

Presentation by H.E. Mr. Shigeo Iwatani, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of Austria, at the OSCE Asia Contact Group meeting on June 7, 2013 titled "Human Security"

Ambassador O'Leary / Dear Chairperson,  
Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

## 1. Introduction

It is a great honor for me to once again be given an opportunity to make a presentation at the OSCE Asia Contact Group meeting this year. In my last speech in February, I touched upon the foreign policy priorities of the current Japanese government under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. In my presentation today, I would like to focus on one of the subjects to which Japan attaches particular value; namely, Human Security. As you will see during my presentation, the goals Human Security aims to achieve are quite similar to what the OSCE itself pursues.

## 2. Human Security

Before I begin, I would like to show you a short video illustrating the human security approach prepared by the Human Security Unit of the United Nations in order to introduce you to the concept.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Human security is, in essence, based upon the principle that a human being, irrespective of where he or she was born, is entitled to live a healthy, dignified and fulfilling life, and should be allowed to develop his or her ability to the maximum extent possible.

The order of the international community has changed dramatically over the years, especially after the end of the Cold War, and we have had to face many challenges that are cross-cutting and widespread such as poverty, environmental degradation, natural disasters, infectious diseases, international terrorism and abrupt economic and financial crises. This situation has brought us to the belief

that we need a new comprehensive approach to deal with such complex and multi-dimensional challenges.

The notion of Human Security first appeared in the Human Development Report of the UNDP in 1994. It emphasized the importance of focusing on the life and dignity of individuals in the context of development. Observing the Asian Financial Crisis of the late 1990s, the late former Japanese Prime Minister, Keizo Obuchi, announced his commitment to promote Human Security.

At the Millennium Summit in 2000, then Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented a report which introduced us to the key concepts of “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”, and which argued how to tackle eminent global challenges facing humankind. Based upon this report, then Japanese Prime Minister, Yoshiro Mori, declared that Japan would uphold Human Security as one of the pillars of its diplomacy, which led to two major initiatives by Japan. The first was the establishment of the Commission on Human Security co-chaired by Madame Sadako Ogata, UN High Commissioner for Refugees and later President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Professor and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen. The Commission thereafter published its final report “Human Security Now” in 2003. The other initiative was the establishment of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security to implement projects on the ground.

### 3. Significance of Human Security

The UN General Assembly resolution on Human Security, which was adopted by consensus last September, established a common understanding on the notion of Human Security. As outlined in the resolution, Human Security is an approach intended to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people. Human Security also calls for people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities. This resolution is an excellent basis for the implementation of Human Security in the activities of the United Nations, the Member States, and regional and international organizations.

Last month, the High-level Event on Human Security, aiming to follow up

on GA (=General Assembly) resolution 66/290 and mobilize support for the advancement of Human Security within the UN and beyond, successfully took place at the UN with around 500 participants. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UNDP Administrator, Miss Helen Clark, and Mme. Ogata, among others, attended this event and made keynote speeches. The event was meaningful since it allowed participants to share good practices and lessons learned from the application of Human Security on the ground and provided a prime opportunity to recognize the usefulness and added value of Human Security.

Japan's foreign policy is a policy for peace. Human Security plays a significant role in our efforts to bring about peace in the world. For example, Japan hosted the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) with the participation of heads of state of African states from 1 to 3 June this week. TICAD, which is co-organized by the Government of Japan, the African Union Commission (AUC), the UN, UNDP and the World Bank, deals with the persistent challenges which remain in African countries to developing robust and sustainable economies. In this regard, TICAD will be working to lay a solid foundation for the promotion of Human Security.

Human Security is also a crucial element of on-going consultations on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and will be so as well in the forthcoming discussions on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We believe that Human Security should be used as an overarching principle or comprehensive approach in the post-2015 development agenda so that it will be widely utilized.

As clearly stated in the UNGA Resolution, the notion of Human Security is distinct from the "responsibility to protect" (R2P). Governments retain the primary role for ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of their citizens. The responsibility of the international community is to complement and provide necessary support to Governments, upon their request, so as to strengthen their capacities, not to override them.

#### 4. Human Security and the OSCE

Ladies and gentlemen,

Up to today, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security has

financed the implementation of over 200 projects in around 80 countries, and has brought concrete and sustainable benefits to vulnerable people and communities threatened in their survival, livelihood and dignity. Human Security, as implemented by the Trust Fund, is an effective approach because it mobilizes multiple UN agencies and combines their wisdom and knowledge to implement projects in a comprehensive manner. I have taken this opportunity to distribute a list of the projects financed so far in the OSCE region, and I would also like to invite countries which have not yet done so to consider making voluntary contributions to this fund.

Human Security has a lot in common with the work of the OSCE. The OSCE is an organization which tries to ensure security in a comprehensive manner over three dimensions: the politico-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension and the human dimension. As I understand, the second dimension deals not only with the prosperity of nations, but also of individuals and communities. And the third dimension is crucial in realizing happiness of individuals in the OSCE countries.

The OSCE also engages in close cooperation with local communities at a grassroots level. Japan has provided assistance for some projects in cooperation with the offices of the OSCE in central Asia in such countries as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, for example assistance to the theatres in Kyrgyzstan to promote tolerance and peaceful inter-ethnic co-existence in south of the country. This assistance was part of our “grant assistance for grassroots human security projects,” which intends to enhance human security in developing countries and regions. We will continue this type of assistance in cooperation with the OSCE.

Human Security recognizes the inter-linkages between peace, development and human rights. We are convinced that freeing each individual from fear and poverty and enabling him or her to enjoy his or her rights as a human being will contribute to peace and prosperity. Thus, the goals of Human Security and the OSCE are held in common. I hope that this presentation has served to deepen your understanding on Human Security.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

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