**Summary**


**Informal Meeting of the Plenary of the General Assembly on Human Security**
**Trusteeship Council Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York**
**2 April 2024**

## I.  Overview

On 2 April 2024, the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session convened an informal plenary meeting of the General Assembly on human security. The meeting provided the opportunity for Member States to exchange perspectives on the fourth report of the Secretary-General on human security (A/78/665) and the way forward for human security at the United Nations. The meeting opened with a high-level segment featuring statements by the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis, and the United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. António Guterres. It was followed by a panel discussion moderated by Mr. Yukio Takasu, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Human Security, and included eminent experts on human security, H.E. Mrs. Laura Chinchilla, former President of Costa Rica and co-chair of the High-Level Advisory Panel of Eminent Experts on Human Security, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, African Union High Representative for Silencing the Guns, and Ms. Rabab Fatima, United Nations High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Following the panel, Member States and Observers made interventions from the floor, with 41 representatives delivering statements for a rich exchange of perspectives and experiences on human security.

Overall, Member States welcomed the Secretary-General's report and its timeliness in view of the complex and multilayered crises impacting people and governments. There was recognition that human security is highly relevant in today's context and is a useful and practical tool for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as for the prevention of crises and instability. While some participants voiced concerns regarding the lack of a definition of human security, many focused on its value as a unifying framework to foster solidarity and cooperation on shared challenges.

## II.  Opening statements

The President of the General Assembly underscored how the global landscape has undergone dramatic change since the last Secretary-General's report and the General Assembly meeting on human security 10 years ago. He noted that, while the international community had experienced landmark achievements, including the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change, the world had also endured the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical challenges that have exacted an enormous toll on the livelihoods and well-being of people. Recalling General Assembly resolution 66/290, the President reminded that "human security is an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people." In a world rife with instability and suffering, he underlined that a people-centred approach offers a powerful tool to support integrated, prevention-oriented responses. He closed by highlighting the upcoming

Summit of the Future and the 80th anniversary of the United Nations and encouraged Member States to determine how best to position human security within the relevant processes and outcomes, welcoming their creative ideas and proposals on the way forward.

The Secretary-General opened his remarks stating that human security is a framework for bold, decisive, collective action at a time of growing uncertainty and turbulence. He reflected on the situation in Gaza, calling for the full implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions without delay. In today's context, the Secretary-General recognized the importance of strengthening outdated multilateral frameworks, forecasting the Summit of the Future in September. He noted, however, that global solutions alone are not sufficient and emphasized how human security, with its focus on people and prevention, has an important role to play. To this end, the Secretary-General underscored that his report showcased the operational value of human security for developing strategies, partnerships and tools to reduce risks, enhance trust, and prevent and mitigate the impacts of crises and shocks, building on extensive lessons from its application at the national, regional and global levels. He emphasized how human security helps enrich our analysis of the major challenges of our time, promote more systematic integration of prevention into development, climate action and peacebuilding strategies, and prioritize resilience and capacity-building to manage future shocks. He closed by stating that human security has proven its value as a framework and can help accelerate progress on the SDGs, future-proof development efforts, and deliver the hope people need. He urged all countries to use this important tool and integrate its insight into efforts to prepare for future challenges.

## III.    Highlights of the Panel Discussion

The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Human Security, Mr. Yukio Takasu opened the panel discussion noting how the meeting marks a turning point for revitalizing human security at the United Nations and in the lead up to the Summit of the Future. Delivering the first remarks of the panel, H.E. Mrs. Laura Chinchilla expressed the urgency of reassessing our approach to addressing the challenges of our era, which are hampering SDG progress and resulting in significant levels of insecurity across the globe. She outlined three important contributions of human security in this context: (i) to expand the notion of solidarity to capture the interdependence across and between people, nature and the planet; (ii) to guide multistakeholder and multilevel partnerships for genuine transformation in the face of a new generation of interconnected threats; and (iii) to promote the agency of people for inclusive and participatory processes that enhance resilience.

Another panelist, Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, underscored that, in a world where security and development are inextricably intertwined, human security has intrinsic value in shaping a people-centred process for sustainable peace and development. Reflected in the African Union's Agenda 2063, he noted that human security is an essential lens to achieve its ambitions and is central to its core aspirations to end poverty, reduce inequalities, improve the quality of governance, ensure access to justice, and promote dialogue-centred approaches for conflict prevention and resolution.

Emphasizing how the challenges discussed in the Secretary-General's report are a fundamental concern of the 92 most vulnerable countries in the world, the last panelist - Ms. Rabab Fatima Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

expressed the value of the human security approach for placing people at the forefront of efforts to build resilience, enhance adaptive capacities and achieve sustainable development. In this regard, she highlighted the interconnections between human security and the dedicated programmes of action to address the unique challenges facing the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, urging adequate support and resources for their full and effective implementation.

## IV.  Key messages from interventions by Member States

Interventions from the floor underscored the timeliness of the Secretary-General's report in the context of deepening and complex global and regional crises. Member States recognized human security as a unifying approach and paradigm for collaboration that can enhance solidarity and foster cooperation to tackle shared challenges. As such, many expressed that human security is more important and relevant today than when it was last discussed in the General Assembly, with some participants recommending an expansion of its application within the United Nations system in order to advance solutions to our most pressing challenges.

Member States recalled General Assembly resolution 66/290, noting that human security is an approach to assist them in tackling multifaceted challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people. Many underscored elements of common understanding, including that Governments retain primary responsibility for ensuring human security and national ownership is essential to promote the protection and empowerment of people. Others reiterated that human security is in line with the Charter of the United Nations and must be implemented within the principles of the Organization and the provisions of international law, including the non-interference in the internal affairs of States as well as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. In this context, some Member States voiced concern that there is no consensus on the definition of human security and its scope, underlining the diverse interpretations of Member States. They noted that the report lacks an intergovernmental mandate and questioned why the report did not tackle the issue of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs).

Member States appreciated the examples of the application of human security at the national, regional and global levels outlined in the Secretary-General's report. Many of the participants shared additional examples from their countries of initiatives, policies and institutions that are implementing human security to address poverty, reduce inequalities in and expand access to health and other basic services, promote peace and social cohesion, and address issues from cybercrime to mitigating the impact of climate change and pandemics.

A significant emphasis across the Member State interventions focused on the practical and operational value of human security as highlighted in the Secretary-General's report. Referring to it as a framework for action and a tool for Governments and the United Nations, a number of Member States identified its value in providing a holistic lens to develop integrated and multi-stakeholder responses that break down silos, promote whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, and as such, are well-suited to addressing multilayered challenges. Many also emphasized that it strengthens coherence on issues that cut across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding action and require responses that bring together the pillars of the United Nations.

The majority of interventions underscored the importance of human security as a tool to help achieve the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including by helping to overcome existing and emerging challenges to their attainment. Member States appreciated its focus on people and the conditions that are necessary for them to benefit from development progress, including the provision of social protection and social welfare services, as well as addressing issues of conflict and violence. Some participants further highlighted the vital importance of disaggregated, local analysis that supports targeted empowerment strategies to address the root causes of insecurity and build the capacity and resilience of people. Others highlighted the value of human security in linking local realities to challenges and trends at the national, regional and global levels for more forward-looking and sustainable responses.

In equal measure, many Member States emphasized that human security is fundamental to prevent crises and instability and create the conditions for peace, prosperity and dignity for all. They underlined its value in identifying blind spots that can derail sustainable peace and development thereby promoting a forward-looking, risk-informed approach and a greater emphasis on prevention. In this context, some participants discussed the importance of disarmament, the threat of small arms, non-state armed groups, transnational and national crime, and issues of migration and displacement. The value of human security for climate action and digital transformation was also emphasized.

In the context of emerging and future challenges, a significant number of Member States underlined the importance of incorporating human security and its elements in the Pact for the Future. References were also made to its inclusion in the Summit of the Future. Some Member States recognized the crucial role of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), highlighting its value in providing resources to deal with the most pressing needs and promoting sustainable solutions to critical areas of human insecurity in accordance with national priorities.

## V.     Concluding remarks

Reflecting on the discussion, Special Adviser Takasu thanked the participants and distinguished panelists for a rich and substantive debate. He was encouraged by the extensive examples of the application of human security based on the common understanding in A/RES/66/290. He also recognized the questions regarding the lack of a formal definition and noted that there are other concepts being used within the work of the Organization that do not have a legal definition such as terrorism. Given the context-specific nature of human security, negotiations in 2012 aimed for a common understanding that outlines its principles, which includes emphasis on the importance of national ownership as well as non-interference in domestic matters. He reiterated the importance of human security moving forward as an overarching, unifying framework for enhancing solidarity and leaving no one behind in the context of multilayered challenges, noting its value vis-à-vis the Summit of the Future. He appealed for expanded resources for the UNTFHS to continue to strengthen human-centred multilateral action.

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