[ABSTRACT]

Human security incorporates the concept of security and wellbeing in a holistic way and can be used as a scale for measuring the UN’s work: the higher the security of people, the better job the UN does. Consequently, this essay attempts to assess the UN from the perspective of the human security concept, dividing the UN’s tasks into two categories: to guard people from fear and from want. To prevent armed conflicts the UN has promoted diplomatic conflict resolution, brokered several treaties on arms control and established collective security. At the same time, resolving internal conflicts such as that in Syria remains a challenge, even though the RtoP doctrine has resolved this to some extent. The socioeconomic perspective of human security is strongly entangled with conflict prevention and post-conflict rebuilding. The essay supports the view that economic development and good governance are in strong relation and can reinforce one another. The UN has been actively promoting both through the Millennium Development Programme and has achieved success in some regions. However, its funds are limited which contracts its capacity to make a larger-scale change. The essay concludes that geopolitical interests and moderate funding limits the UN’s capacity, and although the UN’s merits should be recognised, they are not yet sufficient.
1. Introduction

Since its establishment in 1945, the United Nations (UN) has been making efforts to prevent armed conflicts and improve security and well-being around the globe. It has launched 87 peace-keeping missions between 1948 and 2012,\(^1\) has brokered important agreements to tackle global problems such as armament or climate change and has been implementing hundreds of development projects,\(^2\) to mention just a few of its achievements. Moreover, the UN committees have been providing forum for international negotiations, bringing world leaders together and promoting diplomatic conflict resolution. Overall, the UN’s contribution to a better world is unquestionable.

Whether the UN has done sufficiently enough is, however, a different question. While the majority of people seem to agree, that the UN is “having a positive influence in the world,”\(^3\) the sufficiency of its actions is often called into question. Criticisms cover a wide range of issues, such as the failure to protect civilians in conflicts such as Rwanda, Srebrenica or more recently in Syria, lagging behind with the Millennium Development Goals or failing to implement institutional reform in the Security Council. This essay is a humble attempt to assess how successful the UN has been in fulfilling its mandate to create a better world. Given the diversity of issues addressed by UN bodies, it is not easy to give a concise yet holistic assessment. As a guideline for analysis, this study will examine the UN’s achievements from the perspective of human security. This concept includes a broad range of issues, such as peacekeeping, poverty reduction or development, yet the focus remains on their effect on the security and welfare of human beings.

The human security concept recognises the intertwinement of imminent threat from violence and the long-term socioeconomic hazards, arguing that poverty and the violation of human rights often breed uprisings, ethnic conflicts or terrorism. Accordingly, this essay tries to assess the UN’s achievement in eliminating both kinds of hazards. The first section of the paper introduces the concept of human security and discusses the connection between conventional and non-conventional aspects of security. The second section analyses the UN’s role in protecting people in armed conflicts with particular focus on the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ doctrine. The third section focuses on poverty, one of the most wide-spread long-term hazards to human security. It tries to discover the links between economic development and conflict prevention and the role of the Millennium Development Programme. The final section concludes the essay by pointing out two main factors limiting the UN’s capacity: lack or conflict of political interests and limited funding.

\(^{1\text{ }}\) (List of Peacekeeping Operations 1948 - 2012)
\(^{2\text{ }}\) (Human Development Report, 2011)
\(^{3\text{ }}\) (U.N. Continues to get Positive, though Lower, Ratings With World Public., 2006)
2, The Concept of Human Security

Human security incorporates the concept of security and wellbeing in a holistic way and can be used as a scale for measuring the UN’s work: the higher the security of people, the better job the UN does. One of the first contributions to the concept of human security was made by the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) ‘Human Development Report’ published in 1994. It considers both the "freedom from want" and the "freedom from fear" as components of human security, defining the concept as:

“Human security is people-centred. It is concerned with how people live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to market and social opportunities and whether they live in conflict or in peace.”

This concept gained momentum particularly in Japan, which had long been having a more complex idea of security. Prime Minister Ohira was one of the first advocates of “comprehensive security” (sōgō anzen hoshō) towards the end of the 70s, which included both military and civilian dimensions of security, such as disturbances in trade or natural disasters. His successor, Prime Minister Suzuki, carried on this approach and established the Comprehensive Security Cabinet Committee. Consequently when the UN started to develop a similar approach to human security, Japan was one of its most enthusiastic supporters. In order to institutionalise the concept within the UN framework, the Japanese Government sponsored the establishment of the Commission on Human Security in 2001.

The Commission has been co-chaired by two prominent scholars: Amartya Sen and Sadako Ogata. The Commission published an in-debt study in 2003, called the Human Security Final Report. The report defines human security as:

“Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms—freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.”

As it can be inferred from the definition the extension of protection from imminent to long-term threats lies in the core of the concept. Not only because unfavourable human conditions are likely to result in violence, but perhaps more importantly because people living among such conditions are not secure. One’s life can be threatened by violence, but also by poverty, hunger, diseases, lack of sanity, industrial pollution or several other hazards which must be addressed.

4 (Human Development Report, 1994)
5 (Hook, Gilson, Hughes, & Dobson, 2012)
Newman points out two important aspects of the concept: positive freedom and normativity. Human security attributes economic rights to people by calling for the elimination of poverty, for the right to work or for the right to a clean environment. By doing so human security extends the state’s or the international community’s responsibility from negative to positive obligations. In other words, it does not only require governments to refrain from harming people, but obliges them to provide people certain conditions. While it usually does not require much economic commitment from a government to refrain from doing something, a state might lack resources to grant economic rights. Put it another way, a state can be held accountable for torturing its people, but could hardly be for not providing universal health care. However, when considering the international community rather than states, the distinction between positive and negative obligations is not primarily financial. Committing troops and equipment to launch a humanitarian intervention might be more costly than development programmes. Thus when it comes to the international community’s obligations, the imminence of threat would be a more adequate basis of distinction. While people in armed conflict are in immediate danger, the threat that springs from the lack of economic development is long-term. However, as Figure 1 indicates, the two dimensions of human security are interrelated. Conflict prevention and rebuilding are best achieved by the promotion of economic development and state building. In general, the less people suffer from economic needs, the less tension there is in the society. It follows that economic development and conflict prevention are strongly related. This aspect will be discussed further in the fourth section of the essay.

Human security shifts the focus from the realist concept of a state-centred security to the normative concept of a human-centred security. The realist view considers international relations in terms of the interaction among states. It argues that states are self-interested, rational actors whose primary aim is to ensure their own security. A normative view, on the other hand, rejects that states should act only out of self-interest. It puts emphasis on the importance of norms and ideas in shaping international relations, such as decolonisation or the spread of human rights, and recognises the role of actors other than states, such as NGOs, international organisations or civilian movements. At the same time, the human security concept does not reject the importance of state security. Indeed, it reinforces the need to create

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7 (Newman, 2010)
secure international and domestic environment at the first place, as people can only be safe in such environment.

In sum, human security extends the scope of threats the UN should provide protection from. Section 3 analyses the UN’s contribution to eliminating threats from armed conflicts and section 4 discusses the its role in promoting development as a way to eliminate socioeconomic hazards.

3, Freedom from Fear

(i) Collective Security and the Prevention of Interstate War

The most obvious threat to a population is the outbreak of war. In order to assess the UN’s contribution to security, first its achievements in preventing armed conflicts should be looked at.

Until World War II ‘armed conflict’ meant primarily interstate war. As the text of the UN Charter reflects, its drafters anticipated that this would remain the same in the post-World War era. In order to prevent interstate aggression, the UN Charter establishes collective security. Collective security deters countries from attacking another by making a credible threat that the international community would take collective action to protect the state under attack.

While collective security works well in theory, putting it into practice has some limitations. For example, the Charter does not set specifically to what extent individual states have to contribute to these missions and thus it opens the way for free riders. Some states might be reluctant to contribute troops and equipment or to finance UN missions, but enjoy the benefits of collective security. Conversely, it could be debated to what extent collective security works against dominant states. Cases in consideration are, for example, the USA’s 2003 invasion of Iraq or the Russian assault on Georgia in 2008. Given the difficulty to sanction states as powerful as the USA or Russia, collective security is inevitably biased towards them. Consequently, while collective security can be a strong deterrent against interstate aggression, the political interest of dominant states might alter its objectivity.

The other component of the UN’s interstate conflict prevention is providing national leaders opportunity for diplomatic discussion. The UN framework creates a forum for leaders to conduct diplomatic talks and resolve disagreements at the conference table. This was particularly important during the Cold War, and it proved to be an effective way of mediation between the USA and the USSR. Moreover, the number of interstate wars has been generally low since the end of WWII, which to some extent could indicate the success of the UN framework.

8 (Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg, & Strand, 2002)
Despite of the decreasing number of interstate wars, the end of the 21st century witnessed some of the most hideous ethnic conflicts of modern history. The disintegration of Yugoslavia did not only produce a cruel civil war, but it also resulted in a large scale ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1995 the Srebrenica massacre occurred in front of the very eyes of UN Peacekeepers. A year earlier, in 1994 thousands of Tutsis were killed by the Hutu in the Rwandan genocide while the UN hesitated to intervene. These events shocked the world and stimulated a debate on what the UN’s role was and how it was to fulfil it in the post-Cold War era.

(ii) Post-Cold War Challenges

The new era of civil wars, genocides and international terrorism has been posing a challenge to the UN. The UN arguably failed its task in the Bosnian war and the Rwandan genocide. In the 1998 Kosovo conflict humanitarian intervention did happen, but the decision was made outside the UN framework. NATO airstrikes, which quickly brought the conflict to an end and rescued a significant number of Kosovars, occurred without the direct permission of the Security Council (SC). Most recently, the international community faces difficulties in addressing the Syrian conflict in which thousands have lost their lives and the atrocities do not seem to cease.

The problem with the shift of conflicts from the international to the domestic scene is that it weakens the international community’s legitimacy to intervene based on the text of the UN Charter. Intervention in domestic conflict violates state sovereignty, something recognised and guarded by the Charter. On the other hand, non-intervention results in a large scale loss of life and thus fails the UN’s obligation to humanity. The sovereignty versus human rights debate is particularly sharp among SC Permanent Members (P5). Russia and China consider sovereignty the most elemental right of states and generally rejects intervention as they perceive it illegitimate interference with a state’s domestic affairs. Conversely, the USA, the UK and France in most cases give priority to the protection of the population even on the cost of infringing state sovereignty. While intervention is not always the right solution, the SC should be able to authorise it when it is severely needed. As it is not able to do so due to the insistence to non-intervention of some P5 members, the UN’s capacity to protect people is limited.

Even if an intervention is authorised its success depends on whether there is enough willingness and capacity. While the USA has played key role in most of the humanitarian interventions launched around the globe, it is becoming increasingly overstretched and cannot be expected to be the “world’s policeman” all the time. Furthermore, relying on a limited number of states for carrying out intervention may also raise the problem of selectivity. For example, intervention was launched very fast when Iraq invaded Kuwait a major oil exporter, but not when genocide occurred in Rwanda. While UN interventions are launched based on humanitarian consideration, states are more likely to contribute when there is also a national interest at stake. However, such selectivity might undermine the UN’s credibility. It has been suggested that the UN should have its own permanent mercenary or at least a rapid reaction
force. While it would solve the problem of not having enough states contributing to missions, capacity would remain a problem. UN forces could get over-engaged just as the USA. Moreover, financing the personnel and the equipment for such a mercenary might prove more difficult than recruiting states on ad-hoc basis. Consequently, the UN remains dependent on member states’ willingness to intervene.

The veto power of the P5 and the dependence on member states’ willingness to contribute makes UN intervention in armed conflicts politicised and thus decreases its credibility.

(iii) Responsibility to Protect

Scholars and policy makers have been trying to find a solution for the problems discussed above. Sponsored by Canada, the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) doctrine has been developed by noted scholars and diplomats, such as Gareth Evans or Mohammad Sahnoun. Firstly, the doctrine shifts the sovereignty vs. human rights debate to the idea of ‘sovereign responsibility,’ a state’s obligation to protect its citizens from every kind of hazard starting from armed conflict to natural disasters. It gives the state the primary responsibility for its citizens’ safety but calls for alternatives if the state fails to fulfil this obligation. Secondly, by making the protection of civilians a responsibility, it implicitly obliges the international community to intervene when it is necessary. By doing so it tries to prevent some states blocking intervention when it is needed. In short, it argues that the international community has a responsibility rather than a right to intervene.

On the 2005 World Summit the responsibility to protect doctrine was successfully integrated into the Outcome Document (WSOD). Under paragraph 138 “each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” and paragraph 139 states that:

“we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

The WSOD was followed by two resolutions which reaffirmed the international community’s commitment to RtoP. Resolution 1674 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (POC) and Resolution 1894 was adopted by the SC in 2006 and 2009 respectively. Both resolutions deal primarily with the responsibility of the state concerned, but also recognise that if the state is unable or unwilling to mitigate the situation it “may constitute a threat to

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9 (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, 2001)
10 (World Summit Outcome, 2005)
11 (World Summit Outcome, 2005)
international peace and security, and reaffirms in this regard its readiness to consider such situations and, where necessary, to adopt appropriate steps.”

Since 2005, the RtoP has become a mainstream concept and most likely it will continue to influence the future of peacekeeping. Its actual application has been successful in some cases, but less so in others. The next sub-section discusses some of those.

(iv) Case Study: Recent Humanitarian Crises

The RtoP doctrine has been evoked in connection to Darfur, Myanmar, Libya, Côte d’Ivoire and Syria. Chart 1 gives a brief summary of the cases.

The application of the RtoP doctrine in Myanmar was rejected and the crisis was elevated by ASEAN taking responsibility. A resolution based on RtoP for the deployment of peacekeeping forces to Darfur was first passed in 2006. However, the actual implementation suffered from shortages in capability and made the adoption of a second resolution necessary in 2007, which increased the number of peacekeepers. Military intervention was carried out both in Libya and in Côte d’Ivoire and succeeded in eliminating the immediate threat to civilians. Peacekeeping operations are deployed in both countries by date.

The current conditions in Syria would arguably qualify for authorising intervention based on the RtoP doctrine. According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Chart 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Darfur</th>
<th>Myanmar</th>
<th>Côte d’Ivoire</th>
<th>Libya</th>
<th>Syria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td>Gross human rights abuses of Darfurian civilians by Janjaweed militias</td>
<td>Government blocked the delivery of aid to the victims of Cyclone Nargis</td>
<td>Violent clashes over the result of presidential elections</td>
<td>Violent oppression of rebels by the Gaddafi regime, mass abuse of human rights</td>
<td>Violent oppression of rebels by the Assad regime, mass abuse of human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC allowing intervention</td>
<td>yes (Res. 1706, Res. 1769)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes (Res. 1975)</td>
<td>yes (Res. 1973)</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Taken</td>
<td>Deployment of African Union – UN peacekeepers</td>
<td>Relief delivered by ASEAN</td>
<td>French-led military intervention</td>
<td>UK-France-led NATO intervention</td>
<td>sanctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome/ Situation today</td>
<td>AU – UN peacekeepers deployed (UNAMID)</td>
<td>Humanitarian aid delivered</td>
<td>UN peacekeepers deployed (UNOCI)</td>
<td>Gaddafi regime overthrown. UN support mission deployed (UNSMIL)</td>
<td>mass abuse of human rights continues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Resolution 1674, 2006)
more than 60,000\textsuperscript{13} people have been killed and 1.5 to 2.5 million\textsuperscript{14} had to leave their homes. The Arab League and the High Commissioner have called for intervention based on the RtoP doctrine. However, Russia and China vetoed intervention both in 2011 October and in 2012 February:

\begin{quote}
\textit{“The resolution did not pass on 4 February, despite support from 13 Security Council Members, including India and South Africa who had abstained in October 2011. In opposition to the Arab League endorsed resolution, Russia and China exercised their veto power for a second time.”}\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

As the current crisis in Syria suggests, the UN still faces challenges in responding to domestic conflicts and consequently it is limited in protecting people. Yet, the UN’s role in conflict resolution should not be underscored. Out of the five crises listed above, it directly intervened and mitigated three (Darfur, Côte d’Ivoire, Libya), diplomatically contributed to the resolution of one (Myanmar) and is trying to find a solution for the most recent one (Syria). While UN peacekeeping is not sufficient in some cases, it certainly makes contribution to a safer world.

\textit{Reaction} is, nevertheless, only one part of the UN’s peacekeeping profile. When criticising the UN for being unable to resolve full-blown armed conflicts, it should not be forgotten that many disputes do not reach that stage thanks to the UN’s \textit{preventive} actions. Furthermore, post-conflict \textit{rebuilding} and permanent peacekeeping are also important components of maintaining peace. The following subsection discusses these components.

\textit{(iv) Prevention and Rebuilding}

Prevention occurs on multiple platforms: on the global and on the local scale. On the global level it occurs through providing a forum for national leaders and facilitating diplomatic conflict resolution, as mentioned earlier. Global-scale conflict prevention also occurs through treaties. The UN has brokered several multilateral agreements which promote disarmament or control warfare. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, for example, has been signed by all but three states (Israel, India, Pakistan) with only one, North Korea withdrawing in 2003 and consequently has played a major role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The UN has also championed several treaties on the control of weapons of mass destruction, on trade in arms and on transparency in armament, to mention just a few. From this aspect the UN fulfils an important role in guarding global security.

On the local level UN envoys can facilitate discussion between parties with conflicting interests. The United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) conducts on-ground monitoring, assesses potentially evolving conflicts and reports to the Secretary General. The SG might engage in conflict resolution himself or dispatch UN envoys to conduct on-site

\textsuperscript{13} (Data suggests Syria death toll could be more than 60,000, says UN human rights office, 2013)
\textsuperscript{14} (2013 UNHCR country operations profile - Syrian Arab Republic)
\textsuperscript{15} (Crisis in Syria, 2012)
mediation. Efficiency of a UN mission can be increased through the involvement of third party actors, such as NGOs, who might have a more profound knowledge of the local conditions. Third parties may also play an important role in early warning. In Rwanda, for example, NGOs had warned ahead about the emerging genocide. In short, there are different means available for on-site mediation before an armed conflict actually erupts. The UN has used these means well in some cases (e.g. preventing military coup in Guinea in 2009-2010) but less so in others (e.g. the Rwandan genocide).

Rebuilding closely connects to the wider aspect of human security, the freedom from want. The short-term goal of peacekeeping operations (PKOs) is preventing the re-escalation of a conflict. The longer term goal of these missions is to support state building. Building a stable, preferably democratic state based on the rule of law is the first step to create an environment fertile for development. This also links together conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. In order to avoid having a country which fluctuates between UN maintained “quasi-peace” and full-blown armed conflict, peacekeepers need to promote profound stability. Stability has many components, for example strong institutions, legitimate government, respect of human rights, rule of law and economic development. As Figure 1 has indicated earlier, the connection between the security and welfare dimensions of the UN’s mandate is linked together through state building and development. While PKOs are generally considered to belong to the military dimension, their work contributes to the welfare dimension by creating an environment in which development is possible. This will be discussed further in the following section.

4, Freedom from Want

(i Poverty as Security Hazard

Economic stability is a necessary requirement of achieving human security. As the Final Report states:

“When people’s livelihoods are deeply compromised—when people are uncertain where the next meal will come from, when their life savings suddenly plummet in value, when their crops fail and they have no savings—human security contracts.”

According to the 2012 MDG Report almost 1.4 billion lived in extreme poverty (on less than 1.25 USD a day) in 2008. That is one fifth of the world population. Poverty rates are highest in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 47% of the population lives in extreme poverty.

Breaking the cycle of poverty is not easy. Economic empowerment cannot be achieved simply by distributing aids; people need stable employment with decent wages for achieving self-sufficiency. However, in an underdeveloped economy the availability of stable

17 (The Millennium Development Goals Report, 2012)
18 (The Millennium Development Goals Report, 2012)
employment is low. Incentives for foreign companies to set up factories are very often limited to cheap labour force, as workers are less competitive from other perspectives due to the lack of public education and healthcare. Obviously, a country is unable to provide such welfare benefits without substantial funding. Due to the scarcity of highly-skilled labour and the lack of technological development, industry remains reliant on the primary sector which is less profitable than the secondary or tertiary sectors. Consequently, it does not generate enough revenue to finance a comprehensive welfare state. Among such conditions political stability is also fragile, as poverty and the lack of education make people more prone to agitation. This is where the welfare dimension of human security connects to the military dimension: breaking the cycle of poverty is an important component of conflict prevention.

(ii) The Millennium Development Programme

In 2000 the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which sets the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Declaration defines eight areas where improvements should be achieved by 2015, such as poverty reduction or environmental

Chart 2
source: (Our Projects)

Top recipients of budget for projects with a focus on Poverty Reduction & MDG (left) and Democratic Governance (right).
Despite of the determination, the realisation of the MDGs did not seem to proceed well by 2010. In order to increase the efficiency of development programmes, the 2010 UNDP summit decided on the implementation of the so called MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF). The MAF aims to identify the ‘bottleneck’ of country-specific problems and target them more effectively. In other words, the framework examines why some development programmes are unsuccessful and, after identifying the core reason for failure, it tries to relaunch the programme with a new approach based on international best-practice. Thanks to the MAF, development programmes have higher potential to succeed and funding is also spent more efficiently.

In 2011 there were 6154 UNDPs implemented worldwide. The budget amounted to $5,811.69 million, 29% of which was spent on projects targeting democratic governance, another 29% on poverty reduction and MDG achievement, 28% on crisis prevention and recovery and 14% on environment protection and sustainable development. As it can be observed on Chart 2, projects targeting democratic governance and poverty reduction often go in tandem. For instance, the top three funding recipient countries in both cases are Argentina, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan. Overall, 12 countries out of 20 are on both lists. At the same time, the remaining two categories - environmental protection and crisis prevention - show fewer similarities to other groups.

The reason for having the same countries in the first two categories could be explained by the interrelatedness of development and governance (see Figure 2). In most cases effective economic development requires proper governance. Unstable states are the extreme examples, where production can be disturbed even by violent conflicts. But more generally, conditions such as the absence of the rule of law or dysfunctional institutions also make it difficult for entrepreneurs to start their business. Particularly semi-authoritarian regimes tend provide access to utilities only for certain circles, not necessarily based on business talent. Among such conditions the economic gap between rich and poor remains large and social mobility low. Even the distribution of development aid is strongly related to the accountability of the administrative bodies. As it follows, good governance is necessary for economic development.

Conversely, the modernisation theory argues that economic development leads to democratisation. Lipset finds a strong correlation between economic development and

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19 (Our Projects)
democratisation, which he explains by the societal consequences of development. He argues that “economic development, producing increased income, greater economic security, and widespread higher education, largely determines the form of class struggle, by permitting those in the lower strata to develop longer time perspectives and more complex gradualist views on politics.”

In other words, a wider layer of middle class results in a more critical electorate with higher expectations towards governance.

While it can be debated which is the cause and the consequence, the correlation of economic development and good governance is well established. UNDP targets both the political and economic dimensions of development, which makes them more likely to succeed.

(iii) Funding of UNDPs

Besides the right approach, sufficient funding of the development programmes is also important. Regular resources are just a small part of the UNDP budget. It receives the most significant amount of funding through voluntary contributions from countries and charity funds. Japan is the most prominent supporter of UNDPs, with $510.30 million making up about 10% of the total budget. The European Union and the European Commission together contributes almost the same amount as Japan. The USA and Norway are also important supporters, although their voluntary contributions amount to half and quarter of that of Japan respectively.

Despite of these contributions, the UN budget remains limited. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stated in an interview in 2012:

“Last year, global military spending reportedly exceeded $1.7 trillion – more than $4.6 billion a day, which alone is almost twice the UN's budget for an entire year. This largesse includes billions more for modernizing nuclear arsenals decades into the future.”

Although it is reasonable for states to increase their security, it should be kept in mind that armament is not the only, and perhaps not the most effective way to do so. As it has been stated several times in this paper, poverty and oppression cause violence. Eliminating those through the promotion of economic development and democracy could be more effective and indeed less costly than developing weapons for deterrence. There are three main arguments for that. Firstly, as the democratic peace theory claims democracies do not go to war with each other. The number of democracies has significantly grown in the past half century and in fact none of those countries which democratised has launched war against another democracy. Secondly, developed economies have become so strongly interdependent, that the disincentives for waging war and breaking economic ties with one or more trading partners are too high. Thirdly, aggressors are more likely to find followers among people who have

20 (Lipset, 1959)
21 (Our Projects)
22 (‘The World is over-armed and peace is under-funded’, 2012)
‘nothing to lose.’ A better educated and generally better-off population is less likely to resolve to violence both on the domestic and on the international level. Considering these three aspects, the promotion of economic development and democracy seems to be a better approach for achieving security. The EU, for example, has recognised this and has been actively promoting its values mostly in its neighbourhood but globally as well.

Better financing for UNDPs is thus a crucial point for increasing the UN’s effectiveness. It is easy to point a finger on the UN for, for example not meeting the MDGs, but given the limitation of its resources it should be questioned how much can rationally be expected from it.

5, Conclusion

This paper tried to assess the UN’s work from the perspective of its contribution to increasing human security, dividing hazards into two categories: imminent and long-term threats. The findings can be summarised as follows.

The UN has achieved some major successes in protecting people in and from armed conflicts, but it still faces challenges. During the Cold War the UN helped preventing the outbreak of war between the superpowers and brokered important treaties on disarmament. Through collective security and the promotion of diplomatic conflict resolution it has contributed to decreasing the number of interstate wars in the past decades. Domestic conflicts however, increasingly pose a challenge. Although the RtoP doctrine has helped resolving this to some extent, it seems yet to provide complete solution, particularly in cases where political stances of the P5 are in conflict.

The socioeconomic perspective of human security is strongly entangled with conflict prevention and post-conflict rebuilding. Stabilising political institutions and promoting welfare are effective ways of preventing violence. The essay supports the view that economic development and good governance are in strong relation and are likely to reinforce one another. The UN has been actively promoting them through UNDPs and has achieved success in some regions. However, its funds are limited which contracts its capacity to make a larger-scale change. The essay suggests that spending on development programmes might contribute more to global security than the excessive spending on armament.

In conclusion, the UN has protected the security and welfare of people to a considerable extent. While its merits should be recognised, they are hardly sufficient. The UN’s capacity very often remains restricted by political and financial factors. At the same time, the UN has recognised its weaknesses and improved itself in many fields, for example it adopted the RtoP doctrine to better answer to domestic conflicts and introduced the MAF to make UNDPs more effective. It can be expected that the UN will develop further and provide even better solutions for the problems of our century. As long as people die in armed conflicts, suffer from hunger or their rights are severely trumped, the UN needs to continue enhancing itself.
Bibliography


