



INTERVENTION BY MR. ASHOK BHAN, MEMBER OF INDIAN DELEGATION, DURING THE 2008 PARLIMENTARY HEARING AT THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE SUBJECT 'TOWARDS EFFECTIVE PEACEKEEPING AND THE PREVENTION OF CONFLICT DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS' SESSION III – INTEGRATING A HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH IN THE WORK OF THE UN AT THE 63RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 21, 2008



Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank you for giving me the floor. Let me also thank the participants for their useful insights into the emerging concept of human security.

Mr. Chairman,

The concept of human security, though not clearly defined, encompasses a wide spectrum of issues with both domestic and international dimensions. On the one hand, it has been conceptualized as freedom from want, thereby calling on States to secure basic economic, social and cultural rights. On the other hand, it also includes freedom from fear, which comprises the securing of all aspects of civil and political rights, including protection of life in situations of terrorism and international and internal conflicts.

Mr. Chairman,

The major international challenge of today is not prevention of war or conflict, but tackling of unresolved chronic social and economic challenges like economic shortages and social deprivation, which has adversely affected the livelihood and survival of individuals. Having said this, I would like to add that the international community cannot handle social and economic challenge from a compartmentalized perspective, which is often the order of the day in the UN system. Instead, a comprehensive human security approach may help in handling the problem, as people's insecurities are mutually interconnected and responses cannot be effectively implemented in compartments, without proper coordination.

Furthermore, the international debate on human security should incorporate a greater role of States and Governments in national decision-making, as in today's world, terrorism, ethnic conflicts, social disintegration, pollution, organised crimes, international migration, financial crises and health epidemics, are no longer isolated events, confined within national borders. Therefore, the concept of human security needs to be gradually realized through national effort and international cooperation, in keeping with the economic and other capabilities of States. While doing so, it must not be forgotten that a state has primary responsibility not only for the protection and promotion of all human rights of its citizens, but also for providing safe, healthy and secure environment to live in.

Mr. Chairman,

Parliamentarians have one of the key roles to play in this regard. As the ultimate law making authority in a country, Parliamentarians could be encouraged to develop a vision and knowledge of the complementary nature of various dimensions of human security, be it peace and security, development or promotion and protection of human rights of its citizens. They could focus on creating legal basis for sustainable development of the individual and the larger community.

Mr. Chairman,

In India, we, as parliamentarians, have been able to successfully enact laws and programmes in all spheres of human development. We have also successfully amended

our constitution to establish local governance at village levels, called Panchayats, thereby, encouraging empowerment of grassroots and institutionalization of inclusive decision making for national development programmes. We have also been able to enforce peace and security along with ensuring promotion and protection of human rights of all citizens by effectively overseeing the activities of government. With the further evolution of this concept of human security, we will be in a better position to conceptualize our efforts in a more focused manner and to bridge gaps in providing an adequate standard of living to our people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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