

Presentation By

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“Putting People First: Values, Interests and Human Security.”

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Values and Interests

Foreign policy is the expression of national purpose abroad. Canadian foreign policy is values-based and interests-oriented. The decisions the government makes in foreign policy derive from the people we are, that is, from the values we share and the interests we pursue, - both. The purposes we pursue set at home frame the decisions we make externally. At the same time, events abroad and our reactions to them help shape decisions at home and, over time, affect our national character. We send our soldiers abroad to keep the peace and to enforce order because we believe we are our brother's keeper and because we feel a responsibility to protect the innocent.

We also have an interest in the preservation of peace and stability because we know that they are preconditions to our living our lives in untroubled security and prosperity in Canada. We promote trade and investment liberalization abroad because we want others, not least the billions caught in a poverty trap that affords them a dollar or two a day on which to live, to participate in the prosperity we have experienced in the past half century. We are also persuaded that a more prosperous world is in our interest because the better off people abroad become the better off we will be and the more we will be able to lift Canadian children and families out of poverty, the more we will be able to afford a 21st century health care system for Canadians, and the more we will be able to give our children a world-class education system.

We give development assistance and humanitarian relief to the poverty-ridden abroad because we believe we have an obligation to help those less fortunate than we. We also help them because we know that well-governed, successful societies abroad generate peace and prosperity for their peoples and regions and eliminate the conditions that incubate terrorism and disease and that generate refugee flows. We negotiate international environmental agreements because we believe the protection of our common natural heritage is a universal good. We also know that the decisions we make domestically to meet the challenges to our own environment, and to protect our own health, notably from global phenomena like climate change, will be undermined without the cooperation of others.

We promote the rule of law abroad, e.g., the International Criminal Court, because we believe all people should enjoy the same liberties and rights and protections as we do. We also know that the wider the ambit of the law, the more our own liberties and rights and protections are secure and the more Canadians working and travelling abroad are safe. Success in foreign policy, more than in most walks of life, depends to paraphrase Robbie Burns on our ability to see ourselves as others see us.

How do others see us? What does the world think when it thinks about Canada? When our representatives abroad speak, they are listened to first and foremost because of who they represent and who we are. For the most part, others consider us a successful, bilingual, multi-ethnic, law-abiding, cultivated and compassionate society, one that really does value diversity and that integrates diversity into unity of purpose as well as or better than any one else. We are

seen as a country that tries and, mostly, succeeds in respecting human rights and protecting minorities. We are considered to be a society that produces a quality of life and admirable standard of living for our citizens. We are known as a culture that generates remarkable excellence in literature, the arts and science. And we are respected for putting the security of people everywhere – human security – at the heart of our foreign policy.

What is Human security? Human Security is putting people at the heart of foreign policy. Human Security takes people, and their communities, rather than states, as their starting point. It recognizes that the security of states is essential, but not sufficient, to the safety and well-being of people. Conversely, it treats the safety of people as integral to international stability. It addresses itself to threats from both military and non-military sources. Finally, the human security approach considers security as a continuum from conflict prevention, to intervention, including military intervention if clearly necessary, to post-conflict peace-building.

What I have just given you is a Canadian definition. There are others:

- Boutros Boutros Ghali (Agenda for Peace - 1992)
- Abdul al Haq UNDP 1994
- Kofi Annan - 2001 - Economic Development, Social Justice, Environmental Protection, Democratisation, Disarmament and Respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law.
- Japan (Human Security Commission) - 2001

The Government of Canada sought a narrower definition - we wanted a norm to be established.

- A broad definition is useful - but it risks becoming more an essay topic than a galvanizing principle.
- Why Human Security?
- Why this new concept?

The issues that we group under the human security rubric are not, of course, brand new. Nor are the threats. Victimisation and impunity are as old as time. Infectious diseases are as old as the plague. Civil wars are as old as the idea of the nation-state itself, at least. Similarly, terrorism, international organised crime and environmental despoliation are more recent problems, but they also are hardly new. Human security is thus a shift in the angle of vision: a new way of seeing things and doing things. Some consider it Copernican in its ambition. It is, at least, a paradigm shift in the conduct of foreign policy. A (very) little history will help to illustrate the point.

The nation-state, which first emerged with the Treaty of Westphalia, was consolidated through the centuries. In an effort to stop re-living history, and the wars that seemed inherent in the concept, it was ultimately enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. States are the Charter's central organising principle. Sovereignty took on added strength and currency as colonial empires disintegrated and new nation-states were born, all anxious to make sure that

colonialism would remain a thing of the past. Sovereignty remains a mixed blessing at the United Nations to this day.

History is a messy and often competitive business, particularly with respect to ideas. Like nation states and the idea of national sovereignty, Human Security's roots can also be traced to Europe, this time to the middle of the 19th century. In parallel with the consolidation of national sovereignty, human security evolved with the liberalisation of society and the democratisation of war. This evolution began to be reflected, first through improvements in the ways in which armies treated each other's sick and wounded in the field. Later, in the 19th century, international agreements and conventions were negotiated to codify existing laws and customs of war and limit the use of certain new technologies. Statesmen such as Gladstone and then Wilson brought principle increasingly to bear on the power of statecraft.

The League of Nations ultimately failed but the idea of collective security became stronger than ever. Roosevelt was determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The creation of the U.N. brought further advances in creating a body of humanitarian law and practices, particularly in the field of human rights law. In fact, the UN Charter implies an affirmative obligation of member states to take joint and separate action to promote "universal respect for, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all." This development of a corpus of humanitarian law was carried further by the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Conventions against Genocide and against Torture, the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Protocols which strengthen the protection of victims of international (Protocol I) and non-international (Protocol II) armed conflicts. The process has recently taken a major step forward with the conclusion of the negotiations establishing the Statute of the International Criminal Court. Gradually, people are taking their place along side states as the focus of international relations.

Why has Canada led in the effort to codify this change? It is no accident, and should be no surprise, that Canada has taken a lead in defining and promoting the concept of human security. Our reliance on multilateral cooperation and a rule-based international system is rooted in this geostrategic reality. Human security is very much a "forward defence". The more the world shares our values, the less dangerous it is for us. The third reason has to do with Canadians themselves. Canadians are moved by humanitarian impulse, not by the cold-blooded calculations of national interest or the requirements of realpolitik.

- What are the prospects for Human Security?
- An effective UN is a vital Canadian interest
- The UN is at a cross-roads
- The Grounds for Intervention
 - 1) Humanitarian
 - 2) WMD/terrorism
 - 3) Democracy
- Responsibility to protect
 - Impact of Iraq

- impact of Haiti
- Human Security has never been more urgent a concept.

Conclusion:

- Canadian foreign policy derives from our values, from who we are
- It also seeks to pursue our interests
- There is no contradiction
- No need to choose
- These elements of policy come together in the management of global affairs.
- We are our borther's and sister's, keeper.
- And they are our keeper, as well.
- An enlightened foreign policy will seek both
- That is why, to answer the question posed for this speech, we should put people first.

Thank you.