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Prevention and Human Security – from Protecting the State to Protecting the Person

Prevenција i sigurnost ljudi – od zaštite države ka zaštiti pojedinca*

Sažetak

Na koncept sigurnosti se već duže vremena radije gledalo u užem smislu. "Sigurnost" je najviše smatrana kao "sigurnost države", uglavnom kao sigurnost od agresije izvana. Prema tome, na "sigurnost" i "odbranu" se često gledalo kao na skoro identične pojmove, i na "sigurnosnu politiku" kao skoro identičnu "odbrambenoj politici". Ovaj koncept "vanjske sigurnosti" je imao odgovarajući izraz u "unutrašnjoj sigurnosti". To znači ne samo zaštita države od vanjskih prijetnji, nego i prijetnji iznutra. Ovo se odnosi na akcije koje bi imale svoje korijene unutar države i njenog društva, i koje bi u velikoj mjeri prijetile postojanju države, ili na kraju njenom političkom sistemu. Skoro paralelno sa ovim razvojem širenja shvatanja sigurnosti izvan nivoa države ka međunarodnom nivou, tj. da kažemo "iznad nivoa pojedinačne države", shvatanje sigurnosti je takođe počelo da se širi ka "nižem nivou", naime u porastu prema sigurnosti pojedinačnog ljudskog bića. Ovaj proces je išao paralelno sa promijenjenim shvatanjem uloge pojedinca, gdje je koncept "ljudske sigurnosti" dobio svoje korijene.

Ključne riječi: *prevencija, sigurnost ljudi, zaštita države, zaštita pojedinca*

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Summary

The concept of Security has for a long time been seen in rather narrow terms. "Security" was mostly seen as "security of the state", mainly as security from external aggression. Thus, "security" and "defense were frequently seen as almost identical terms, and "security policy" as almost identical with "defense policy". This concept of "external security" had a corresponding term in "internal security". It meant to protect the state not only from external threats, but also against threats from within. This referred to actions which would have had their origins within the State and its society, and would have threatened the very existence of the state, or at least of its political system. Almost parallel to this development of widening the understanding of security beyond the level of the State to the international level, so to say "above" the level of the individual State, the understanding of security also began to widen to a "lower" level, namely increasingly towards the security of the individual human being. This process went in parallel to the changed understanding of the role of the individual person, where the concept of "human security" has got its origins.

Key words: *prevention, human security, protecting the state, protecting the person*

1. Introduction

The concept of Security has for a long time been seen in rather narrow terms. "Security" was mostly seen as "security of the state", mainly as security from external aggression. Thus, "security" and "defense were frequently seen as almost identical terms, and "security policy" as almost identical with "defense policy".

This concept of "external security" had a corresponding term in "internal security". It meant to protect the state not only from external threats, but also against threats from within. This referred to actions which would have had their origins within the State and its society, and would have threatened the very existence of the state, or at least of its political system.

It depended to a large degree on the political perspective of the States' ruling élites² what they regarded as such threats. Liberal democracies would have had a rather narrow definition, concerning in principle such violent acts as riots, upheavals, terrorism, and the like. Less democratic systems would also have regarded less violent actions as threatening to security, as for example verbal or written criticism of the State ideology, or even political jokes. This was true for example of the reactionary regimes established on Europe after the short-lived bourgeois revolution in 1848. It was even more true for the dictatorships which emerged in Europe in the early 20th century and in some parts dominated the political landscape almost until the end of the century. Fascist, national-socialist and communist regimes alike saw threats to security even in the slightest deviation from the State party's dominating ideology. It is no coincidence that the instruments of repression in these regimes had frequently an explicit reference to "security" in their names – be it the "Committee for State Security" (KGB) in the former Soviet Union; the "Ministry for State Security" ("Staatssicherheit – Stasi") in the former GDR, "Securitate" in Romania, or the Office for State Security (UDBA) in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).

It is obvious that such a repressive understanding of security was in reality also a sign of these systems' internal weaknesses. The less a political system has been based on consensus by its citizens, the more it has to rely on repression. While the degree of repression varied within these groups of States, this particular fact became visible when the regimes finally crumbled at the end of last century.

Within these traditional views, the individual person was seldom recognized as an entity of its own but mostly defined by the group it belonged to – be it as in feudal systems as the "property" of the landowner³, be as defined by the nation (as in the national States of the 19 and 20 century), by race (as in German National Socialism) or by the class (as in the "socialist" States).

² Frequently, the States elites identified themselves with the State. Confer the statement by the French King "I am the State" – L'état – c'est moi

³ A relict of this perception is still alive in identifying a British citizen as "her Queen's subject"

However, the understanding both of “security” and of the status of the individual person went through significant changes in the course of the 20 century.

With regard to the concept of “security”, it overcame the narrow understanding as “security of the state” in two ways. One concerned the widening from national towards including international security. It became visible already by the outbreak of World War I that the traditional idea of power politics, relying mostly on military power, had led not to more security of the States concerned but into a horrible war. The States’ reaction was to increasingly rely on international institutions which they created for that purpose. The first one, the League of Nations, was built in a rather idealistic, pacifist concept. It emphasized peace and disarmament as well as peaceful means of resolving international disputes. However, it did not yet rule out war as an “instrument of political intercourse with other means” in the Clausewitzian sense.

The real breakthrough in this respect came with the foundation of the United Nations in 1945. Again, they were created by the then victorious coalition of States as an instrument to prevent further wars. However, in contrast to the pacifist approach undertaken in the creation of the League of Nations, its creation reflects the experience that peaceful means to maintain peace⁴ might not be sufficient, but that it might also require forceful means to restore peace⁵. More important for the purposes of this paper, however, is the frequent reference to “international peace and security” within the United Nations’ charter. Indeed, the very purpose of the United Nations has been defined as “to maintain international peace and security”. It is a reflection of the fact that war is a threat not only to the individual State but also to the international system of States as such. Thus, the decision to use war, or military force in general, has been explicitly ruled out by the United Nations Charter⁶. The only exceptions recognized by the charter are the exercise of the legitimate natural right of self-defense⁷, and actions

⁴ As enshrined in chapter VI of the United Nations’ Charter

⁵ As enshrined in chapter VII of the United Nations’ charter

⁶ Art. 2, par. 4 explicitly prohibits the “threat or use of force”

⁷ Art. 51 of the Charter

undertaken under authority of the Security Council⁸. International security has since then become a major issue in international politics, as well as in the academic analysis of international politics and in political practice alike.

Almost parallel to this development of widening the understanding of security beyond the level of the State to the international level, so to say "above" the level of the individual State, the understanding of security also began to widen to a "lower" level⁹, namely increasingly towards the security of the individual human being. This process went in parallel to the changed understanding of the role of the individual person, where the concept of "human security" has got its origins.

2. The concept of "Human Security"

The concept of human security, meaning the security of the individual person as the focus of security policy, was for the first time used in an official document in the 1994 Human Development Report, an annual report by the United Nations Development¹⁰. The report presents the view that *"The concept of security has for too long been interpreted narrowly: as security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust. . . forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives"*.

The report then suggests a new concept of security, i. e. human security, which it defines as follows: *"Human security can be said to have two aspects. It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease, and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities"*

⁸ There have been several discussions whether there would be another exception in the case of humanitarian intervention. The discussion is still open

⁹ This should not indicate a hierarchy of values but merely of narrower and wider circles

¹⁰ UNDP, Human Development Report, 1994, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 22

This does not indicate that the concept was, so to say “invented” at that time. Quite on the contrary, it developed out of various roots, which can also be traced back at least to the time after world War II.

2. 1. The roots

One root was the development of humanitarian international law, i. e. the laws regulating the protection of victims of war and other armed conflicts. The first international instrument in this direction was the (first) Geneva Convention of 1864 which regulated the protection of the wounded and sick in Armed Forces in the Field¹¹. In addition to this convention and corresponding to the problems which became visible in the protection of the victims of the wars of those times, further conventions were developed – for the protection of the Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked members of armed forces at Sea in 1899, and the third Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War in 1929. This part of international law developed more or less in parallel with the other part of the laws of war which had been codified in the various Hague conventions from 1899 and 1907.

These classical conventions obliged the Parties to respect and protect all persons not (or no longer) fighting in combat. Any attack against protected persons would have been regarded a war crime. However, they also saw the person just as subjected to, and to a certain degree therefore as a kind of “property” of, the respective State. Thus, while in principle any violence against protected persons would have constituted a war crime, it was seen as legitimate if it happened in reaction to the previous violation of these laws by the other side, or as a means to coerce the other side to comply with the law (reprisal).

Due to the gross misuse of the latter legal instrument to justify otherwise criminal acts, the existing Geneva conventions were overhauled and re-issued together with an additional Convention Relative to the Protection of the Civilian Persons in time of War on 12 August 1949. There is now the explicit common regulation that violence against protected persons cannot be justified, even not under the pretext of reprisal. While this constitutes in itself a significant progress in humanitarian law, it is also a significant step with respect to the emancipation of the individual person from the state whose

¹¹ It also gave the basis for the development of the Red Cross

citizen the person would be. Protection of the individual person has now got a higher value than punishing the State by allowing violence against protected persons who happen to be its subjects.

Furthermore, the Fourth Geneva Convention reaffirmed the obligation for occupation powers to ensure the continued functioning of public and health services¹² and the maintenance of public order¹³. Thus, it did not just provide that the civilian population should be safe **from** the occupation power, but also safe **through** the occupation power.

Another root can be seen in the development of human rights. Again, their origins may be traced back to the French and American revolution, but it took some time until the concept of human rights became a developed body of legal regulations. The most basic document in this context is the universal declaration of human rights by the United Nations' General Assembly on 10 December 1948. In the European context, the European Human Rights Convention signed on 4 November 1950 can be seen as the major breakthrough. It not only codified the basic rights of every person which have to be respected by all State authorities, but it also established supranational legal protection for human rights via the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg¹⁴. It was more than significant that while the Western European States adopted the convention and accepted its legal mechanisms for the protection of human rights which went beyond their own sovereignty, the socialist States refused to join.

While these legal instruments saw human rights and the rights of individual persons primarily through the perspective of protecting them from violence, abuse, and arbitrary treatment by an enemy force, an occupation power or even their own government, these instruments were developed practically without any reference to the concept of "security". This changed with the development of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) which later developed into today's Organization for Security and cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

¹² Art. 55 and 56 of the Fourth Geneva Convention

¹³ This can be indirectly derived from Art. 64 of the Convention

¹⁴ Chapter II, art. 19, and in detail chapter IV, Art. 38-56

First ideas for such a European Security conference were launched as early as in 1954¹⁵ by the then Soviet Union, to ensure that borders in Europe would not be changed and that the results of World War II would not be revised. Another idea within these conference proposals was to de-nuclearize Central Europe. The West for quite some while refused to accept these ideas and offered from the mid-sixties counter-proposals, namely negotiations to reduce conventional forces in central Europe¹⁶. In the late sixties and early seventies the two ideas came closer to each other. The West now showed some interest in the idea for a European security conference but demanded that it should not only deal with “classical” security issues as for example disarmament or territorial integrity of States. In the Western view, security could not be maintained without respecting human rights.

Thus, when the two sides finally in 1972 agreed to join each others conference proposals, the setting was as follows:

- There would be an East-West Conference on Mutually Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) in Central Europe, and
- There would be also a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in which all European States plus the USA and Canada would participate. Subjects would cover
 - “classical” issues of security as for example military stability, territorial integrity and so forth (the so-called “first basket”);
 - cooperation in the fields of economy and ecology (the so-called “second basket”), and
 - the human dimension (the so-called “third basket”).

The real breakthrough was achieved, however, when in the course of the negotiations the western (and also the democratic neutral) states succeeded to include the respect for human rights and basic freedoms within the security basket. When the Conference was finally concluded on 1 August 1975 with the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, this Act contains in its first chapter an enumeration of ten security principles which should in the future guide the relations between all participating states. These principles include “classical” principles of security as for example the refraining from the threat or use of force (principle II), inviolability of frontiers (principle III), territorial integrity of States (principle IV), non-intervention in internal affairs

¹⁵ Proposal by the then Soviet Foreign Minister W. M. Molotow from 10 February 1954

¹⁶ Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, 13-14 June, 1967, Communiqué

(principle VI), and the like. However, they also include for the first time the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as a principle of security (principle VII).

The Helsinki Final Act made thus clear that respect for human rights and the security of the individual person was no longer to be seen an internal affair of the respective State but has become a matter of concern for all other States, too. This fact led to serious differences between the then Socialist and the Western camp. Soviet and other "socialist" commentators were quick in pointing out that the Final Act's ten principles would be of differing quality. Those principles safeguarding the security of the state, as for example territorial integrity, would be of "higher" quality", whereas other principles, including the respect for human rights, would be of a "lower" quality.

Thus, when in 1977 at the follow-up conference to the CSCE in Belgrade¹⁷ the Western States complained about the bad Eastern implementation record with respect to human rights, the Eastern side insisted that this would constitute an interference with internal matters¹⁸ and would therefore contravene the principle of non-interference. The Western side (including the neutral democracies), however, maintained the view that all principles would be equal, and that insistence on implementation of an agreed principle could no longer be seen as interference into internal affairs.

The controversy continued¹⁹ until the breakdown of the socialist regimes and the democratic revolution in 1989. Since then, respect for human rights has become an undisputed shared value for all OSCE participating States, with developed mechanisms which give other States the right to address the human rights situation in any given OSCE participating State.

¹⁷ The meeting lasted from 4 October 1977 to 9 March 1978 and ended with no results in substance, due to the differences between East and West

¹⁸ They were in particular concerned by the fact that the human rights groups sprouting in their countries frequently referred to the Helsinki Final Act, or to the time of the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting ("Helsinki" Groups in the then Soviet Union; "Charter 77 in the then Czechoslovakia, etc.)

¹⁹ There were further Follow-up Meetings in Madrid (11 November 1980 to 9 September 1983) and Vienna (4 November 1986 to 19 January 1989). During the Vienna meeting, the changes in the former East became already visible

Simultaneously, the concept of human security gradually took its shape. It was shaped by the growing awareness of the need to protect human rights, but also by the conflicts which emerged in the eighties and nineties all over the world – in developing countries but also in developed countries, as for example in the area of the former Soviet Union and the former SFRY. These conflicts were increasingly no longer fought between regular States but between sub-state groups, and with little to no respect for humanitarian law. It was first and foremost the suffering of the population in these conflicts as well as in underdeveloped but neglected areas of the world which gave an impetus to re-define the meaning of security.

2. 2. Human security – an operational concept?

The concept of human security has been kept relatively vague and lacks precision. Within the mentioned UNDP report, the following elements are enumerated to constitute human security²⁰:

1. Economic security (e. godine freedom from poverty);
2. Food security (e. godine access to food);
3. Health security (e. godine access to health care and protection from disease);
4. Environmental security (e. godine protection from such dangers as environmental pollution and depletion);
5. Personal security (e. godine physical safety from such things as torture, war, criminal attacks, domestic violence, drug use, suicide, and even traffic accidents);
6. Community security (e. godine survival of traditional cultures and ethnic groups as well as the physical security of these groups);
7. Political security (e. godine enjoyment of civil and political rights; and freedom from political oppression).

It is obvious that this is a rather broad list, and it would be difficult to decide what would not constitute "human security". There derive several consequences from this rather vague list:

- First, it is so comprehensive that it does not allow a clear conceptual positioning with respect to other concepts of security, or indeed the whole complex of social sciences. If "human security" could mean anything, it has at the end no real meaning at all;

²⁰ Ibid., p. 24

- Second, it may not even be a useful guide for further research as it does not indicate what one should study if the subject should be “human security”. It well may end up to become identical with “society” as such, or with the “condition humana”. There is thus the danger that the concept as it stands seems capable of supporting virtually any hypothesis – along with its opposite – depending on the prejudices and interests of the particular researcher²¹. As academic research is concerned with the study of cause and effect, it is difficult to “study” the impact of certain socio-economic factors as “affecting human security” when they themselves are defined as part of human security – “human security” would thus have an effect on “human security” which leads to nowhere;
- Third, it does not help in practical politics. The mere enumeration of elements does not indicate any priorities what should be seen as more relevant, and what as less relevant. It is thus no operable concept to guide political decision-making which has to set priorities. In the given broad definition, the concept would to a certain degree even exclude such prioritization.

There have been several attempts to narrow the concept down to operational proportions. They are, however, frequently confronted with the problem where to set priorities, and what should be seen as “more” or “less” important. In most cases²² priorities are indicated without a logical reason why one element should be given priority over the other. In some particularly absurd attempts, safety from physical violence is given lower priority than health care or good education²³.

This excessive approach should, however, not mean that the concept would be completely useless and nothing more than “hot air”.

One could attempt to bring “human security” back into a framework of a comprehensive yet differentiated understanding of security for example in the following way²⁴:

²¹ Roland Paris, Human Security – Shift in paradigm or hot air? In: International Security, vol. 26, no. 2 (fall 2001), pp. 87-102 (93)

²² See the various examples in R. Paris, p. 95

²³ Important as these factors may otherwise be for the well-being of a person

²⁴ The matrix has been adapted from R. Paris, p. 98

		NATURE OF THE THREAT	
		Military	Non-Military
SUBJECT OF SECURITY (SECURITY FOR WHOM?)	States	National Security (aggression etc.)	Redefined Security (e. godine economic or environmental threats)
	Society, Groups, Individuals	Intrastate security (civil wars, ethnic or ideological conflicts, genocide. .)	Human security (economic, environmental etc. threats, famines, diseases. . .)

Table 1

The chart still leaves some gray areas, as some threats may affect both societies and the individual person, and the state, at the same time. This is true for any type of armed conflict. It has become, however, a particular hallmark of terrorist attacks that they are directed against the civilian, non-combatant population in order to affect the State. Thus, while the attempt to bring some order into the rather unstructured concept of human security may help, it still does not close all the gaps and gray areas the concept would inherently encompass.

In sum, "human security" as such may be still of dubious value if we would attempt to take it as a fully developed concept. In a wider meaning, however, it is a useful reminder that "security" has grown beyond the traditional meaning of "State security", and that security of the individual person has become a matter of concern. If "human security" does not have all characteristics of becoming an operational concept for academic research as well as practical politics, it might at least serve as a guiding principle for concrete undertakings in the academic as well as the political sphere.

3. The correlation between human rights and international security

This brings us back to the correlation between the protection of the individual person via the concept of human rights, and the concept of security as it has been enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act. Rather than attempting to widen the concept of security to the disproportionate, all-encompassing phrase of "human security" the Final Act just indicates that respect for human rights is a principle upon which the participating States will base their relations.

This approach has been based on the conviction (and indeed experience) that democratic States who respect the rule of law internally, do not fight wars against each other. Respect for human rights and the rule of law as the guiding principles for the internal politics of States are the best safeguard for peace among the States. This has been expressed already more than 200 years ago by the enlightened philosopher Immanuel Kant in his "Treatise on Eternal Peace" where he demanded internal democratization as a precondition for maintaining peace among the nations. In the course of the 20th century, it has become a guiding principle for democratic States to assist and promote democratization and the establishing of the rule of law as wide as possible, in order to promote peace and stability.

The broadening of the concept of security from "national security" both to the wider scale of "international security" and the narrower scale of "human security"²⁵ has thus not just happened parallel in time, but also in a functional correlation. The better human rights are respected and the rule of law would work, the better also the prospects for international security, i. e. , the maintenance of international peace.

Vice versa, any lack of protection of human rights and gaps in the rule of law can no longer be seen as a mere "internal affair" of the State concerned. This was one of the major mistakes by the international community²⁶ with respect to the growing of the crisis in the former SFRY. While the violation of the law by various actors became more and more visible and should have provided highly visible warning signals, these signals were seen but no action was undertaken, inter alia in the mistaken perception that these matters would be an "internal affair" of the SFRY²⁷. The following events made clear that the developments left the rest of Europe not unaffected, either. As a consequence of this experience, efforts were undertaken to create international instruments, rules and standards to prevent a repetition of these events.

²⁵ In the meaning of respecting human rights and the rule of law

²⁶ I. e. the European and other relevant States

²⁷ Heinz Vetschera/Andrea Smutek-Riemer, Early warning – the Case of Yugoslavia; Paper presented at the XVI World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Berlin, August 21-25, 1994, p. 25

In today's perspective, the following issues are now a matter of concerns not only for the individual State in question but for the community of states as such:

- The protection of human rights in its original meaning: this refers to legal guarantees for human rights within the State's constitutional and legal order, and provision for legal instruments and remedies in case of violation of human rights. In the context of European States, this would in particular refer to the mechanisms provided by the European Convention on Human Rights;
- The rule of law as a principle to be followed not merely on the paper but in real terms. This refers to the fact that even authoritarian, non-democratic political systems had formally defined themselves as "states of law", as they had formally regulated internal affairs – including internal security – by laws. However, these laws did not serve to protect the citizen²⁸ but the State²⁹ and its organs. Thus, a typical characteristic of such a system would be "blanket laws" which give "institutional immunity" ("carte blanche") to State organs, be it the police, the military, security services, etc. Any act undertaken by them would on paper be justified by the mere fact that it has been taken by a state body whose competencies have been defined in rather vague terms³⁰. In a proper understanding, the rule of law would mean that no such blanket laws exist but that all acts by all State bodies and/or organs are regulated by laws in a way which allows appropriate control by superiors, the judiciary, and the legislative bodies. Indeed, democratic control of the whole power sector³¹ has become a major factor for security not just within a State, but also a matter of security of all States³².

²⁸ Or any other individual human being

²⁹ Or rather: the dominating political elite

³⁰ As for example "state security" or "fighting the class enemy", and the like

³¹ Police, security and intelligence services, the military etc.

³² The pertinent major document is the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-military Aspects of Security which was adopted by all OSCE participating States, including BiH, in December 1994. In it, the participating States explicitly oblige themselves to establish and maintain democratic control over the power sector. The pertinent provision (par. 20) reads:

"The participating States consider the democratic political control of military, paramilitary and internal security forces as well as of intelligence services and the police to be an indispensable element of stability and security"

The following paragraphs contain the detailed provisions of the subject

- The rule of law does not only refer to the relationship between the citizen and the authorities but also to the relationship among the citizens. It is undermined not only by “institutional immunity” or uncontrolled action by authorities but also by corruption and organized crime which give *de facto* immunity to otherwise “ordinary” citizens. The rule of law in a proper understanding does thus not only oblige the authorities to **respect** the human rights of the individual citizen but also to **offer protection** against criminal acts which would deprive the individual citizen of exercising his or her basic human rights.
- Thus, the trend in the authorities obligations now goes from the obligation to tolerate³³ towards the obligation to actively provide and undertake effective measures to protect the individual person from any illegal acts, be it by officials or other persons.

It is in the context of the rule of law that the concept of “human security” might gain a certain relevance if properly understood and re-defined. It would now stand for two developments, namely

- the development from merely respecting the individual person’s human rights towards actively protecting the person, and
- the recognition that there is no overall security without security of the individual person.

4. Human rights, Human security and prevention

Respect for human rights and establishing and maintaining the rule of law are thus not just a matter for romantic humanitarian idealists. Quite on the contrary, they have to be seen as a direct contribution to the security of the individual State as much as of the international system as such. Lawlessness is a threat to security, be it the actions by authorities who behave as if they could act beyond the law, or be it due to criminal acts by individuals or organizations who undermine the very fabric of a State and society.

This is in particular a latent threat to societies in transition. On the one hand, authorities and the individual organ (police, security services etc.) might still either maintain a somewhat authoritarian

³³ I. e. to respect the individual person’s human rights

mindset of a pre-democratic system which gave them practically virtual immunity, or are now so reluctant not to violate the new standards that they would refrain from doing anything at all. On the other hand, criminal individuals or groups are quick in capitalizing on the insecurity which accompanies every time of transition, and the perceived weaknesses of the security apparatus. Add the normally rather low pay for police officers, and the combination of pressure and offers by criminals may open the doors for corruption which is also a wide-spread phenomenon in transition periods.

In reaction to such developments, authorities or individual police officers etc. may be inclined to blame the rise of crime on the changed conditions, in particular the improved protection of human rights and the emphasis on the rule of law, rather than on the fact that we are in a transition period. There is an inherent danger that the growing challenge of organized crime may induce them to fall back to "(not so) good old practices" which are perceived as "less burdensome", "more effective", and the like. True as it might be that in a narrow perspective and on the surface, they might achieve occasionally better results in enforcing a particular law (as for example the criminal code), they would at the same time undermine the credibility of the rule of law as such and fertilize the ground for even more lawlessness. Short term "successes" may thus at the end turn into long-term defeat for the law.

Respect for human rights and for the rule of law thus gains relevance for prevention from various perspectives:

- One is the narrow perspective of preventing threats to the individual person, i. e. in a re-defined appropriate understanding of "human security". The better human rights are respected, and the better the conditions are shaped for the individual person to be protected by the law, the better the chances that threats to the individual person can be prevented;
- The other one is the perspective of preventing threats to the State. While in a narrow understanding "state security" has been frequently identified with "repression of the individual person", history has shown that this approach does not create long-lasting stability. It may create a superficial impression of stability, but without long-lasting effects. In reality, authoritarian regimes who cannot afford to respect the rights of their citizens are inherently unstable – otherwise, they would not have to use repression if they

could really rely on the solidarity of their citizens. Thus, respecting human rights, offering protection by the law to the individual person, accepting democratic political change as normal, and subjecting the "power sector" to democratic control by the legislative are no signs of "weakness" but of strength of the respective State. Citizens are more likely to be loyal to a State if they have seen that loyalty is no one-way street upon demand by the State, but that the authorities also offer them the protection they need. Preventing threats to the individual person thus also prevents threats to the society as such, and thereby threats to the stability of the State;

- The widest one is the perspective of security for the whole international system. Unstable political systems are not just a danger for themselves and their citizens but for the whole international system as such. Inasmuch as such unstable political systems/States are characterized inter alia by low standards with respect to protection of human rights, and the rule of law, the protection of human rights and the rule of law have a direct bearing on the prevention of threats to the international system, too.

Prevention of threats to security has thus become a closely interrelated subject on all three levels:

- Preventing threats to international security also enhances the security of States and individual persons;
- Preventing threats to the individual person also enhances the security of the respective State and the international system.

For preventing threats to the stability of the individual State, we have to understand that it cannot longer be seen in isolation from both the levels of international security and human security. Security of the State cannot be bought on expense of either the security of other States, or the security of the individual person. It has to be based on true internal stability, in order to contribute to true external stability.

5. Conclusions

The very meaning of “security” has undergone a significant process of widening over the past decades. It now no longer just refers to the State but includes the security of the international system as well as the security of the individual person.

There have been times where the various levels of security were perceived as contradictions to each other. States sought security by fighting against each other, thereby undermining the security of the international system. Internally, States sought to maintain the security of the political system (or the ruling elite) by suppressing the rights and freedoms of the individual person.

History has shown that these approaches were mistaken and produced at the end more instability and insecurity than security. Today we know that stability and security of one element are necessary conditions for stability and security of the other elements. There can be no stable international system with unstable States, and there can be no stable and secure State with insecure citizens. This is the approach also undertaken within the OSCE framework where States co-operate to increase their own security and stability by cooperating with each other, and by emphasizing the rule of law as the guiding principle for the individual participating State’s internal structures.

Prevention of threats to the security of the individual person has now become a key issue. This is where the police and the judiciary of the respective State have a major role to play. They must no longer be structured and/or perceived as mere power elements to serve the ruling elite but as true instruments of the whole population. Their powers must be effective to protect the individual citizen, yet completely subordinated to the rule of law, and with respect to the police to democratic control by the legislative bodies.

A high level of professionalism within the police and judiciary, embedded in the rule of law, are the best means to prevent threats to security also in the wider perspective we have outlined above.

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