning and implementation amongst different sectors and entities, and provides the rationale and evidence on how best to lay the foundation for a risk-informed and inclusive sustainable development.

The benefits of such a framework are many as demonstrated through programmes supported by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security.

First, as a people-centered and context-specific framework, analyses based on the application of human security provide evidence-based information to design tailor-made responses that reflect the particular circumstances of a given country, district, or community.

This can be seen in UNTFHS-funded programmes in Turkmenistan, The Gambia, and Senegal where transparency and citizen participation were enhanced through regular consultative forums.

In Turkmenistan, for example, by establishing a two-way dialogue between youth and policymakers, representatives from the **Youth Reference Group** were better informed of the challenges faced by different groups and as such developed with policymakers context-specific initiatives to alleviate health and environmental insecurities, which were priorities for the local communities.

Similarly, in The Gambia and Senegal, transparency and citizen participation strengthened the capacity of **Village and Ward Development Committees**, resulting in more effective whole-of-society solutions by the respective governments, civil society, youth, women, and religious leaders.

Second, human security goes beyond single isolated policies or actions, leading to a series of policies including preventive measures, institutional reforms, sufficient public investment, broad and sustained political will, and the adoption of more modern and effective systems of information and intervention.

Subsequently, in Cambodia, a comprehensive human security assessment was conducted in close consultation with all relevant stakeholders to identify challenges and opportunities in Sihanouk province where rapid development had resulted in social exclusion and increased inequality and poverty amongst local citizens.

Based on this comprehensive and participatory assessment, a **Sustainable Inclusive and Smart City Action Plan** was developed and endorsed with the aim to enhance citizen and community participation in local policymaking; foster e-governance through accessible digital participation and effective grievance/redress mechanisms; improve access to social services; promote local entrepreneurship; reduce the digital divide and gender gap; and build Sihanoukville into a smart, sustainable, and inclusive city.

Third, human security enables decision-makers, in collaboration with local communities, to consider the appropriate mix of short, medium, and longer-term strategies for sustainable peace and development.

The human security programme in Somalia showed the benefits of this approach by developing urban profiles and facilitating evidence-based discourse on the needs and preferences of the different groups.

In this programme, **Community Action Plans** were developed based on a participatory, bottom-up planning process in which local government and communities, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as IDPs, returnees and women, discussed their respective situations and developed a shared vision for an integrated urban settlement that facilitated social cohesion; supported peaceful coexistence; and fulfilled their basic needs and rights.

Lastly, as seen in the Pacific Islands and the East Caribbean programmes, human security considers how different levels of governance should be included in order to address the varying drivers and underlying causes of risks and vulnerabilities at the local, national, regional, and global levels.

In the Pacific, through engaged and sustained dialogue, a regional framework on climate mobility was developed, bolstering cooperation, recognizing different national contexts, addressing various dimensions of mobility, and keeping the needs and vulnerabilities of people at the forefront.

In the Eastern Caribbean region, a similar approach is creating mechanisms and new tools for proactive policy coherence to better address human mobility in the context of intra-regional migration and displacement, where climate change, along with frequent natural disasters and environmental degradation, are putting immense pressure on people and governments.

Colleagues,

With a wealth of experience in more than 300 programmes in close to 100 countries, initiatives supported by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security and the application of human security are at the forefront of innovative solutions for advancing integrated and multi-stakeholder responses that

encourage early action, reduce vulnerabilities, and build resilience towards whole-of-society solutions that leave no one behind.

Let me close by congratulating IPU for organizing this timely webinar, and to underscore our commitment to this partnership.

I thank you for your attention and I look forward to our continued collaboration.