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## **UNIT 3    HUMAN SECURITY AND PEACE BUILDING**

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Millions of people have been killed by wars and conflicts. Wars destroy lives, cause misery and displacement to millions, militarize societies and men, set back development and destroy creativity, culture and ideas. In the recent decades there has been a decline in large interstate wars like the First and Second World Wars. However, the armed conflicts of this decade are primarily internal or intra-state wars unlike the inter-state wars of the previous decades. Peace building thus has to be applicable to such intra-state conflicts. Research as well as experience reveals that ensurging human security is a positive and concrete step that contributes to peace building. This unit shows the linkages between human security and peace building and links it to Gandhi's ideas on peace.

Since time immemorial, mankind had been searching for an ideal society where man can lead a happier, worthier and rewarding life. Political thinkers like Manu, Kautilya, Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Karl Marx and Gandhi considered the social and cultural presupposition of the ideal political order.

An ideal society can only be possible if we understand the root causes of war and armed conflict, understand their multidimensional nature and then devote our time and efforts to the peace and security of the world. Without peace no nation and no individual can move forward. In a peaceful atmosphere mankind can secure greater heights. A society without peace is like life in the state of nature-brutish, barbaric, short, dull and nasty as Hobbes pointed out in his political theory on the origin of the state. Everyone professes a desire for peace as an ultimate goal, but is willing to take up arms to retain his power. This prompts the need to find out, as to what conditions are necessary to ensure enduring peace. Disarmaments and arms control cannot be pursued for their own sake, but their objectives must be peace. Security will be a natural consequence of peace but the reverse is not necessarily true. Nations consider that military might is totally necessary to ensure peace. As a result militarism has multiplied both as an ideology that relies on the use of force to resolve disputes and materially through acquisition of dangerous weapons.

History has witnessed major wars but wars cannot bring peace. Retaliation only causes counter-retaliation. Peace can be brought only by non-violent means as expressed by Mahatma Gandhi because in the violent environment, human beings cannot have secure and peaceful conditions of life.

### **Aims and Objectives**

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain the relation between Human Security and Peace Building.
- describe the importance of Human Security for Peace Building and vice versa.
- analyse the need for Peace Building.

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## **3.2 HUMAN SECURITY**

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An arms race is like a spiral because once it begins it becomes a spiral and gains its own momentum. Peace can't be achieved unless the use of violence for settling human conflicts is replaced with non violent means. This was repeatedly expressed by Mahatma Gandhi. Just as peace does not mean an absence of war but means peace with justice and dignity, similarly, the term non-violence should be understood not just as absence of physical injury but as an active force of love towards all creatures including humans, animals and plants.

Human Security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities whose proponents challenge the traditional notion of national security. Human security holds that a people-centered view of security is necessary for national, regional and global stability.

The concept of human security emerged in the post-Cold War period when a peace dividend was expected, But the number of intra state conflicts increased, even though inter-state conflicts declined. With this a multi-disciplinary understanding of security involving different security threats evolved. The United Nations Development Programme 1994 Human Development Report is considered a milestone publication in the field of human security, The Report laid emphasis on “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear” for all. These freedoms are considered as the best path to tackle the problem of global insecurity.

The search for peace and security in a world marked by extreme economic, social and

cultural heterogeneity, bedeviled by self-aggrandising states which go to war against each other, occasionally plunging the world into senseless destruction, has inspired many proposals for creating one 'True World' where every individual is at peace. The search for peace is also within states that are marked by ethnic, religious and other kinds of conflicts. Often states themselves have an entrenched elite that repress change leading to conflicts. The human security paradigm suggests a multi-dimensional way of resolving conflicts by guaranteeing security.

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### 3.3 UNDP'S 1994 DEFINITION

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Dr. Mahbub Ul Haq first drew global attention to the concept of human security in the United Nations Development Programme's 1994 *Human Development Report* and sought to influence the UN's 1995 World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen (Denmark). The UNDP's 1994 Human Development Report's definition of human security argues that the scope of global security should be expanded to include threats in seven areas:

**3.3.1 Economic Security** — Economic security requires an assured basic income for individuals, usually from productive and remunerative work or, as a last resort, from a publicly financed safety net. In this sense, only about a quarter of the world's people are presently economically secure. While the economic security problem may be more serious in developing countries, concern also arises in developed countries as well. Unemployment problems constitute an important factor underlying political tensions and ethnic violence.

**3.3.2 Food Security** — Food security requires that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food. According to the United Nations, the overall availability of food is not a problem rather the problem often is the poor distribution of food and a lack of purchasing power. In the past, food security problems have been dealt with at both national and global levels. However, their impact has been limited. According to UN, the key is to tackle the problems relating to access to assets, work and assured income (related to economic security).

**3.3.3 Health Security** — Health Security aims to guarantee a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. In developing countries, the major causes of death are infectious and parasitic diseases, which kill 17 million people annually. In industrialised countries, the major killers are diseases of the circulatory system, killing 5.5 million every year. According to the United Nations, in both developing and industrial countries, threats to health security are usually greater for poor people in rural areas, particularly children. This is mainly due to malnutrition and insufficient supply of medicine, clean water or other necessities for healthcare.

**3.3.4 Environmental Security** — Environmental security aims to protect people from the short and long-term ravages of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment. In developing countries, lack of access to clean water resources is one of the greatest environmental threats. In industrial countries, one of the major threats is air pollution. Global warming, caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, is another environmental security issue.

**3.3.5 Personal Security** — Personal security aims to protect people from physical violence, whether from the state or external states, from violent individuals and sub-state actors, from domestic abuse, or from predatory adults. For many people, the greatest source of anxiety is crime, particularly violent crime.

**3.3.6 Community Security** — Community security aims to protect people from the loss of traditional relationships and values and from sectarian and ethnic violence. Traditional communities, particularly minority ethnic groups are often threatened. About half of the world's states have experienced some inter-ethnic strife. The United Nations had declared 1993 the Year of Indigenous People to highlight the continuing vulnerability of the 300 million aboriginal people in 70 countries as they face a widening spiral of violence.

**3.3.7 Political Security** — Political security is concerned with whether people live in a society that honours their basic human rights. According to a survey conducted by Amnesty International, political repression, systematic torture, ill treatment or disappearance is still being practised in 110 countries. Human rights violations are most frequent during periods of political unrest. Along with repressing individuals and groups, governments may try to exercise control over ideas and information.

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## 3.4 FREEDOM FROM FEAR VS FREEDOM FROM WANT AND BEYOND

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In an ideal world, each of the UNDP's seven categories of threats would received adequate global attention and resources. Yet attempts to implement this human security agenda have lead to the emergence of two major schools of thought on how to best practice human security – “*Freedom from Fear*” and “*Freedom from Want*”. While the UNDP 1994 report originally argued that human security requires attention to both *freedom from fear and freedom from want*, divisions have gradually emerged over the proper scope of that protection (e.g. over what threats individuals should be protected from) and over the appropriate mechanisms for responding to these threats.

- **Freedom from Fear** – This school seeks to limit the practice of Human Security to protecting individuals from violent conflicts while recognizing that these violent threats are strongly associated with poverty, lack of state capacity and other forms of inequalities. This approach argues that limiting the focus to violence is a realistic and manageable approach towards Human Security. Emergency assistance, conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building are the main concerns of this approach
- **Freedom from Want** — The school advocates a holistic approach in achieving human security and argues that the threat agenda should be broadened to include hunger, disease and natural disasters because they are inseparable concepts in addressing the root of human insecurity and they kill far more people than war, genocide and terrorism combined. Different from “Freedom from Fear”, it expands the focus beyond violence with emphasis on development and security goals.

Despite their differences, these two approaches to human security can be considered complementary rather than contradictory. Expressions to this effect include;

- Franklin D. Roosevelt's famous Four Freedoms speech of 1941, in which “Freedom from Want” is characterized as the third and “Freedom from Fear” is the fourth such fundamental, universal, freedom.
- The Government of Japan considers Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want to be equal in developing Japan's foreign policy. Moreover, the UNDP 1994 called for the world's attention to both agendas.

- Surin Pitsuwan, current Secretary-General of ASEAN cites theorists such as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Houme to conclude that “human security is the primary purpose of organizing a state in the beginning.” He goes on to observe that the 1994 Human Development Report states that it is “reviving this concept” and suggests that the authors of the 1994 HDR may be alluding to Franklin Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech without literally citing that presentation.

Although “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” are the most commonly referred to categories of human security practice, an increasing number of alternative ideas continue to emerge on how to best practice human security. Among them:

- **G. King and C. Murray.** King and Murray try to narrow down the human security definition to one’s “expectation of years of life without experiencing the state of generalized poverty”. In their definition, the “generalized poverty” means “falling below critical thresholds in any domain of well-being”; and it is in the same article, they give brief review and categories of “Domains of Well-being”. This set of definition is similar with “freedom from want” but more concretely focused on some value system.
- **Caroline Thomas.** She regards human security as describing “a condition of existence” which entails basic material needs, human dignity, including meaningful participation in the life of the community, and an active and substantive notion of democracy from the local to the global.
- **Roland Paris.** He argues that many ways to define “human security” are related with certain set of value and lose the neutral position. So he suggests to take human security as a category of research. As such, he gives a matrix to illustrate the security studies field.

Security for Whom	What is the Source of the Security Threat?	
	Military	Military, Non-military, or Both
States	National security (conventional realist approach to security studies)	Redefined security (e.g., environmental and economic [cooperative or comprehensive] security)
Societies, Groups, and Individuals	Intrastate security (e.g., civil war, ethnic conflict, and democide)	Human security (e.g., environmental and economic threats to the survival of societies, groups, and individuals)

- **Sabina Alkire.** Different with those approaches seek to narrow down and specify the objective of human security, Sabina Alkire pushes the idea a step further as “to safeguard the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats, without impeding long-term human fulfilment”. In a concept as such, she suggests the “vital core” cover a minimal or basic or fundamental set of functions related to survival, livelihood and dignity; and all institutions should at least and necessarily protect the core from any intervention.

### 3.5 THE CANADIAN APPROACH

The Canadian approach urges that, ‘at a minimum, human security requires that basic needs are met, but it also acknowledges that sustained economic development, human

rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, good governance, sustainable development and social equity are as important to global peace as arms control and disarmament'. It recognises the links between environmental degradation, population growth, ethnic conflicts and migration. Finally, it concludes that lasting peace cannot be built until human security is guaranteed. Here, it needs to be noted that terms like 'basic needs', 'good governance' and so on are contested issues; hence their precise import remains vague and unclear.

What is common between the UNDP and Canadian approaches to human security? Both reject the focus on state security with varying degrees of emphasis, whilst anointing human security as their central concern. Both stress the need to ensure the well-being of citizens, their personal freedom and safety from direct and indirect threats, which can equally emanate from the state or society. On the other hand, there are divergences between the two approaches. The UNDP privileges the individual over the state, whilst the Canadian approach gives importance to the state whilst according primacy to human security. The UNDP emphasises the threat from indirect violence as from environmental factors, whilst the Canadians highlight the dangers of direct violence from domestic and societal, and also global factors. The UNDP believes that human security can be achieved by promoting human development through greater democratisation of global society; the Canadians lay emphasis on political development, global norms, and the collective use of force and sanctions.

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### **3.6 LIMITATIONS OF AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING HUMAN SECURITY**

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The problem with adopting an 'all-encompassing concept of human security' is that its scope could be enlarged to include everything that adversely affects the well-being of people under the rubric of freedom from fear and freedom from want. Such an inchoate and nebulous perception does not permit effective analysis and the seeking of practical solutions to the problems identified. Over-stretching the concept of human security to make it all-inclusive would make it too broad to be relevant or doable. As observed, 'once everything that generates anxiety or threatens the quality of life in some respect becomes labeled a 'security problem', the field risks losing all focus. Such an agenda is inconceivably rich, and is certainly inclusive, but it can also be off-puttingly vague'. The need for delimiting the concept of human security therefore becomes imperative. How can this be credibly effected without trivialising the concept of human security? The possible solutions in this regard are categorised as follows.

First, a distinction must be drawn between threats to human security that are amenable to state intervention and others that must be left to public and social action. No rigid distinctions can be made here, but threats like the abuse of women and children that have been elevated into the human security agenda do lie, more largely, in the sphere of societal rather than state action. Recognising these distinctions would permit the laying out of priorities and a better utilisation of the budgetary instrument to harness efforts by the state to support societal endeavour.

Second, it has been urged that non-military threats to human security become legitimate subjects of concern if they get sufficiently securitised to be accepted as realistic threats to state or societal interests; thereafter they are 'constituted by the inter subjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects'. The problems of incoherence can be met by establishing rigorous criteria for securitising these threats and disaggregating them into their component sectors. Thus the

problem of infectious disease, for example, can become a plausible threat to human security if its uncontrolled spread hinders industrial production or causes unemployment and social unrest. For an issue to constitute a threat to human security, therefore, there must be a likelihood of a situation arising that is serious enough for political action to be necessitated, and the situation being of a lasting but not transitory nature.

Third, the situation can obtain where a generic threat to human security evolves to include other threats; hence their inter-linkages need delineation after the primary threat is identified. Environmental degradation, for instance, could trigger internal displacements of population into cities leading to unplanned urbanisation, growth of slums, pressure on municipal services, and law and order problems; all these issues affect human security. A large percentage of the population in these slums is insecure and lives in fear and suffers from want. The end result of environmental degradation therefore presents a threat to human security, but the prophylactic means for its mitigation or avoidance lies in the area of human development, reinforcing the link between human security and human development, although they cannot be equated.

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### **3.7 PEACE BUILDING**

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Peace building strategies are those that seek to address the underlying causes of disputes, conflicts, and crises; it is necessary to ensure that these problems do not arise in the first place or if they do arise, they would not recur. In 'An Agenda for Peace', the Secretary-General of the UN focused his attention on non-recurrence, what he described as 'post-conflict peace building'. But peace building has a strongly preventive character as well. If the foundations are properly laid by efforts, among other things, to create fair systems of rules, fair ways of distributing scarce resources, and to meet basic human needs for survival and dignity, then the chances are that many potential problems, whether international or internal, will remain manageable.

At the heart of the notion of peace building is the idea of human security for a reasonable standard of living, and for recognition of identity and worth. Conflict, whether cross-border or within country exists, when important interests or needs of one or more parties are frustrated, threatened or remain unfulfilled. There are many strategies for identifying these needs and interests and as far as possible, to accommodate and reconcile them. Here the focus is more general, on creating the conditions that will ensure non-recurrence of the problems.

The term peace building is a semantic innovation, but the idea behind it has roots in old religious and moral teachings. Part of the doctrine's foundations found expression in the writings on the 'Law of Nature' in the concepts of human touch in the time of the Renaissance, and later in the postulates of the young bourgeoisie attacking the privileges of the Church and the absolute rule of emperors. The French Revolutions were influenced by these writings and the postulates of the Enlightenment, as well as by the formulations of "Bills of Rights" concerned with equality and liberty as the factors of war prevention and assertion of peace.

With the decay of primitive society and the formation of states, legal systems came into being within the state territories as instruments of the rulers for the maintenance of public order and security. At the same time, principles necessary for the conduct of mutual relations among sovereigns took shape. At first the latter were of a predominantly customary character and were concerned with the alliances for defence, or common

military undertakings such as the procedures for staging wars, their conduct, the fate of war prisoners and booty, delimitation of borders, and similar problems. However, there is an impressive body of evidence that shows that even in ancient times, the written law of nations relating to matters of commerce, negotiations, respect of treaties, diplomatic representation, neutrality and peace building were not rare.

In contradiction to the human security dealing with crucial problems of state sovereignty and essentially with the relationship between individuals and the state, the law of war is concerned with the results of armed conflict between sovereigns, with the protection of the wounded, the ill, prisoners and the civilian victims of armed conflicts. Paradoxically, it reached a high degree of codification and implementation generations ago. This is so because not only humanitarian principles but also mutual interest contributed to its formulation.

To a large extent, peace building involves doing exactly the sorts of things that a civilised international community, and the states that make it up, should be doing anyway i.e. putting in place effective international rules-systems, dispute resolution mechanisms and cooperative arrangements; meeting basic economic, social, cultural and humanitarian needs; and rebuilding societies that have been shattered by war or other major crises. But too often in the past these things, while seen as worthwhile in their own right, have not been identified clearly enough as absolutely integral to the achievement and maintenance of peace and security, and as a result have been given less than the attention they deserve. If we are to achieve just and durable peace in the post-Cold War world, it is crucially important that the international community pay adequate attention to human security.

### **3.7.1 Pre-Conflict Peace Building**

Preventive peace building within states, in which both the international community and individual states themselves have mutually supportive roles to play, should aim at achieving progress in reducing the gap between rich and poor, to extend basic human rights to all, to promote sustainable development and to advance a just and fair society which does not discriminate on grounds of gender and race. Preventive peace building at this level also seeks to promote adherence by states to the established standards of good international citizenship. Good internal government is the necessary foundation of good global governance.

At the national level appropriate preventive peace building techniques include social and economic development, democratisation, observance of fundamental human rights, the elimination of all forms of gender or racial discrimination and respect for minorities. Many states spend disproportionate amounts of their scarce resources for military security thus depriving their populations of vital economic and social infrastructural needs which would be, in general, far more effective in enhancing their national security and well-being. In all regions of the world- and this is just as true of developed as of developing countries- the conversion from defence industry and expenditure to civilian programmes and the adoption of disarmament and arms control measures could, if appropriately managed, result in substantial economic benefits.

Many states simply do not have the physical or financial capacity by themselves to deliver material well-being to their people: to do so involves not just good will and sound priorities but resources, and those are often in desperately short supply. What every state does have the capacity to deliver to its people is the adequate human security. It is essential, in all these respects, that states protect and promote the primacy of the rule of law and periodically review their compliance with international humanitarian, human rights,



refugee, economic and social agreements. Where national laws or practices contradict or diverge from international agreements, states should seek to, and be urged to, bring domestic practices into line with international standards. States should periodically review the extent to which national policy and practice conform to international standards, and should be encouraged to become parties to the key human rights conventions, in particular the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and of Racial Discrimination; the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

International development assistance and the promotion of cooperative development projects, especially in areas of potential dispute, are important to economic peace building within states. Projects aimed at bringing adjoining states together round joint agricultural development projects, transportation, water and electricity utilisation schemes are important confidence-building measures in their own right and should be encouraged.

### **3.7.2 Post-Conflict Peace Building**

All the strategies appropriate to pre-conflict peace building are just as applicable to post-conflict situations, but there are some additional things that will often need to be done-again through a combination of national effort and international support to meet the special needs of countries and people shattered by warfare. The problem is that states generally engage and prioritize state building rather than peace building.

The task in these situations will often be no less than the total reconstitution of broken and devastated societies. The lessons to be learned from the past experience show how essential it is for the people and their leaders to reach agreements about what sort of society and polity they wish to develop after the conflict. The priority task in peace building has to be relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction with justice. It should have women at all levels of peace building tasks as mandated by Security Council Resolution 1325. In these situations, the international community-not just the UN itself, but regional organisations and other international actors as well- has a responsibility to promote democracy and human rights as part of the linked processes of peace making and post-conflict peace building.

In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna showed that differences of emphasis between North and South on human rights issues can be accommodated. It also underlined the principle that democracy, development and respect for fundamental human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Where a state has been the object of massive and intrusive UN intervention, the UN may have to contend with an impatience to dispense with its services at the military and political levels so that internal approaches to managing the affairs of state can be pursued unhindered. But the goals of human security cannot be compromised. These goals cannot be reached without a functioning and effective police system, the restoration of an independent judiciary and the creation of security personnel committed to democratisation. In countries that have had no tradition of democratic government and where there is understandable residual suspicion of state authorities after a conflict, there is a need to make a special effort to generate education campaigns about what a democratic, participative and human rights respecting political system could look like, and why parties in the post-conflict situation should suspend judgement and give new approaches a chance. This is an area where the international community can give crucial support. The building of an atmosphere is a particularly crucial priority if the gains of a peace keeping operation are to be consolidated and a relapse

into conflict avoided. The UNDP human security mandate should be part of any peace keeping and post –conflict peace building exercise.

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### 3.8 SUMMARY

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It is ironical that we still relying upon nuclear weapons to provide security. We need a security that does not place human future in jeopardy. The confusion and errors of the past demanded an urgent and serious attempt to develop workable principles for humanitarian interventions both at national and international levels. Since new insecurities have been generated by globalisation, a concerted effort is needed to ensure security that gives dignity to persons. A more comprehensive and proactive framework, which includes the root cause of conflicts, needs to be worked out.

In the post Cold War era, there are number of threats to the peace and security of the world, such as terrorism, poverty, migration population, ecological imbalance, drugs, human trafficking and disparities between rich and poor. These issues were addressed at the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference, in 1991, wherein emphasis has been laid on human security (freedom from fear and freedom from want).

Terrorism is another major threat to the world peace. Even the most powerful nuclear country in the world cannot provide an ounce of security against a terrorist group, armed with a single nuclear weapon. In order to bring peace and security in the world, we must chart a new way to peace. Peace is more than just an absence of war. Peace is the highest expression of human value because it alone can make it possible to attain other values. What we need today is to replace the old paradigm founded on entrenched ideological position with new one that is open to reappraisal of social, political, cultural and ecological balance of values. Herein lies the efficacy of human security.

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### 3.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

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1. Examine the relation between Human Security and Peace Building.
2. Why is Human Security necessary for Peace Building?
3. How does Peace Building lead to Human Security?

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### SUGGESTED READINGS

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