



## **Security Reflections: A Holistic Approach Without Nuclear Weapons**

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### **Abstract**

*Today's global threats require a cooperative response. The ongoing cycle of fear – wherein armaments spread insecurity and insecurity generates more armaments – is incompatible with the requisite cooperative environment needed to address the 21<sup>st</sup> century crises of climate change, sustainable development (as identified by the Millennium Development Goals), and nuclear disarmament. Such cooperation, furthermore, will engender cooperation on other critically important issues such as terrorism, cyber security, pandemics, and financial stability and make efforts to address these challenges more likely to succeed. Today's unprecedented interdependence necessitates a new definition of security. No longer can we afford to practice the old model of real politik, based on a ruthless Hobbesian view of the human condition. National security can no longer be achieved through competition with other nation-states, and particularly not through increased amounts of military spending. Cooperation is no longer an admirable human trait: it is imperative for our very global survival.*

There are present dangers to our biological and social environments which no one nation, or a small group of nations, no matter how powerful, can adequately address alone. These threats are global in nature and require cooperation rather than competition as the appropriate response. Maintenance of the implicit threat posed by the existence of the horrific destructive power of nuclear arsenals is incompatible with this cooperative environment which must be created for an increasingly interdependent world.

It is time to emerge from a dark cycle based on fear wherein armaments spread insecurity and insecurity generates more armaments. The nuclear arsenals are the most destructive example of this paradigm. By cooperatively addressing the crises identified by the world summits of the 1990s, and the more recently recognized challenges of climate change, we can create a new cycle of life wherein trust, confidence and cooperation can reinforce disarmament which will in turn strengthen trust, confidence and cooperation.

The United Nations Security Council marked the end of the Cold War by holding its first ever summit meeting which issued a declaration laying the ground work for the new global security agenda:

*“The absence of war and military conflicts amongst states does not in itself ensure international peace and security. The non-military sources of instability in*

*the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields have become threats to peace and security.” (UN Document S/PV.3046, United National Security Council Declaration, January 31, 1992, P.143.)*

An integrated post-Cold War human security agenda can be identified as emerging from the United Nations-administered world conferences of the 1990s.\* These conferences set forth agendas, embodied in political commitments reached by consensus amongst member-states which effectively set forth programs to address our global crises. The security of all nations, including superpowers, has become collectively jeopardized. The United Nations system, which must be strengthened, provides us a global political identity and means for such coordinated action.† This agenda has been largely articulated in the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs lack only a coherent incorporation of a new definition of security.

That new definition must be focused on obtaining global public goods of the highest value such as a stable climate, healthy oceans and rainforests, and the elimination of both poverty and nuclear weapons. Failure to work cooperatively to achieve these necessary objectives will ensure insecurity and enormous human suffering. Working together on these objectives will make cooperation on other critically important issues such as effectively containing terrorism, cyber security, controlling pandemics, and financial stability much more likely to succeed.

Never before have we required such new ways of thinking; never before have we faced such threats to our survival and found the means to address them.

Changing the cyclic patterns that lead to competition in military prowess as the predominant route to “security” is imperative if we are to overcome present tangible, scientifically verifiable threats to the planet’s life support systems.

The interlocking sets of problems are manageable and very realistic good advice can be found in the commitments made at the summits and world conferences during the 1990s. They were not so long ago. The 9/11 world has not changed their core insights and we can learn a great deal by looking at them carefully. (See Appendix A)

These world conferences addressed the increasing disparity of wealth between the developed and underdeveloped worlds, highlighted by the fact that tens of thousands of children die each day from malnutrition and preventable diseases, and over 1.3 billion people live with uncertainty as to whether they will have enough calories in the next few days to survive. These conferences addressed the global aspects of our environmental crisis highlighted by the fact that a hydro fluorocarbon molecule emanating from a refrigerant in Chile recognizes no national boundaries in its destruction of the fragile ozone layer that protects us all. The inter-relatedness between such issues as environmental protection and the well-being of children, unemployment and crime, population growth and the rights of women became apparent. We began there to recognize that so many threats to our security are global: organized crime,

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\* See the excellent descriptive material of the World Summits set forth in the year end briefing paper, “The World Conferences, Developing Priorities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, ISBN: 92-1-100631-7, UN Publications, information current as of March 1997.

† Eighty per cent of the work of the UN system is devoted to helping developing countries build the capacity to help themselves. This includes promoting and protecting democracy and human rights; saving children from starvation and disease; providing relief assistance to refugees and disaster victims; countering global crime, drugs and disease; and assisting countries devastated by war and the long-term threat of land mines.

The budget for the UN’s core functions – the Secretariat operations in New York, Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and five Regional Commissions – is \$1.3 billion a year. This is about 4 per cent of New York City’s annual budget – and nearly a billion dollars less than the yearly cost of Tokyo’s Fire Department.

trafficking of children and drugs, the AIDS epidemic, protecting biological diversity, ozone depletion, malnutrition, illiteracy, inadequate housing, unemployment, racism, ethnic and religious strife, violence against women, massive violations of human rights, the extraordinary expenditures in conventional weapons, the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, deforestation, soil erosion, global warming, the widening gap between rich and poor and the threats posed by the provincialism of religious fanaticism. The world conferences provided a forum where civil society partnered with governments and governments cooperated with one another in addressing our collective threats.

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Each conference marked the culmination of months of consultations among member states, non-governmental representatives and UN experts who reviewed vast amounts of information and shared knowledge and experience. Each conference forged agreements on specific issues and commitments from member states. This process is unprecedented in world history. All of these world summits addressed problems which are beyond the capacity of any individual state to solve. Cooperation is no longer merely admirable as a human trait; it is imperative for our very survival – our family values must be awakened.\*

The old model of real politique in which world politics is understood solely as struggles for superior power amongst nations reflects an outmoded Hobbesian view of the human

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\* Ambassador Douglas Roche, O.C., 8923 Strathearn Drive, Edmonton, Alberta T6C 4C8 Canada (tel. 403-466-8072) (fax: 403-469-4732) (Email: [djroche@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca](mailto:djroche@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca)) (Internet Home Page: [www.ualberta.ca/~djroche](http://www.ualberta.ca/~djroche)), former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament co-authored with Robert Muller *Safe Passage for Humanity* and recently *The Ultimate Evil*. He said in “An Agenda for the ‘People’s Millennium Assembly’”: It is interesting that the Report of the Commission on Global Governance, after its opening chapter describing the post-Cold War world, turned immediately to an elaboration of “Values for the Global Neighborhood.”

*“We believe that all humanity could uphold the core values of respect for life, liberty, justice and equity, mutual respect, caring, and integrity. These provide a foundation for transforming a global neighbourhood based on economic exchange and improved communications into a universal moral community in which people are bound together by more than proximity, interest, or identity. They all derive in one way or another from the principle, which is in accord with religious teachings around the world, that people should treat others as they would themselves wish to be treated.”*

The Commission urged the international community to unite in support of a global ethic of common rights and shared responsibilities. This would “provide the moral foundation for constructing a more effective system of global governance” and close the present gap between governments and citizens. A global civic ethic also requires democratic and accountable institutions and the rule of law.

Discussions on ethics frequently tend to become esoteric, not to mention divisive. But a new global ethic can be expressed sharply, succinctly and irrefutably, as the 1993 Parliament of the World’s Religions did:

*“Every human being must be treated humanely!”*

This repeated the dramatic appeal contained in the 1955 Manifesto issued by a group of scientists led by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein who, having worked on the development of the atomic bomb, called for its abolition:

*“We appeal, as human being, to human beings:  
Remember your humanity, and forget the rest.”*

Through the UN and its systems, we possess, for the first time in the history of the world, a catalogue of information about how our planet works, and treaties to protect the rights of individuals and the environment itself. Both people and governments are learning that they must cooperate for many purposes: to maintain peace and order, expand economic activity, tackle pollution, halt or minimize climate change, combat disease, curb the proliferation of weapons, prevent desertification, preserve genetic and species diversity, deter terrorists, ward off famines, etc.

All this has prepared us for the formulation of a new global ethic. By a global ethic, I do not mean a global ideology or a single unified religion and certainly not the domination of one religion over others. Rather, I mean a fundamental consensus on binding values, irrevocable standards and personal attitudes. This ethic is the expression of a vision of peoples living peacefully together, of national and ethnic groupings of people sharing responsibility for the well-being of the Earth.

The expression of a new global ethic of sharing and stewardship might seem, to some, overly ambitious in a world still torn by the effects of long histories of greed and dominance. Yet agreement on common values for common survival is the most pressing challenge facing the international community.

condition and is no longer realistic. The interrelationships of communication, transportation, international trade have released irreversible forces of transnational integration highlighting the transnational nature of the problems which must be solved cooperatively. The spread of democracy, the growing recognition of economic interdependence, the decreasing appeal of war, and the rise of supra national institutions in civil society, business and political life to regulate world affairs are clearly positive trends. Most significant is the growing recognition that the well-being of nations is not necessarily secured by increasing amounts of military spending; international cooperation is required to safeguard the interest of the planet as a whole. If humanity is to survive in this period of global interdependence and if global security is to be achieved, national policies should be enlivened by a vision of collective security and cooperation. This is the new realism – interdependence – which we all face now.

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The conferences set forth a workable cooperative integrated human security agenda. The funds to fulfill the agenda have been given to wars and military deployments. This is not a new problem. The Advisory Board on Sustainable Development criticized countries that put weapons ahead of human needs:

*“The greatest financial waste is in military expenditure and this is dissipating resources needed for sustainable development. Agents from rich developed countries continue to promote arms sales to developing countries, and one such agent has even recently persuaded several African countries to reverse earlier decisions to switch expenditures to education.” (UN Document E/CN.17/1995/25, Report of the High Level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development, February 16, 1995, p. 25)*

The world’s governments spend more than 1.3 trillion dollars a year to support military forces of more than 27 million soldiers. Analysis of the policies of a progressive country like the US can begin with the history of promotion of arms exports compared to the promotion of exports of environmental technologies.\*

The developing countries spend approximately over 200 billion dollars on arms expenditures, while some 1.3 billion people are so poor they cannot meet their basic needs for food and shelter. Poverty grows as fast as populations.

Some of the poorest countries spend more on their military than on their citizens’ education and health: e.g., Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen. The Human Development Report suggests that 12% of the amount spent on military hardware would provide primary healthcare and safe drinking water for all; 4% would provide universal primary education and educate women to the same level as men; 8% would provide family planning services to all willing couples and stabilize world population by 2015. The ugliest part of this dynamic is that the sellers of these arms are the most developed countries which need the cash the least. The sales are dripping with blood.

\* A Tale of Two Markets: Trade in Arms and Environmental Technologies (call Commission at 202-234-9382 for copy).

The nuclear arsenals and their implicit threat of excessive violence to maintain global governance are no longer reasonable amongst parties which must work together.\* “By global governance, we mean the way in which we manage global affairs, how we relate to each other, how we take decisions that bear on our common future.” (*Our Global Neighborhood: The Basic Vision* (Main Themes Booklet), p. 7.)

There are two icons of the modern age. One is the mushroom cloud, which emphasizes our collective threat of death and destruction through the abuse of the gift of scientific power. Like a mushroom it grows from decaying matter – in this instance the fear and the quest for world dominance. The other icon is the picture of the planet taken from outer space – one glorious living integrated organism. The image of this beautiful living biosphere highlights our interdependence and calls us to a new level of cooperation. Our choices could not be clearer.

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\* Security is being redefined to encompass cooperation, disarmament, the environment, and social development. No one can doubt that there is presently excessive dependence on armaments and threat or use of force. The final declaration of the Social Summit in Copenhagen specifically adopted this analysis (“The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action”, Section 70). Previously, 150 states adopted the following accurate description of security by consensus in the final document of the International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development,” paragraph 14 (UN, A/Conf.130/39, September 11, 1987):

*“Security is an overriding priority of all nations. It is also fundamental for both disarmament and development. Security consists of not only military, but also political, economic, social, humanitarian and human rights and ecological aspects. Enhanced security can, on the one hand, create conditions conducive to disarmament and, on the other, provide the environment and confidence for the successful pursuit of development. The development process, by overcoming non-military threats to security and contributing to a more stable and sustainable international system, can enhance security and thereby promote arms reduction and disarmament. Disarmament would enhance security both directly and indirectly. A process of disarmament that provides for undiminished security at progressively lower levels of armaments could allow additional resources to be devoted to addressing non-military challenges to security, and thus result in enhanced overall security.”*

## Appendix A

1. The World Summit for Children in New York in 1990 issued a convention on the Rights of the Child and set goals for reducing deaths, malnutrition, disease and disability among the children of the developing world. (UN Document A/45/625, *World Summit for Children*, New York, September 1990). Already 89 countries have reached the end decade target of over 90% immunization coverage, and the achievement of the goal of the eradication of polio by the year 2000 is in sight. There has been a dramatic improvement in the management of diarrhea saving the lives of at least a million children annually. The program for iodine deficiency control has led to over 1.5 billion more people consuming iodized salt in 1995 than in 1990, and as a result, 12 million infants are protected from mental retardation each year. The population without access to safe drinking water has fallen by about one third helping in excess of over a billion people.
2. The World Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio in 1992 produced a Biodiversity Convention, a Global Warming Convention, a Statement on Forest Principles, a Declaration on Environment and Development, and Agenda 21. The last is a blueprint for the sustainable development of the planet into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (An interpretive guide to Agenda 21, *The Global Partnership for Environment and Development*, is available. UN Sales No.E.93.I.9.). The imperative of a rule of law governing sustainable development and a business environment will obviously need an enormous shift in the attitude of our leaders. The interdependence of the world's economic system bodes well that cooperative efforts could bear fruit rapidly when the political will is harnessed. In the same way as a village must cooperate to protect its commons, we will need far higher levels of international cooperation to address the problems of ozone depletion, global warming, and water pollution which continue to grow in seriousness. Nevertheless, Agenda 21 remains the only globally accepted comprehensive outline to respond to our planetary crisis.
3. The World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action, including the establishment of the office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, designed to strengthen human rights around the world. The Vienna Declaration set forth the universality, indivisibility, and interdependence of civil rights, cultural, economic, political and social rights as the birthright of all human beings and the first responsibility of governments. It clarified the essential relationship between development, democracy and the promotion of human rights. Despite sensitivity regarding respect for national sovereignty principles, it was agreed that within the framework of the purposes and principles of the UN charter, the promotion and protection of human rights are a legitimate international community concern. (UN Document A/CONF. 157/24, *The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, Vienna, June 25, 1993). The emergence of an international criminal court can be indirectly attributed to the institutional momentum generated by this conference.
4. The International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 shifted the previous emphasis on demography and population control to sustainable

development and the recognition of the need for comprehensive reproductive health-care and reproductive rights. Its declaration emphasized the empowerment of women, appreciation for pluralism values and religious beliefs, reaffirmation of the central role of the family, and the needs of adolescents. (“Declaration of International Conference on Population and Development,” UN Document A/CONF. 171/13, Cairo, September 13, 1995.)

5. The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1994 brought together 117 heads of state to issue a political Declaration and Programme of Action to alleviate and reduce poverty (including the eradication of absolute poverty), expand productive employment, and enhance social integration. In many ways, the social summit is the centerpiece of the global conferences of the 1990s. The Summit Declaration set forth 10 commitments each followed by specific recommendations for action at national and international levels. They include, in part: the eradication of poverty in the world with policies addressing the root causes of poverty giving special attention to the needs of women and children and other vulnerable and disadvantaged; the promotion of full employment and social integration by fostering social stability and justice based on non-discrimination, tolerance and the protection of human rights; the achievement of equality and equity between women and men; the promotion of universal and equitable access to quality education and healthcare; the acceleration of the economic, social and human resource development of Africa and the least developed countries through the promotion of democratic institutions and addressing problems such as external debt, economic reform, food security and commodity diversification.
6. The Conference on Climate Change in Berlin in 1995 started a process to limit and reduce emission of greenhouse gases within specified time frames, such as 2005, 2010 and 2020. (UN Department of Public Information, Press Release HR/888, April 12, 1995.)
7. The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995 produced a comprehensive plan, the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,” for the international community to promote the status of women to the ultimate benefit of society as a whole. Twelve critical areas of concern are dealt with in depth: poverty, education, health, violence against women, armed conflict, economic structures, power sharing and decision-making, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, human rights, the media, the environment, and the girl child. It redefined women’s rights as human rights, asserting women’s rights to “have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.” The United States launched a six year, \$1.6 billion initiative to fight domestic violence and even established a White House Council on Women to plan for the effective implementation in the United States of the platform for action with full participation of NGOs. It was the largest conference ever convened by the UN, with 5,000 delegates from 189 States and the European Union. In addition, an independent NGO Forum attracted 30,000 participants.
8. The City Summit (Habitat II) produced a Declaration on Sustainable Human Settlements and brought together many of the themes of the previous world summits.

Recognizing that inadequate living conditions are a primary cause of social conflict, an agreement was reached on specific commitments such as adequate shelter for all, financing human settlements, international cooperation and review of progress in the future. Reports were received from over 500 mayors and key municipal leaders constituting the World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities. It also convened NGO groups in forums which included the World Business Forum, the Foundations Forum, the Academies of Sciences and Engineering Forum, the Professionals and Researchers Forum, the Parliamentarians Forum, the Labor Unions Forum, the Forum on Human Solidarity and even the Wisdom Keepers Forum. By the year 2010, it was predicted that over half of the world's population will be living in cities and that there will be at least 20 mega cities. We are ill prepared to deal with the social repercussions of such a dramatic global transformation but the conference Secretary General, Wally N'dow, put it simply, "The resources exist to put a roof over the head and bring safe water and sanitation for less than \$100 per person to every man, woman and child on the planet." This is the new reality of security.