The background of the cover features the dark silhouettes of three people from the chest up, facing each other as if in conversation. The person on the left is partially cut off by the edge of the frame. The person in the center is slightly behind the other two. The person on the right is also partially cut off. The overall composition is centered and balanced.

**Promoting Human Security:  
Ethical, Normative  
and Educational Frameworks  
in Central Asia**



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# **Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in Central Asia**

**Anara Tabyshalieva**



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## **Promoting human security: from concept to action**

During the last decade, human security has become a central concern to many countries, institutions and social actors searching for innovative ways and means of tackling the many non-military threats to peace and security. Indeed, human security underlines the complex links, often ignored or underestimated, between disarmament, human rights and development. Today, in an increasingly globalized world, the most pernicious threats to human security emanate from the conditions that give rise to genocide, civil war, human rights violations, global epidemics, environmental degradation, forced and slave labour, and malnutrition. All the current studies on security thus have to integrate the human dimension of security.

Thus, since the publication of the United Nations Development Programme's 1994 *Human Development Report* on new dimensions of human security, major efforts have been undertaken to refine the very concept of human security through research and expert meetings, to put human security at the core of the political agenda, at both national and regional levels and, most important of all, to engage in innovative action in the field to respond to the needs and concerns of the most vulnerable populations. Two landmarks in this process were the creation of the Human Security Network in 1999, made up of twelve countries from all regions, which holds ministerial meetings every year; and the publication of the 2003 report of the Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People*, which has called for a global initiative to promote human security.

UNESCO has been closely associated with these efforts from the outset, in particular in the framework of its action aimed

at promoting a culture of peace. Thus, as of 1994, the Organization launched a series of regional and national projects relating to the promotion of a new concept of security, ensuring the participation of regional, national and local institutions, and involving a wide array of actors, including the armed forces, in Central America and Africa.

On the basis of the experience acquired through the implementation of those projects, human security became a central concern for the Organization as a whole. A plan of action for the promotion of human security at the regional level was adopted in 2000, as a result of the deliberations of the First International Meeting of Directors of Peace Research and Training Institutions on the theme 'What Agenda for Human Security in the Twenty-first Century?', held at UNESCO Headquarters; and in 2002 human security became one of the Organization's twelve strategic objectives as reflected in its *Medium-Term Strategy for 2002–2007*. This strategic objective is closely linked to UNESCO's contribution to the eradication of poverty, in particular extreme poverty, to the promotion of human rights, as well as to its action in the field of natural sciences, in particular regarding the prevention of conflicts relating to the use of water resources.

The choice of adopting regional approaches to human security has been most fruitful to date. In Africa, UNESCO, in close cooperation with the Institute for Security Studies of South Africa, has initiated action aiming at the formulation of a regional human security agenda, addressing conflict prevention and many of the issues raised in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative, which UNESCO has fully supported from its inception. In Latin America, cooperation with the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) in Chile in 2001, 2003 and 2005 led to important discussions of human security issues in the region, and to the formulation of policy recommendations that have been submitted to the ministerial meetings of the Human Security Network and to regional intergovernmental meetings on



hemispheric security. In East Asia, building on important progress made by subregional academic and political institutions, UNESCO, in collaboration with the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and Korea University, organized the 2003 meeting on Human Security in East Asia, whose results were widely disseminated. In March 2005, UNESCO and the Regional Human Security Center in Amman (Jordan) jointly organized the International Conference on Human Security in the Arab States. UNESCO developed similar projects in Central Asia, in cooperation with the OSCE Academy, in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), in September 2005, and in South-East Asia, in collaboration with ASEAN, in Jakarta (Indonesia), in October 2006. After a workshop on Human Security in Europe: Perspectives East and West, organized at UNESCO by the Center for Peace and Human Security in Paris, in June 2006, the cycle of regional consultations will be concluded in Africa in 2007.

With a view to opening new perspectives for focused research, adequate training, preparation of pilot projects, and to further consolidate public policy and public awareness on human security issues, UNESCO has launched a series of publications: *Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks*. These emphasize three important elements in order to translate the concept of human security into action: (a) the need to have a *solid ethical foundation*, based on shared values, leading to the commitment to protect human dignity which lies at the very core of human security; (b) buttressing that ethical dimension by *placing existing and new normative instruments at the service of human security*, in particular by ensuring the full implementation of instruments relating to the protection of human rights; and (c) the need to reinforce the education and training component by better articulating and giving enhanced coherence to all ongoing efforts, focusing on issues such as *education for peace and sustainable development, training in human rights and enlarging the democratic agenda to human security issues*.

We hope that this series – each publication focusing on a specific region – will contribute to laying the foundations of an in-depth and sustained action for the promotion of human security, in which the individual has a key role to play.

*Moufida Goucha*

## **Introduction**

This paper examines the ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security in Central Asia, a region comprising Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. These countries share a common history, culture, resources and human security challenges and responses, derived from their geographical proximity. Formerly isolated from the international community and their neighbours, now all eight countries have tremendous opportunities to make up for lost time by cooperating to overcome their many common problems and issues relating to human security, and acting as concerned Silk Road Central Asian neighbours to devise and promote strategies, projects and policies about human security.

The report is divided into four parts: examining the human security concept; assessing ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security in Central Asia; highlighting threats to human security common to all eight countries; regional cooperation and recommendations. It begins with a description of the regional and national challenges to human security, outlines the commonalities within the region and briefly details the particular situation of each country. The report concentrates on issues relating to human security: political and social exclusion and economic insecurity, religious extremism, inter-state and intra-state conflicts over resources, drugs and HIV/AIDS epidemics, forced migration and human trafficking, environmental issues and gender disparity. The options of regional cooperation that may contribute to the promotion of human security are discussed in the last section.

The report suggests that attempts should be made to encourage wider regional discussion on human security issues in Central Asia and proposes further UNESCO assistance in encouraging dialogue on a holistic approach to ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security between state and non-state actors at national and regional levels.

## **The concept of human security**

The concept of human security first proposed in the 1994 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Human Development Report* has since been adopted by international development agencies and led to the establishment of the Human Security Network. It is important to note that the utility of this concept, for Central Asia and other regions, lies in its deviation from classical notions of security that imply military power based on state actors to a more inclusive and multifaceted notion of security based on the individual. This is expressed in the UNDP report as follows:

For too long, security has been equated with threats to a country's borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime, these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world (UNDP, 1994, p. 3).

Since the publication of the report, human security has remained a contested, complex, yet undeniably important concept and has evolved to become a key lexicon in international relations, development, security studies, economics and social sciences discourses.

Academic debates further elaborate the issue. In their references to human security academics may be divided in two groups: those authors who respectively adopt narrow conceptualizations versus those who adopt a broader view.

Advocates of a narrow focus on human security (Krause, Mack, Macfarlane, Paris, Buzan) refute a broad definition, interpreting human security more as freedom from physical violence. These different interpretations are discussed below. According to Ellen Seidensticker, human security diminishes 'excessive' state discretion in the promotion of human rights. In reality, 'national security arguments are often used to justify the suppression of human rights. The incorporation of the traditional notion of state security into human rights law frequently qualifies rights to allow for state discretion'. Seidensticker believes that human security would be able to 'resolve conflicts between different human rights, i.e. the need to suppress some human rights in order to protect others' (Seidensticker, 2002). As Caroline Thomas further explains:

Human security describes a condition of existence in which basic material needs are met, and in which human dignity, including meaningful participation in the life of the community, can be realized. Such human security is indivisible; it cannot be pursued by or for one group at the expense of another (Thomas, 2001, p. 161).

Roland Paris (2004) points out that the meaning of human security made by the 1994 statement was unclear and broad, however it does offer a single definition of the human development concept. S. Neil Macfarlane (2004) points out that the core of human security is a shift in the referent of the concept of security from the state to the individual, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children. In this sense, 'state sovereignty and the primacy of the state are justified only to the extent that the state's claim to protect the people within its boundaries is credible, since the only irreducible locus of sovereignty is the individual human being'. Barry Buzan (2004) argues that human security redirects 'security thinking and policy around the individual as the referent object. This is normatively attractive, but analytically weak'. Typically, citizens support state

systems that control territory, state independence and foreign relations. 'The human security approach reverses this equation: the state – and state sovereignty – must serve and support the people from which it draws its legitimacy'. This may lead to a situation where the sovereignty of states reluctant or unable to accomplish 'certain basic standards' may be jeopardized. Buzan postulates that the use of military force for human protection might be the bleak illustration of such a concept.

Comparatively, advocating the broad focus, several academics (Alkire, 2004; Thakur, 2004; Axworthy; Bajpai; Hampson) propose that poverty, health and environmental problems, for example, be included in the definition. The Commission of Human Security shares this approach. Taylor Owen laconically concludes the discussion, saying that 'narrow proponents have sacrificed non-violent threats for policy utility, and broad proponents have sacrificed some analytic rigor and policy clarity for inclusiveness' (Owen, 2004, p. 381). The problem remains – several academics included many threats, other proposed the exact list of threats that 'focus on more development-oriented, rather than violence-based concerns'. Owen suggests returning to UNDP roots by saying that the UNDP definition is actually much clearer than has been reported and that it has been unjustly dismissed as unworkable (p. 381). He suggests the following definition: 'human security is the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political threats' (p. 383). It is very close to the UNDP definition of human security that proposed 'safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression', along with 'protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the patterns of daily life' (UNDP, 1994, p. 23).

The Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen elucidates that the concept of human security ought to include the following 'distinct elements':

- a clear focus on individual human lives (this would contrast, for example, with the aggregately technocratic notion of ‘national security’ – the favoured interpretation of ‘security’ in the military context);
- an appreciation of the role of society and of social arrangements in making human lives more secure in a constructive way (avoiding a socially detached view of individual human predicament and redemption, emphasized in some – but not all – religious contexts);
- a reasoned concentration on the downside risks of human lives, rather than on the overall expansion of effective freedom in general (contrasting with the broader objective of the promotion of ‘human development’); and
- a chosen focus, again, on the ‘downside’ in emphasizing the more elementary human rights (rather than the entire range of human rights) (Sen, 2002).

United Nations-led activities further develop the notion of human security and enrich it on a region-specific basis. Reports about principal human security initiatives have been accumulated by a number of UN and governmental agencies<sup>1</sup>. The 2000 UN Millennium Summit introduced the idea of the independent Commission on Human Security. Sadako Ogata, Co-Chair of the Commission, points out that human security ‘through the protection-empowerment framework, provides better means to realize human rights’ (Ogata, 2004, p. 26).

In practice, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals are the key steps in realizing

<sup>1</sup> See Commission on Human Security (<http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/>); Human Security Network (<http://www.humansecuritynetwork.org/>); Harvard Program on Human Security (<http://www.cbrss.harvard.edu/programs/hsecurity.htm>); Center for Human Security at Liu Institute for Global Issues (<http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/chs.htm>); Human Security Initiatives of the Japanese Government ([http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human\\_secu/](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human_secu/)); and Human Security Initiatives of the Canadian Government (<http://www.humansecurity.gc.ca/menu-en.asp>).



a broad 'UNDP' conceptualization of human security. However, the goals cover only part of human security which, in its broad sense, includes the wider range of threats to people.

UNESCO also contributes to the development and expansion of the human security concept around the world<sup>2</sup>. A website has been established to provide a global view of the past and in-progress activities of the UNESCO Programme on Human Security and Peace<sup>3</sup>. Several conferences held under the auspices of UNESCO and in partnership with national governments have promoted the idea of regional cooperation to achieve human security. For example, the Issyk-Kul Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations in Eurasia adopted by the international conference 'Eurasia in the XXIst Century – Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?' (Kyrgyzstan, June 2004) called for the respect of certain core universal values and ethical principles, such as tolerance, human rights, democracy and the rule of law and respect for cultural diversity, which are universal and transcend all civilizations. They are central to the concept of our common humanity. Dialogue must therefore focus on the centrality of shared values, which confer meaning to life and provide form and substance to human identities (UNESCO, 2004).

In Central Asia, the concept of human security in its broad and all-inclusive aspects was discussed at a round table organized by the Commission on Human Security in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan (CHS, 2002) and an international conference organized by UNESCO and the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (2005). The findings of the Ashgabad meeting reflected the notion that human security enhances and strengthens state security. The participants came to the conclusion that the human security concept reorientates thinking from a state-centred

2 See appendix, Some UNESCO publications on Human Security, Peace and Conflict Prevention.

3 <http://www.unesco.org/securipax/>

to a people-centred approach to security and prioritizes problems of people at risk. It was also elicited by Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh at Ashgabad that there is a need to narrow

the gap between humanitarian and development assistance, and between securing borders to responding to concerns of people within them. The concept pitches new threats such as poverty, environmental degradation and inequality against old ones, such as territorial integrity of the state (Tadjbakhsh, 2002).

Participants at the Bishkek conference on human security proposed to hold discussions so important for Central Asia on a regular basis at national and regional levels. Despite these acknowledgements, it was not an easy process to bring together country representatives to discuss issues relating to national and human security. In official talks and negotiations, the traditional concept of state-centred national security prevails over issues of individual human rights and human development. Human security is instead interpreted in relation to other important concepts of ethnic interests, Islamic values, national independence, and cultural and educational background.

Thus, in order to better understand the context of these discussions, it is important to briefly consider the historical legacies of the states comprising Central Asia, and their current political, economic, social and security environments.

## II

# **Assessment of ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security**

### **1 The seven 'Stans' and Iran: an overview**

At first glance, it would seem as if the Cold War 'wall' legacies still divide Central Asian states into two opposite groups: the five post-Soviet states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – and their three southern neighbours – Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan – the latter three of which are officially named Islamic Republics to emphasize the overriding importance of religion in their countries.

Thus, divided by the Great Game, a conflict between Tsarist Russia and the British Empire over domination in Central Asia and, later, by the Cold War, a rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States that split the world into two camps, these groups of states underwent very different paths of development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union, more than 315 million people of the region have slowly rediscovered each other, establishing political, economic and cultural links.

In all Central Asian states, the larger identity groups also have sizeable kin groups residing in adjacent countries (Table 1): there are Pashtuns in Pakistan and Afghanistan; Tajiks in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; Uzbeks in Uzbekistan and all states around it; Kazakhs in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, etc. Moreover, Russians live in all post-Soviet Central Asian states.

In the past, the name ‘Iran’ connoted a land of Farsi-speaking population, as distinct from ‘Turan’, an ancient name of the land of the Turkic-speaking peoples Turkmen, Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and many others. Another major division in common history was linked to two mutually supporting and interdependent groups of oasis and nomadic populations that have some impact on contemporary traditions and culture. Since ancient times a significant part of Central Asia has been inhabited by a hybrid population with Iranian, Turkic, Mongolian and Indian ancestries.

**Table 1. Population and major ethnic groups in the eight countries**

Country	Population (millions)		Annual population growth rate (%), (2005–2015)	Major ethnic groups
	2005	2015 (prognosis)		
Afghanistan	29.9	41.4	–	Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Aimak, Turkmen, Baloch
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	69.5	79.9	2.6	Persian, Azeri, Gilaki, Mazandarani, Kurd, Arab, Lur, Baloch, Turkmen
Kazakhstan	14.83	14.88	–	Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek, Ukrainian, Uygur
Kyrgyzstan	5.3	5.9	1.1	Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Russian
Pakistan	157.9	193.4	2.0	Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun, Baloch, Muhajir
Tajikistan	6.5	7.6	1.5	Tajik, Uzbek, Russian
Turkmenistan	4.83	5.5	1.3	Turkmen, Uzbek, Russian
Uzbekistan	26.6	30.7	1.4	Uzbek, Tajik, Russian, Kazakh, Karakalpak

Sources: UNCDB (2001); UNDP (2005*b*); CIA (n.d.).

Currently, two predominant *lingua francas* are spoken by two groups of states: the former Soviet republics speak Russian, whereas the other three neighbours communicate in English.

A further distinction is made in terms of education and development, as the development agendas differ in each country. For example, the five post-Soviet states have almost universal literacy and the remnants of a more highly developed infrastructure.

However, it is also worth noting that all eight states are predominantly Muslim, multilingual and multicultural.

Yet despite many different historical trends and divides, recent developments, together with shared and overlapping distribution of ethnicities, religious and cultural traditions signify that these countries share common challenges and perspectives. Even the names of the seven states proudly include the ending 'stan'<sup>4</sup> as a symbol of sovereignty and commonality, giving a sense of shared history and future developments.

Against this background to the region, it is useful to consider the individual situation of each country; therefore a more detailed picture of each is drawn below.

### **Afghanistan**

Over the last twenty-five years, Afghanistan has been a country at risk. A number of people have been displaced several times following major events including the Afghan-Soviet war, the clashes between fighting factions, Taliban repression and its conflict with the Northern Alliance and the US-led war against terrorism. In 2001, international troops under US leadership took Kabul, the capital, and the Bonn Agreement (December 2001) established the Afghan Interim Authority.

Human insecurity in Afghanistan is complicated by weak central power and the availability of arms among non-state actors, including paramilitary groups, narco-dealers, organized crime groups, and others. The security situation is highly dangerous for indigenous people and foreigners in the country. The thriving narcotics industry and devastated infrastructure, internal feuds and landmines make it the most unstable place in the region. Despite significant humanitarian assistance, even some aid workers have been recalled. For example, for the first time in its

<sup>4</sup> Persian suffix meaning 'land' or 'country'.  
<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=-stan&searchmode=none>

history, Médecins sans Frontières left the country because of insecurity for its employees. In 2004, twenty-four aid workers were killed in the country, and five have died in 2005 (CARE, 2005). Thousands of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan are reluctant to return to the country because of human insecurity concerns.

Currently, Afghanistan suffers severely from extreme poverty and insecurity, especially for women and children. Living standards remain among the lowest in the world. Basic needs in housing, clean water, electricity, medical care and jobs are not yet met. Thanks to over US\$2 billion of international assistance following the war in 2001, the economic situation is gradually recovering. However, the opium trade represents one-third of GDP and experts indicate that the narcotics industry comprises 60 per cent of the state's legal economic activities. Donor countries have proposed a sharp eradication of opium crops to be replaced by other types of cash crop, yet this has increased the current levels of extreme poverty, migration and destabilization of the country. Already many poor Afghans have migrated to Pakistan, complaining that 'they cannot survive in Afghanistan without opium' (Rubin and Zakhilwal, 2005, p. 20).

### **Islamic Republic of Iran**

The role of Iran in providing human security standards in the region is highly important. The country hosts over 1 million refugees: 1,223,823 from Afghanistan and 124,014 from Iraq (2004)<sup>5</sup>. Traditionally, Iran has a significant influence on Persian-speaking populations in Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

Since 1979, internal tension between reformists and conservative groups is growing. The conservatives' triumph in parliament in 2004 led, in the 2005 presidential elections, to the

5 See *The World Factbook*:  
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ir.html>

replacement of Khatami by a conservative, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Thus, unlike other Central Asian states, Iran has tense relations with the United States and international agencies, which impede regional dialogue on human security issues between Iran and other states cooperating with the US and its allies.

### **Kazakhstan**

Economically, Kazakhstan gives the impression of being the most successful state in Central Asia. The oil-rich country has the fastest economic development in the region. The rise of its economy and numerous multisectoral reforms have made it stable and attractive for guest workers from neighbouring states.

Concentrating power in the presidency, the authorities silence domestic dissent and opposition parties. The largest opposition party – Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan – has been dissolved by the courts.

### **Kyrgyzstan**

The Kyrgyz Republic was called an ‘island of democracy’ in post-Soviet Central Asia. Thanks to some political and economic liberalization that has contributed to building a vibrant civil society and to external aid, the country seems to be the most advanced in comparison with the other four post-communist states. Further, Kyrgyzstan was the first country in the region to become a member of the World Trade Organization. The recent March revolution in 2005 ousted the corrupt leadership and demonstrated strong mass support for democratic values and reforms.

However, serious institutional weakness and corruption, pervasive poverty, an unsustainable level of debt and the lack of access to regional markets provide tremendous challenges and risks for such a small country. Despite political and economic

liberalization, and the highest aid per capita, Kyrgyzstan remains a heavily indebted poor country.

### **Pakistan**

Pakistan has 151 million people, making it the second largest Muslim country in the world. Since 1947, when the state was established, the population has increased ninefold and is predicted to double by 2035 (IRIN, 2005*b*). Structural reforms on public and corporate governance, liberalization of the economy, privatization of public sector enterprises and changes in education greatly improved development outcomes. However, according to World Bank observations, Pakistan's social indicators are still low compared with countries with similar per capita incomes (World Bank, 2005*a*).

An alliance of six religious parties threatens to introduce *sharia* law in provinces adjoining Afghanistan. Sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shiites has destabilized the situation in the southern part of the country. In addition, Pakistan hosts over 1 million Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and a large group of refugees in remote tribal areas poses a serious challenge to state and human security.

Further, in terms of other security issues, Pakistan is the only Muslim country to have declared possession of nuclear power. General Musharraf closely cooperates with the Bush administration in the US-led war against terror. Under Musharraf, the peace talks with India over the Kashmir issue have made very slow steps forward and these highly militarized disputes in Kashmir and tense relations between Pakistan and India have had negative implications for the region and the world. Waziristan, the area adjacent to Afghanistan, has become a safe haven for a number of home-grown Pakistani extremists together with like-minded Arabs, Chechens and Uzbeks.



## **Tajikistan**

Tajikistan, the poorest country among the post-communist states, has had to resolve numerous problems after the war in 1992–97. Eighty per cent of the population of 6.3 million are estimated to be living in poverty. The government under President Emomali Rakhmonov has taken measures to restructure agriculture and privatize state enterprises. Several subregions of the country compete with each other over resources, investments and access to political power in the capital. After the war and the subsequent redistribution of power, the traditionally better-developed north (Sugd province) has been marginalized from political processes, whereas the factional groups from the poorer south, led by the president, dominate the government.

Yet, on the positive side, numerous local NGOs supported by international organizations greatly contribute to the post-conflict reconstruction and the promotion of human security. For example, thirty-two NGOs based in Dushanbe sent an open letter to the leaders of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, expressing concern and urging them to do more to protect citizens from mines planted on the Tajik-Uzbek border (Zakirova, 2003). This is an excellent example of civil society involvement in social and security issues.

Lastly, in terms of politics, Tajikistan remains the only country of the former Soviet Union that has a legal religious political party, the Islamic Party of Rebirth, and its members are included in the government administration. Prince Aga Khan and his Foundation have an impressive aid programme for stability in Tajikistan, including the Ismaili population in mountainous Badakhshan<sup>6</sup>.

6 For more information see: [www.akdn.org](http://www.akdn.org)

## **Turkmenistan**

Economic growth in Turkmenistan is provided by export of hydrocarbons. Besides having the world's fifth-largest reserves of natural gas, the country is among the world's top ten producers of cotton.

However, the political situation in Turkmenistan is less positive: It is the only country in Central Asia where only one pro-president political party is operating. Saparmurad Niyazov, supported by Mikhail Gorbachev, became president in the late 1980s. Since the early 1990s, the opposition movement was suppressed and many opponents of the regime had to flee the country. The momentum for change has been lost. Niyazov proclaimed himself president for life, with the title Turkmenbashi (Head of all Turkmen).

Thus, even though people's basic needs are being met in terms of having food provided by the government in exchange for labour, the poor human rights record and restriction of political and economic freedoms still weigh heavily on the population. Most people work for the public sector and are therefore dependent on government hand-outs, making them more vulnerable to discriminatory government policies. In 2000, for example, only 10 per cent of the labour force worked in the private sector, mainly in trade and consumer services<sup>7</sup>.

Security issues remain ambiguous. In 1995, Turkmenistan received UN-recognized status as a neutral country, yet this small country spent US\$200 million on military equipment in 2003. According to the president, the country has the most up-to-date arms, aircraft and helicopters to protect itself in case of danger (RFE/RL, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> For more information see:  
<http://www.heritage.org/research/features/index/countries.cfm>

## **Uzbekistan**

Uzbekistan's political situation is challenging. Declaring 'a particular path to success' and calling the country 'an island of stability', the Uzbek leadership has suspended political and economic reforms (ICG, 2001*b*). Since September 2001, President Islam Karimov's term has been extended by an additional two years by the Oliy Majlis (parliament) and by referendum. As a result, Karimov, president since 1989, has been confirmed till 2007. During peaceful demonstrations in Andijon (Fergana Valley) on 13 May 2005, protesters demanded liberalization in political and economic life. However, hundreds of civilians were killed and fled to neighbouring Kyrgyzstan<sup>8</sup>.

Thus there are many similarities and differences in the political, social, economic and security issues present in each of the Central Asian countries. Cognizant of this historical legacy and the current context, a detailed analysis of the normative and ethical frameworks of the region can now be considered.

## **2 Normative and ethical frameworks**

### **Normative**

#### *(i) National law/constitutions*

In Central Asia, human security is closely linked to state security and national laws assure many elements of human security in different ways. As the Commission on Human Security's report *Human Security Now* emphasizes, 'human security and state security are mutually reinforcing and dependent on each other. Without human security, state security cannot be attained and vice versa' (CHS, 2003, p. 6).

<sup>8</sup> Local activists say 3,000 missing, over 1,000 dead after Andijon killings (IRIN, 2005*c*).

In 1991, the post-Soviet Central Asian countries adopted new constitutions and national laws reflecting an uneasy transition from the communist system to the new normative, ethical and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security, market economy and democracy. Similarly, in newborn Afghanistan, the current government and society face myriad challenges in building the normative, ethical and educational frameworks for promoting human security. For example, President Karzai and international actors have to negotiate a normative framework with Afghan Islamists. As a result, the Constitution of January 2004 proclaims that the state complies with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Rubin, 2004*b*, p. 14). However, the Islamists requested that the president should be male and this is clearly not equitable in terms of gender issues (p. 15). This request contradicts Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, and Article 1 in that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

In general, national constitutions and other legal frameworks guarantee the protection of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities. The ethnic and religious structure of all Central Asian states is highly diverse and most national governments promote a policy of ethnic peace and religious tolerance. However, in reality, in certain cases, ethnic/subethnic and religious minorities may be alienated from political life. International and local human rights communities repeatedly report on discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities in the region. For example, Human Rights Watch expresses concerns that the Turkmen authorities are implementing a policy of ethnic homogeneity by closing all foreign-language schools and minority ethnic and cultural centres, thus making only the Turkmen language used in all education systems in this multi-ethnic country (Human Rights Watch, 2004).

*(ii) International law/conventions*

The normative framework common to all nations includes international laws and conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and many other documents. Central Asian states have signed a number of international treaties and conventions expressing their commitment to international norms in the areas of human rights, labour, and environmental protection, for example. By means of international relations and membership of many worldwide organizations, they are encouraged to follow these standards and integrate into the international community. As 2003 Nobel Peace prizewinner Shirin Ebadi from Iran points out, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is ‘applicable to both East and West. It is compatible with every faith and religion. Failing to respect our human rights only undermines our humanity’ (UNDP, 2004, p. 23).

Among multilateral institutions that operate in the region are UN organizations, international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, and others. The credibility of the UN family, the Bretton Woods institutions, and other organizations is relatively high in Central Asian states and many of these organizations support a norm-building environment in each country. For example, the well-placed UNDP agencies encourage local and international actors to prepare and share the regional and national human development reports and common country assessments. National human development reports and other publications provide analysis and recommendations for many aspects of human security in each country.

International and regional agencies support standards of good governance and human security. They are a significant help in building the institutional framework: the electoral systems,

party systems, parliament, government and civil society organizations. The UN agencies, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and international and local NGOs provide high-quality monitoring and documentation of threats to human security and human rights in the region. They attempt to collaborate with national governments in developing and strengthening the normative framework for human security that is the adoption of international conventions and harmonization with national laws. Addressing the need for an accurate picture of events on the ground in Central Asia, the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), part of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has established a Central Asia office that covers eight countries.

The Millennium Development Goals concept introduced a simple and clear strategy to promote many elements of human security in each country. The goals bring together governments, non-governmental organizations and international agencies to identify priorities for national and regional partnership. The programme provides an opportunity to set regional benchmarks to measure progress and share experiences and lessons learnt from promoting human security in the region.

OSCE presence has been greatly expanded in recent years in the post-Soviet states and Afghanistan. According to International Crisis Group observations, despite the region's obvious needs, post-communist Central Asia receives only an insignificant part of OSCE's attention and resources. For example, 'less than five per cent of its total budget goes to its missions and programmes in the five states, and about 30 international officers, out of a total OSCE field presence of nearly 3,500' (ICG, 2002). To a certain extent this can be explained by the reluctance showed by some Central Asian politicians to have Western organizations involved in their domestic political issues.

The international community offers support in promoting human rights in each country and disapproves of violation of human rights and human insecurity in some Central Asian

countries. For example, the UN Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution in April 2004 expressing disapproval of Turkmenistan's restrictions on political freedoms, rights of ethnic minorities and suppression of the media. In response, the Turkmen leadership criticized the UN for its lack of knowledge of the country. If a political leadership does not comply with the commitments of international conventions that the country has signed in the area of human rights and human security, international organizations may use other mechanisms to promote human security. For example, the Uzbek leadership's negative response to an independent investigation into the police crackdown of the 2005 Andijon unrest and slaughter of hundreds of civilians prompted the European Union to decrease aid, suspend a cooperation agreement, enforce an arms embargo on Uzbekistan and even disallow Uzbek officials responsible for 'the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force' against unarmed demonstrators from travelling to Europe (RFE/RL, 2005).

International and local NGOs across the region use the human rights normative framework to provide more human security at national and community level. Inadequate information on this framework on human security and insufficient resources may well lead to disappointment and fear in society. For example, in the Russian Federation thousands of migrant workers from several Central Asian states are not familiar with the laws of the host country. Application of the human rights/security framework to illegal and legal migration may solve certain problems. For policy-makers and their advocacy groups it is very important to make the normative documents known, in order to prevent unjustified discrimination against migrants.

Over the last few years, multilateral organizations and country donors have increasingly highlighted a regional approach to promoting human security in Central Asia. The World Bank launched a regional programme in the Low-Income CIS-7 countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which have a common

agenda in nation-building, democratization and the market economy. Targeting human insecurity, the Asian Development Bank supports regional cooperation, economic growth and governance in Central Asian countries. Its regional projects are focused on the development of transport, energy and trade, and other issues affecting human security. ADB aid is also provided in the form of loans for transport projects (ADB, n.d.) and a grant for the implementation of the 'Great Silk Road' initiative (BBC, 2003). Other international financial institutions also raised their level of assistance with normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security in the region. The EBRD has increased its assistance<sup>9</sup> and the European Commission has opened new offices in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, in addition to the existing one in Kazakhstan.

A number of international organizations and NGOs<sup>10</sup> offer aid in promoting the international normative framework for human security. Their reports attempt to identify the causes of conflict and human insecurity and propose policy recommendations for local and external actors. The International Crisis Group, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflicts, has offices in Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek) and Pakistan (Islamabad). Local journalists supported by the Institute for War & Peace Reporting, a UK-based NGO, also inform the Central Asian population about human security issues in a timely manner.

### *(iii) Customary law*

In each country of Central Asia, the human security paradigm is understood in different ways although people in the eight states discuss local and regional challenges to human security

9 For more information see Eshanova (2002).

10 Notably, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Institute for War & Peace Reporting, International Crisis Group, Médecins sans Frontières, Mercy Corps, OXFAM, Save the Children (UK and Denmark), Transparency International.



and attempt to respond jointly to cross-border problems such as narco-trade, migration, gender inequality, religious extremism, environmental issues and other problems. Nevertheless, a lack of public discussion over the normative framework for human security in these diverse societies is obvious.

In Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan a number of traditions support prejudices and unfairness towards women and youth. For example, in Afghanistan and Pakistan, customary law dominates thanks to tribal elders and many other community institutions. *Pushtunwali*, a blend of an ethnic code of honour and a local version of Islamic law, traditionally plays an important role in social life and human security issues among Pashtuns. According to experts, in Afghanistan 'fostering the informal system will be both more realistic and more sensible in the cultural context than trying to push the formal justice system into remote areas' (USIP, 2004, p. 10).

In the post-Soviet countries, despite having progressive written law, oral law dominates in certain areas at grass-roots level, for example, some elements of oral law (*Adat*) promote gender and age discrimination in society. A number of international and local NGOs advocate that the preservation of traditions that discriminate against certain groups in society would curtail human development and human security. In Central Asia customary law in many cases is unfair to women and youth, and this impedes their empowerment. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that the restoration of *mahalla* (neighbourhood) committees and court of elders' institutions in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan reinforces some elements of customary law in society. According to Human Rights Watch, the *mahalla* committee or the 'centuries-old autonomous institution organized around Islamic rituals and social events', has been adopted to modern development in Uzbekistan. In reality, the *mahalla* committees act as 'family courts, deny battered wives permission to divorce, sending them back to their husbands and the violence they face in their homes' (HRW, 2003).

On the whole, the complexity and impact of customary law on human security in Central Asia remain under-researched and frequently ignored in policy-making processes. Not all traditional practices contradict the concept of human security. Many ethnic and religious traditions in Central Asia merit preservation, such as mutual help at community level, ethnic and religious tolerance, hospitality, sensible respect for elders, importance of family, support of disadvantaged groups of population, and a high regard for the local environment and holy places.

### **Ethical: behaviour of relevant state and non-state actors**

In several countries, a gap in understanding the ethical and normative frameworks of human security is widening between the state and non-state actors and between various segments of society. The leadership and the general population often interpret human security differently. In some cases, state actors consider political liberalization and democratization as a challenge to stability and security in their states and region. A number of political leaders tend to equate human security with state security. A few national governments prioritize the threat of international terrorism, whereas the public believes that poverty and a lack of human security, including daily needs, are the most important problems.

Policies of state and non-state actors create ethical obligations. In an assessment of public figures who pursue certain policies, the public often assesses the ethics of their behaviour. For example, one of the reasons that the March 2005 revolution in Kyrgyzstan occurred was the widening gap between leadership rhetoric and the actual situation in the country. In general, voters question how their leaders intend to protect their freedom from want and fear. Not surprisingly, in assessing the leadership of a country, most state and non-state actors take into consideration international norms of ethical behaviour and most public figures apply international and

national laws to local traditions of good governance. In a few states, problems relating to the ethical and normative frameworks of human security are rarely discussed publicly.

Concerning the ethical framework, certain Central Asian politicians refer to national specific norms and traditions, some of which may support undemocratic models of development. The language and tools of the human security and human rights framework thus sound unfamiliar and unrelated to the national interest of these policy-makers.

Providing free public utilities (gas, electricity, water), promising national prosperity for all and isolating the country from the international community, the authorities emphasize the specificity of the Turkmenistan way of development<sup>11</sup>. However, the human rights community urges Turkmenistan to cooperate more closely with the UN human rights system<sup>12</sup>. Although international documents promote universal ideals on human rights and human security, a number of countries consider these ideals as equivocating the influence of and pressure from the Christian West. As Caroline Thomas noted, 'the scepticism and cynicism of developing countries and global citizens regarding global governance is understandable', as they see little distance between US policy and the IMF, WB, G7 and other international organizations. She recommends that, 'ultimately human security requires different development strategies from those currently

11 In the name of building the Turkmen nation, the president has banned opera, ballet, circus and the philharmonic orchestra. Libraries in rural areas are being shut down. It was announced that all hospitals outside the capitol of Ashgabat would also be closed (HRW, 2005*b*).

12 According to Human Rights Watch, the Turkmen Government has not cooperated fully with the UN human rights system, although it has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and other major human rights treaties. It has not filed a single report to UN treaty bodies (HRW, 2005*a*).

favoured by global governance institutions. Strategies that have redistribution at their core' (Thomas, 2001, pp. 173–74).

Furthermore, few leaders in the Central Asian states confront norms and values promoted by international agencies. For example, some politicians doubt whether their countries should follow recommendations relating to human security and human rights, calling them Western values and democracy (IRIN, 2004*c*). After the revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine, the Open Society Institute (Soros Foundation) and later many civil society organizations in Uzbekistan were closed down on the plea of protecting local traditions. A number of political leaders offer consideration of issues of governance separately from human rights, criticizing the international organizations, including international financial institutions, for intervention in the ethical framework of human security<sup>13</sup>. The political leadership explained that the institute, like many international organizations, came 'to a Muslim country without understanding our thousands of years of history and our values, and they are trying to destroy our traditions' (Pannier, 2004).

In the post-Soviet Central Asian states, the process of a restoration of ethnic and Islamic identities leads to myriad public discussions about history, traditions and cultural heritage. Some political leaders of the newly independent Muslim countries, in search of national ideology and integration of various segments of society, promoted the veneration of medieval figures who ruled across Central Asia. Building national ideology through ethnocentrism and the glorification of ancient war-time rule may well contradict leadership commitments to pursue democracy and stability in the region.

Another aspect of the ethical approach to human security issues is that some local leaders exploit the presence and military

13 For example, it was said 'the European Bank [for Reconstruction and Development] sometimes takes too much on itself – sometimes you can't understand whether it's a bank with economic and financial interests or a human rights organization' (Pannier, 2004).

interests of international agencies and great powers, to further enrich ruling families. As Barnett Rubin notes, this practice 'creates opportunities for capturing resources by patronage networks. These include direct corruption (bribery over contracts), nepotism, and various form of favouritism' (Rubin, 2004a, p. 25).

Thus the ethical and normative approaches to human security are increasingly essential for the Central Asian countries that share numerous cross-border and regional problems. In this context, national and external actors help to fine-tune the normative and ethical approaches to human security, within security and moral principles.

### **3 Educational framework**

#### **Relation between education and human security**

As Amartya Sen underlines, human security stands 'on the shoulders of human development with a particular adaptation of its rich vision and perspective, and this applies especially strongly to the critical role of elementary education' (Sen, 2002). The education framework is one of the most important ways of promoting ideas of human security in society. Significant state and private investments in education mean more freedom from fear and want. Primary education for many people is a first step to security, employment, political participation and legal rights.

Lack of schooling leads to the reinforcement of traditional gender and age discrimination that is deeply rooted in Central Asian societies. The first signs of this are now showing in post-Soviet Central Asia, due to severe budget cuts in the education sector. Illiteracy also greatly limits the social emancipation of women and several countries – Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan – still suffer from educational backwardness, especially among women. Yet data from Central Asian countries confirm that

children's mortality rate and the adult fertility rate are both decreasing, concurrent with advances in education and the empowerment of women.

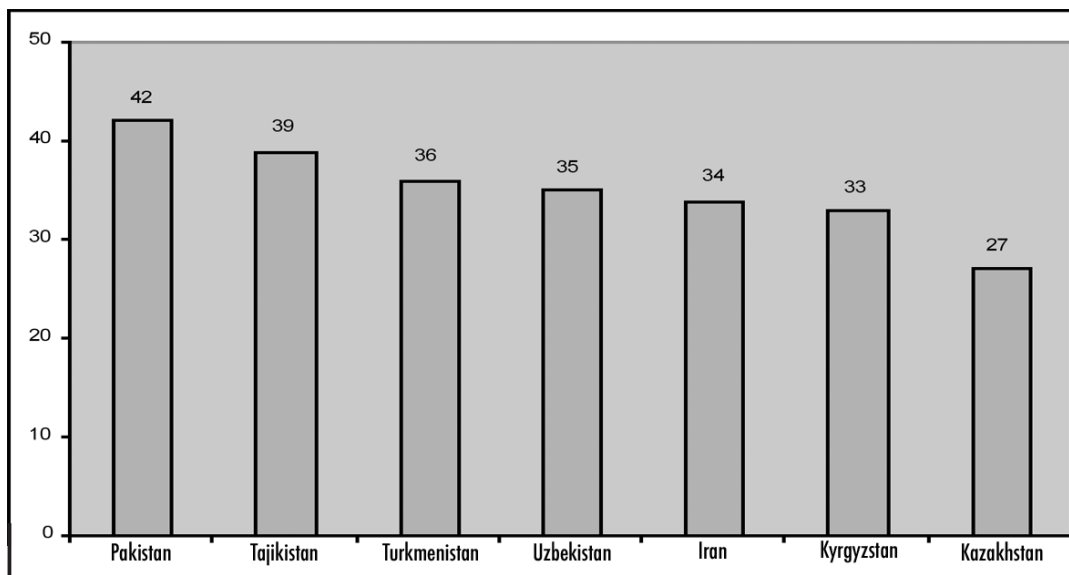
There is probably a connection between poor education and internal state conflicts. Discussions about relations between education and human security pointed out that 'a dysfunctional educational system can raise the expectations of graduates without giving them the tools to participate in the modern economy'. The consequences of this gap between expectations and opportunities may cause social problems and social exclusion<sup>14</sup>. In the Central Asian context, the content of education is key to promoting human security.

### **Situation in Central Asia**

In the modern world of Central Asia, illiteracy and innumeracy entail human insecurity, whereas people's empowerment through universal basic education gives them more knowledge and skills on human security. Primary and secondary education is particularly significant: in all eight states, children and young people constitute the majority of the population. Youth under 15 make up to 42 per cent of the total population in Pakistan, 39 per cent in Tajikistan and 36 per cent in Turkmenistan (see Figure 1) (UNCDB, 2001). There is a higher burden on the education system in most Central Asian states compared with regions such as Latin America or East Asia; for example, in China and the Republic of Korea the figures are 24 per cent and 21 per cent respectively.

14 Workshop on Education, Equity, and Security, organized by the Commission on Human Security, UNICEF/India, the Pratichi Trust and Harvard University, in Kolkata (India), 2–4 January 2002.  
<http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/activities/outreach/0102Kolkata.html>

**Figure 1. Youth under 15 (as percentage of total population)**



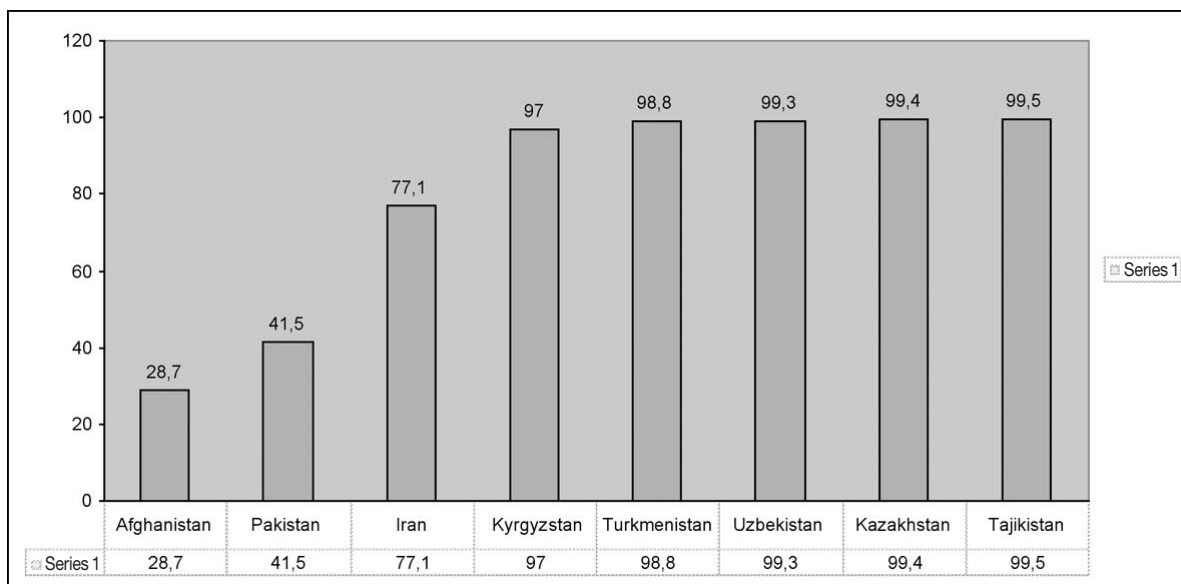
*Source:* UNCDB (2001).

In three states – Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran – the problems of illiteracy are particularly challenging (Figure 2). The small number of those aged 15 and over who can read and write and understand a short, simple statement relating to their everyday life is alarming: 71 per cent and 58 per cent of the population in Afghanistan and Pakistan respectively, and one-fifth of the population in Iran, are unable to read.

Universal primary education, with a particular emphasis on girls' education, is one of the most important goals in the region, especially in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran (Figure 3). In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the female literacy rates (age 15 and over) are respectively only 14 per cent and 35.2 per cent, the lowest in the world. Journalists report that among the approximately 4 million Afghan children attending school, roughly 75 per cent are boys (Coleman, 2004, p. 59). Similarly, in Pakistan, in the rural areas only 22 per cent of girls and 47 per cent of boys over the age of 10 have completed primary level or higher schooling (World Bank, 2005a). In these countries, the majority of educated women live in cities, whereas in rural areas

most women remain illiterate. Poor educational infrastructure, cultural barriers and security concerns affect girls' school attendance. The absence of public transport and poor roads also make school access very difficult for girls from rural areas. Another reason for the high illiteracy rate for girls is related to common traditions of using child labour, particularly female child labour. Gender imbalance in enrolment means that a significant proportion of women will suffer from the vicious cycle of poverty and will probably not escape their miserable plight.

**Figure 2. Adult literacy in Central Asia, percentage aged 15 and over (HDI 2002, Afghanistan 2003)**



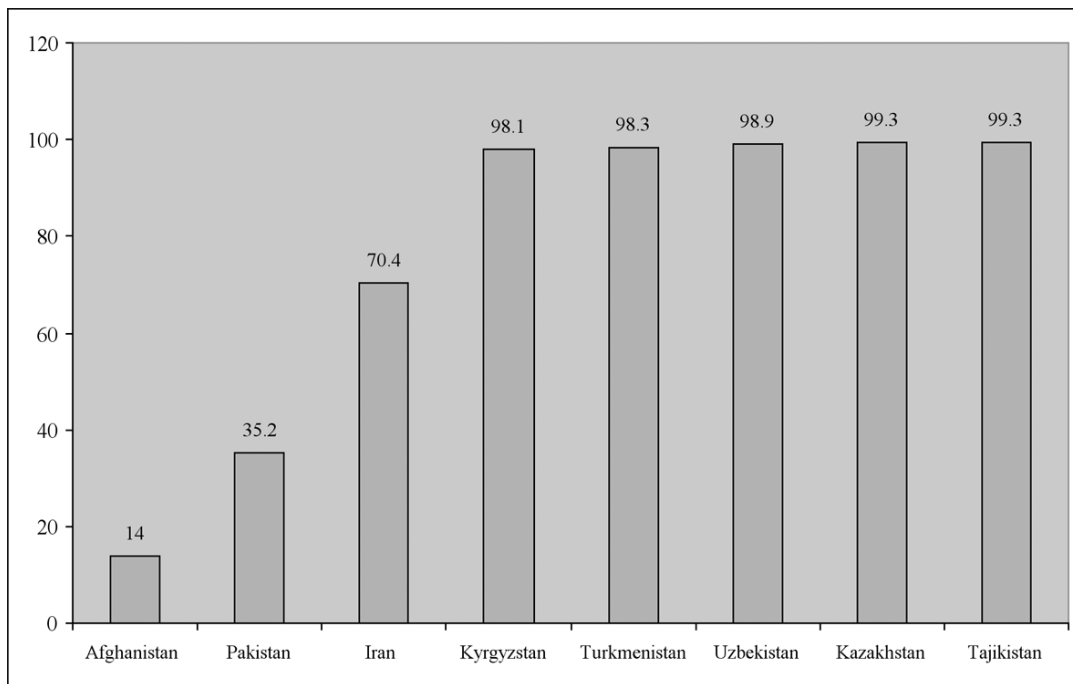
Source: UNCEDB (UNESCO estimates)

In contrast, populations in post-Soviet countries enjoy universal primary education, although some are gradually losing this benefit. The official data on literacy in a few post-Soviet countries may not fully reflect the real situation in rural communities. A number of families cannot afford to pay for their children's studies, even if primary and secondary education continues to be free across the region. The education systems



suffer in terms of both access and quality: infrastructure breakdown; introduction of fees hampering equitable access; acute shortage of teachers and resources, underqualification and underpayment of teachers; decline in expenditures on the sector as a whole; the need to change textbooks and curricula. These factors have led to a drastic decline in the standard of universal adult education from its former level, especially among the female population.

**Figure 3. Female adult literacy, percentage aged 15 and over (HDI 2002)**



Sources: UNDP (2005a, p. 281; 2005b).

At the same time, conservative views prioritizing early marriage for women above education are shared by many parents, particularly in rural areas. In Tajikistan, one mother puts it plainly: ‘Boys have more responsibility in life. They have to feed their family and children.’ Another Tajik mother explains that families simply have no alternative: ‘We do not have a choice. We have to

push our boys to study, rather than girls. We cannot offer girls conditions to study because it is too expensive, because we have to pay for every university' (EurasiaNet, 2003a). Tajikistan has one of the widest gender gaps in tertiary education among countries in the post-Soviet region. Several countries, notably Iran, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, have made progress in increasing the enrolment of female students in tertiary education (Table 2).

**Table 2. Ratio of female to male enrolment in tertiary education**

Country	1990	1998	2000	2001
Afghanistan	0.48	—	—	—
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	0.48	0.8	0.94	1.01
Kazakhstan	—	1.16	1.18	1.26
Kyrgyzstan	—	1.04	1.04	1.14
Pakistan	0.58	—	—	—
Tajikistan	0.61	0.35	0.32	0.33

*Source:* UNCDB (UNESCO estimates).

Another serious impediment to universal education is the wide use of child labour in Central Asia. The International Crisis Group report states that the International Labour Organization could be usefully involved, and the three states, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, that are using schoolchildren for cotton collection should adhere to its Convention No. 182 (1999) on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour<sup>15</sup>. All three states have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan should be encouraged by UNICEF and other UN agencies to submit five-year periodic reports in 2005, as they are

15 For more information on the ILO campaign, see: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/>

obliged under the Convention, but there is no record of Turkmenistan having submitted any reports<sup>16</sup>.

In Turkmenistan, the reform of the education system does not allow children and youth access to worldwide information and knowledge on human security. Higher education is now limited to two years.

Numerous projects expanding higher educational opportunities have been initiated on the domestic and international fronts. The American University of Central Asia, Aga Khan universities in four states, the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP) and many other universities have greatly changed the image of higher education in the region. In cooperation with academia and universities, UNESCO has launched several projects on education for peace, tolerance and cultural diversity. For example, the International Institute for Central Asian Studies in Samarkand (Uzbekistan), supported by UNESCO, promotes the regional study of common history and culture.

A new factor that contributes to fragmentation in the post-Soviet republics is the use of and differences between languages and alphabets. Whereas Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have adopted Latin script, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan continue using the Cyrillic alphabet. Learned people in these states have very little access to mainstream information on human security because they lack command of the English language and there are insufficient funds to develop modern social sciences and policy research institutions. In comparison, policy-makers and educated professionals in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan are fluent in English and enjoy better access to the worldwide knowledge and information that is normatively based in the linguistic hegemony of English.

16 See the sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/sessions.htm>. There is no indication that Tajikistan or Uzbekistan are planning to submit reports in this timeframe. Kyrgyzstan submitted a report in 2004.

All these factors that promote human security, communication and Internet connections, freedom and openness of the press and academia in reporting on and reflecting the world and their important function in building well-informed modern societies, are rapidly developing in most Central Asian countries (Table 3). In a few of them, the lack of a unified communication space and liberal media impedes independent research and discussion of human security issues at all levels.

**Table 3. Information and communication data**

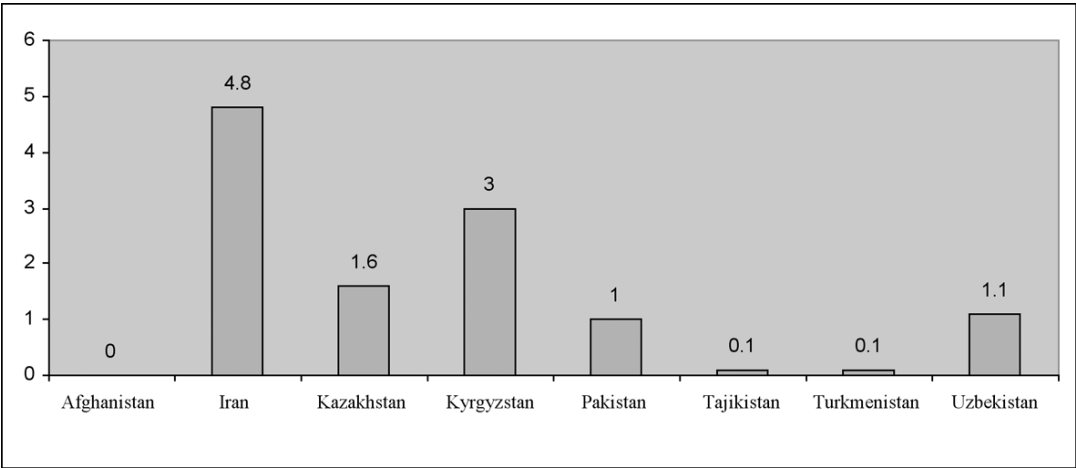
	Daily newspapers per 1,000 people (2000)	Radios per 1,000 people (2001)	Television sets per 1,000 people (2001)	Cable subscribers per 1,000 people (2001)
Afghanistan	5	114	14	0.0
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	28	281	163	–
Kazakhstan	–	411	241	4.1
Kyrgyzstan	27	110	49	2.6
Pakistan	40	105	148	–
Tajikistan	20	141	326	–
Turkmenistan	7	256	196	–
Uzbekistan	3	456	276	3.0

*Source:* World Bank (2003).

Figure 4 shows that the highest share of Internet users per 1,000 people is in Iran, followed by Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Compared with their neighbours, populations in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan largely lack access to the Internet or national and international information. The currently increasing use of and access to the Internet by urban youth is indicative of a widening gap between cities and rural areas in terms of both technology uptake and information access. One of the many Cold War legacies is that the mainstream of information about post-Soviet Central Asian states comes mainly from Moscow and the West whereas horizontal communication between states is

extremely fragmented. For example, there is very little information flow between neighbouring Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and the post-Soviet Central Asian states. Despite having a common history and culture, neighbourhood and shared challenges and interests, these countries lack expert knowledge, or even basic information, about each other.

**Figure 4. Internet users per 1,000 people in Central Asia: access to World Wide Web (2002)**



Source: UNCDB (ITU estimates, 2002).

### III

## **Threats to human security**

### **4 Political and social exclusion**

In general, the majority of people in the region have restricted access to political participation. Tracking progress in electoral processes, governance and legislative frameworks, in 2005 Freedom House assessed all countries in the region and determined that they are not free (Table 4). All have serious problems with political rights and civil liberties. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan remain the lowest-ranking countries: freedom of expression is severely limited there. Repressive regimes have imprisoned political dissidents and independent religious leaders. Such autocracy and restriction of political and economic freedoms in several countries of Central Asia has spill-over effects: migration and conflicts. In this neighbourhood, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Tajikistan have slightly better profiles in political rights than the others. In Iran, confrontation between the conservative clerical leaders and reformists holds back the development of normative and educational frameworks for promoting human security. These scores to some extent reflect the environment for discussing human security issues in each country and in the region.

**Table 4. Comparative measures of freedom in the world (2005)**

Country	Political rights rating*	Civil liberties rating*	Freedom rating
Afghanistan	5	6	Not free
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	6	6	Not free
Kazakhstan	6	5	Not free
Kyrgyzstan	6	5	Not free
Pakistan	6	5	Not free
Tajikistan	6	5	Not free
Turkmenistan	7	7	Not free
Uzbekistan	7	6	Not free

\*Scale: 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating.

Source: Freedom House (2005a).

## **5 Economic transition and Human Development Index**

As Owen notes (2004, p. 381), the human security responses to the most urgent threats and human development, in fact tackle 'societal well being'. In recent years, the international community and national governments have increased their focus on long-term programmes of poverty reduction. The Millennium Development Goals determine common parameters on poverty reduction and associated projects mobilize various players and donors in promoting human security in the region. Poverty and increasing inequality characterize the current landscape of the eight Central Asian states, as shown by the UNDP annual *Human Development Reports* which present a clear picture of the evolution of the Human Development Index (Table 5).

Afghanistan is ranked with a comparatively low rate of human development; whereas the other Central Asian countries have a medium rate. According to World Bank data (2005b), poverty rates remain the highest in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan. However, insufficient and conflicting poverty data do not allow an assessment of the real situation in Central Asia, where poverty has in fact been reduced in all countries. The post-Soviet states are steadily recovering after the shocks of the early years of transition in the 1990s. Several Central Asian countries adopted Poverty Reduction Strategies

supported by international financial institutions and country donors. This has allowed attention and efforts to be concentrated on poverty reduction and economic growth.

**Table 5. Human Development Index in Central Asia (2003)\***

HDI rank	Country	HDI value	Life expectancy at birth (years)
80	Kazakhstan	0.761	63.2
97	Turkmenistan	0.738	62.4
99	Iran, Islamic Rep. of	0.736	70.4
109	Kyrgyzstan	0.702	66.8
111	Uzbekistan	0.694	66.5
122	Tajikistan	0.652	63.6
135	Pakistan	0.527	63.0
173	Afghanistan (2002)	0.346	44.5

\*Human Development Index: composite index measuring a country's achievements in three aspects of human development: longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Sources: UNDP (2005a; 2005b).

People suffer from economic insecurity if they are unemployed or underemployed, undernourished and lacking access to health, education and social protection. Economic insecurity widens the gap between income groups, men and women, cities and villages, and the ethnic majority and minorities.

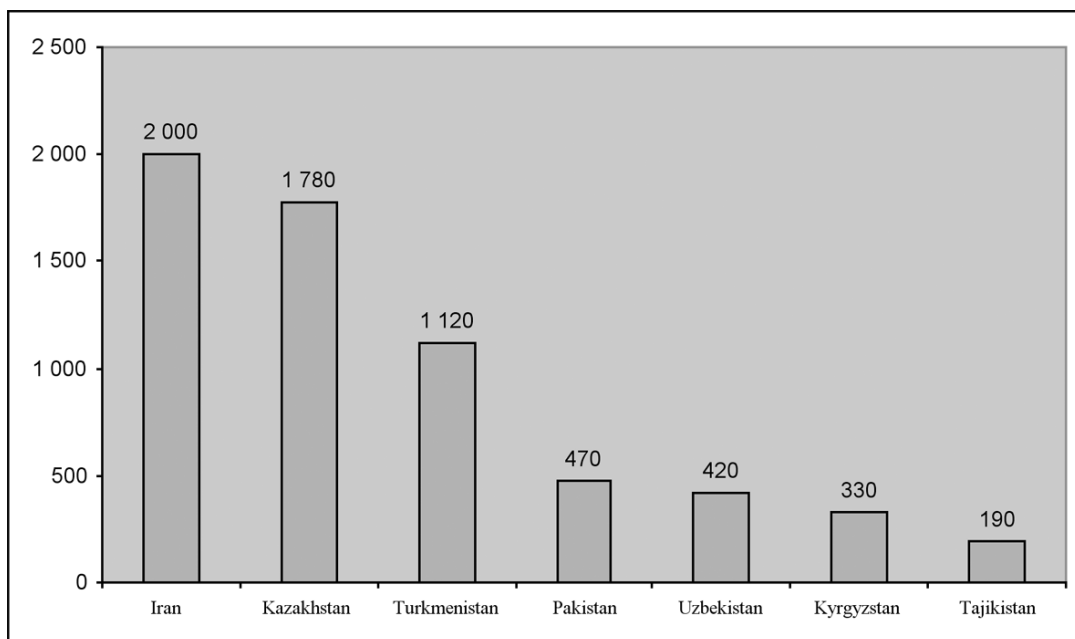
The Central Asian economies remain highly dependent on natural resources that could affect future economic growth and poverty reduction. Figure 5 demonstrates a significant gap in gross national income (GNI)<sup>17</sup> between two groups of states. The highest GNI per capita is in Iran, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, countries blessed by rich natural resources, however, their human security indicators may not be higher than in other Central Asian

17 Gross national income (formerly gross national product or GNP), the broadest measure of national income, measures total value added from domestic and foreign sources claimed by residents. GNI comprises gross domestic product (GDP) plus net receipts of primary income from foreign sources.



countries. The cases of the oil/gas rich countries demonstrate that poverty increases or remains because of inequality in income distribution. For example, in Kazakhstan, the country's economic growth does not affect the wide gap between poor and rich in certain regions and between provinces. Economic exclusion based on locality, age, ethnic and religious identity can fuel tensions and discontent in any country. Life expectancy at birth also does not reflect the wealth of the state or per capita GNI: oil-rich Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have surprisingly low indicators, such as life expectancy at birth, compared with Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan. In the most troubled country, Afghanistan, life expectancy at birth is 18–25 years lower than in other Central Asian states.

**Figure 5. Gross national income (GNI) per capita US\$ (2003)**

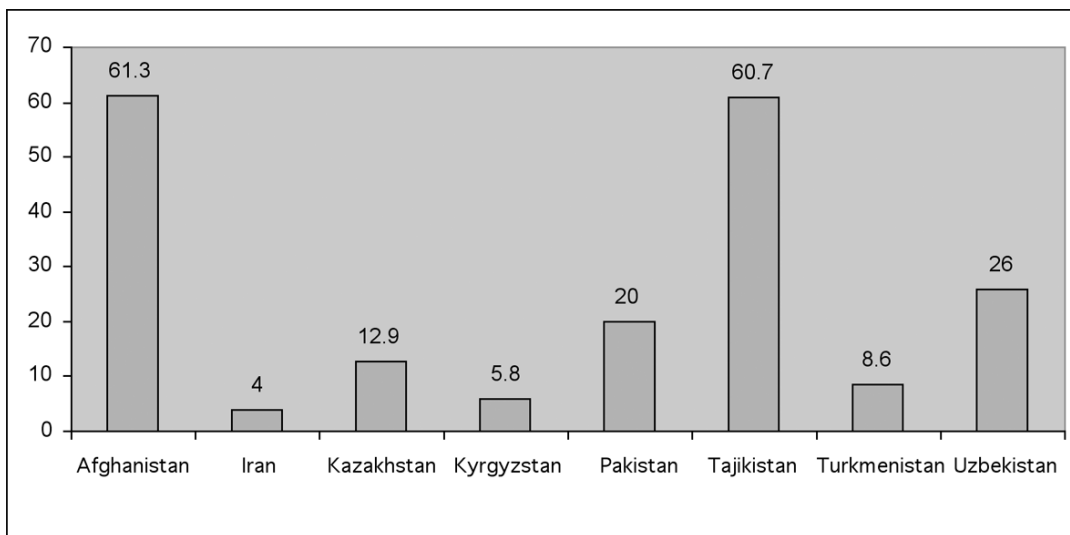


*Source:* World Bank (2005*b*).

Food security is one of the most important indicators of human security. According to the statistics of the Food and

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the number of undernourished people is highest, at over 60 per cent of the population, in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. However, estimates (Figure 6) of undernourished people in Kazakhstan as lower than in Uzbekistan and Pakistan look doubtful, indicating the need for improvement of statistics methodology in the Central Asian region.

**Figure 6. Undernourishment in Central Asia: percentage of total population whose food intake is chronically insufficient to meet minimum energy requirements (2001)**



*Source:* UNCDB (FAO estimates).

The percentage of GDP spent on essential social and health services and on the military differ in Central Asian countries (Table 6). Analysis of the budget is complicated by lack of data. However, it is clear that a group of oil/gas-rich countries (Iran, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) is not spending significantly more on health services than their poorly resource neighbours. In contrast to most of the post-Soviet states, Pakistan spends a much higher percentage of its GDP on military needs, greater than education and health combined, and this is reflected in its very high illiteracy rates.

**Table 6. Percentage of GDP spent on essential social and health services**

	Public expenditure (% of GDP)		Military expenditure (% of GDP) (2002)
	Education (2000–02)	Health (2002)	
Afghanistan	1.6 (2002)	0.50	2.6 (2004)
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	4.9	2.9	4.0
Kazakhstan	3.0	1.9	1.0
Kyrgyzstan	3.1	2.2	1.5
Pakistan	1.8	1.1	4.7
Tajikistan	2.8	0.9	1.4
Turkmenistan	–	3.0	3.4 (1999)
Uzbekistan	–	2.5	2 (1997)

Sources: UNDP (2004, pp. 203–4); UNDP (2005*b*); CIA (n.d.); UNDP (2005*a*, p. 280)

In most cases, people are eager to improve their situation but restrictions on their economic freedom limit their activities.

**Table 7. Index of economic freedom (2005)**

	Rank	Score	Category
Kyrgyzstan	97	3.29	Mostly unfree
Kazakhstan	130	3.66	Mostly unfree
Pakistan	133	3.73	Mostly unfree
Tajikistan	144	4.00	Repressed
Uzbekistan	147	4.10	Repressed
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	148	4.16	Repressed
Turkmenistan	151	4.36	Repressed

Source: Heritage Foundation/*Wall Street Journal* (2005).

Poverty and high unemployment lead to the smuggling of raw materials, involvement in arms, drugs and human trafficking and participation in many other sectors of the informal economy across porous regional borders. Protectionist tariff policies, stringent visa regimes, and unofficial fees to customs officials have damaged the so-called ‘shuttle trade’ in foodstuffs and consumer

goods across post-Soviet Central Asia. The absence of economic freedom and continuing unemployment impel people to migrate. As Craig Murray points out, restrictions to internal movement in Uzbekistan led to a situation whereby ‘those born on state farms – 60 per cent of the population – are effectively serfs’ (IRIN, 2004c).

## **6 Conflicts over resources: between and within Central Asian states**

In the post-colonial era a chain of possible conflicts over resources, including borders, land and water, have been prevented in Central Asia. In each state, some tension or conflict potential remain with neighbours in the cross-border areas and between various factions within the country. The largest cross-border ‘hot spots’ are listed in Table 8. In this section, the conflicts between Central Asian states and other neighbours, such as the Kashmir and Iran/Iraq problems, are not considered.

Human insecurity is linked with several overlapping factors in the military, political, economic and social spheres. A number of root causes could lead to conflict in the wider Central Asian region – increasing poverty and political exclusion, unfair resource distribution, militarization, drug trafficking, problems of ethnic and religious intolerance, and environmental problems. Poverty in affected provinces and communities may increase instability and the manipulation of people by those who have vested interests in the redistribution of power and resources. Conflicts are concomitant with human insecurity and, in turn, such insecurity fuels violence.

A number of conflicts have occurred in the recent past, including the Afghan and Tajik wars, and several internal clashes in Pakistan and the Fergana Valley. Conflict in Afghanistan remains a serious source of regional instability and human insecurity. State collapse in Afghanistan and Tajikistan led to humanitarian catastrophe and the migration of millions of

people. Several countries in the region have been plagued by violence, political instability and economic hardship, and despite some progress towards the development of democratic institutions, and the enormous potential for the exploitation of natural resources, the risks of continuing political instability, ethnic violence and inter-state conflict persist.

The legacies of colonialism and the Cold War, the political and geographical isolation of the Central Asian states, and many other concerns have led to ill-equipped responses to conflicts that produced many cross-border problems. In this interdependent neighbourhood, events in one country are echoed in others. Complicating factors include a rapidly increasing drug trade and threats posed to religious extremists by external aid, as radical Islamic movements operating in weak states fuel insecurity in the region.

**Table 8. Cross-border tensions and major disagreements among the eight neighbours**

Area	Countries involved
Caspian Sea	Iran and Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, Iran and Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation
Afghanistan/Pakistan border	Afghanistan and Pakistan
Helmand River	Iran and Afghanistan
Fergana Valley	Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan
Aral Sea Basin	Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan

The cross-border tensions outlined in Table 8 are described in more detail below.

#### *Caspian Sea*

Tension over the division of the Caspian Sea is not yet resolved. Iran stands alone among the littoral states in insisting upon a division into five equal sectors. Disagreements between Iran and Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, Iran and Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation make the region unstable.

Increasing militarization of the Caspian region greatly complicates multilateral partnerships and subregional cooperation. In addition, the Russian Federation equips its own navy with ballistic missiles.

#### *Afghanistan/Pakistan border area*

Afghanistan does not recognize the Durand Line, now the border with Pakistan. The 1893 Durand Agreement established borders between Afghanistan and British India, dividing Pashtun tribes. Pakistan has sent troops into remote tribal areas to control the border and to quell organized terrorist and other illegal cross-border activities<sup>18</sup>; regular meetings between Pakistani and coalition allies aim to resolve periodic claims of boundary encroachment.

#### *Helmand River*

Iran protests at Afghanistan limiting the flow of dammed water on the Helmand River tributaries in periods of drought, claiming a portion of the Helmand waters. The two countries signed an agreement in 1973 according to which Afghanistan was required to allow a certain amount of water to flow from the dams into Iran. However, in 1999, the Taliban 'turned the taps off completely' (IRIN, 2002).

#### *Fergana Valley*

Home to more than 12 million people, the valley is divided among the three Central Asian republics: Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. About 60 per cent of the territory lies in Uzbekistan (4 per cent of state territory), 25 per cent in Tajikistan (18 per cent of state territory), and the remaining 15 per cent in

18 See *The World Factbook*: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/af.html>

Kyrgyzstan (42 per cent of state territory). The social, ethnic, and religious dynamics in this densely populated subregion comprise a set of problems that could quite feasibly lead to conflicts. In the past, several ethnic clashes there have resulted in the killing of hundreds of innocent civilians. The Andijon upheavals on 13 May 2005 led to a deterioration of security in the Uzbek and Kyrgyz parts of Fergana Valley. The uncertain future of hundreds of internally displaced persons from Uzbekistan in cross-border areas of Kyrgyzstan has increased inter-state tension.

#### *Aral Sea Basin countries*

Besides the cross-border areas, there are a number of unresolved issues relating to water between upstream and downstream states and ecological threats. Conflicts over water and irrigated land are a serious threat to regional stability in the arid region. In the post-colonial era, new inter-state tensions over water and energy distribution are increasing between the countries of the Aral Sea Basin. The management of water and energy dramatically changed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The transition to a market economy demanded cooperation between newly independent states. Downstream Uzbekistan has no significant water reservoirs able to accumulate an adequate amount of water for seasonal regulation, making the issue an international one. The main disagreement between upstream Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and downstream Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan resumes almost every year because of an absence of long-term agreements on the demands of downstream countries, requiring most water at the time of cultivation for irrigation; and upstream countries needing water mainly for electrical power production during the winter season. In winter, small upstream countries depend heavily on gas and coal imports from downstream neighbours. Economic pressure by large downstream states becomes a popular tool for officials to wield in order to alter policies upstream.

### *Border crisis among post-Soviet states*

In the five post-communist states, the imaginary administrative borders of Soviet times have become real, some people facing real borders for the first time in their lives. Gradually, peoples in these states have lost the limited freedom of movement within their region that they had had during the Soviet era. A visa requirement was imposed first by Turkmenistan, then by Uzbekistan towards Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

### *Intra-state conflicts*

The threat of intra-state conflict exists almost in all countries. The emergence and re-emergence of ethnic tension across Central Asia could have a spill-over effect. In several states, a serious problem of intra-ethnic rivalry among local elites, and centre/periphery tension within one ethnic group for access to resources and political power, could lead to intra-state conflict. In the post-Communist states, the removal of Moscow's watchful control has intensified inter-clan (territorial) rivalry for political power. Indeed, the 'new-old' (former communist) elites are dragged into clan and territorial struggles everywhere.

Leadership in each Central Asian country clearly understands that internal stability requires balance between the 'ruling' regions and the under-represented provinces. In several states, to prevent regionalism and inter/intra-ethnic cleavages, political leaders attempt to fill the ideological vacuum with ideas of ethnocentrism or faith-based superiority. It is unlikely however that cross-border and intra-state conflicts will lead to large-scale conflicts unless governmental or non-governmental leaders or external actors orchestrate discontent.

Besides inter/intra-state conflicts, a number of other cross-border and domestic threats endanger the population in Central Asia.



## 7 Other cross-border and domestic threats

### Transnational terrorism and religious extremism

Jihadist extremism through a terrorist network is one of the most serious threats to human security in Central Asia. For several years, Afghanistan under the Taliban served as a safe haven for the transnational terrorist organization al-Qaeda, whose goal was probably to establish a worldwide caliphate. During the Soviet/Afghan war in the 1980s, Osama bin Laden established the Maktab al-Khadamat, which was supported by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United States. Al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan were protected by the Taliban and warlords. After September 11, the US and its allies defeated the Taliban and destroyed the al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan. However, religious radicals in Pakistan actively participate in political life and train students in a number of Jihadi *madrasas*. The rise of extremist Islam in these *madrasas* is linked to the Soviet war against Afghanistan: in the 1980s, countering the communist threat in Afghanistan, the US and Pakistan established and cherished associations of mujahedin (Islamic guerrilla fighters) which included camps, arms and training (Fair and Chalk, 2004, p. 41). These groups of radicals are responsible for hundreds of killings each year. Several organizations such as the Sunni Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Sipah-e-Mohammad and Sipah-e-Sahaba, and Shi'a Tehrik-e-Jafria Pakistan, support the radicalization of young Muslims.

UN Security Council Resolution 1373 required Pakistan to take measures to contain Islamic extremism. These included closing down some *madrasas* and extremist organizations, and legislating to cut funds to these groups and their networking. Pakistani leadership seems to be very cautious in *madrasa* reform. A number of unregistered *madrasas* harbour soldiers in preparation for conflicts in Afghanistan and Kashmir. According

to some estimates, it would be safer to close some 10–15 per cent of *madrasas* harbouring religious extremists. Both Shia and Sunni extremists continue to attack one another. Sectarian violence between Shia and Sunni Muslims is on the rise. The International Crisis Group (ICG, 2005) reports that in Pakistan, the state policy of Islamization and patronage of religious parties may support religious extremism that negatively affects society and state. The increase in sectarian terrorism provides evidence for the harmful effect of the marginalization of democratic forces.

Political exclusion in Uzbekistan and the Tajik civil war (1992–97) created ideal conditions for home-grown Islamic militant opposition, later supported by al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Originating in the Fergana Valley in the late 1990s, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), began an anti-government movement of protesters expelled by the secular leadership of Uzbekistan and supported by the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Tohir Uldosh, a leader and founder of the hard-line IMU, teamed up with bin Laden in Afghanistan, but has been based in Pakistani tribal areas since the fall of the Taliban regime in late 2001. Seeking to overthrow the ruling power in Uzbekistan and create an Islamic caliphate in Fergana Valley, the IMU has operated in the territories of four states, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan. Tohir Uldosh put himself forward as emir (ruler) of a new caliphate more concerned with political demands than religious beliefs. The majority of the militants came to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from Tajikistan, where the UTO supported them because they fought together in the Tajik war. In 1999 and 2000, the IMU entered Kyrgyzstan, demanding a pass through its territory to Uzbekistan. In the rebel crisis, a total of sixty Kyrgyz citizens died. Moreover, Uzbek planes bombed a Kyrgyz village, allegedly by mistake, on 29 August 1999, and although they were aiming at the rebels, three Kyrgyz citizens were killed. Before the US attacks in 2001, there were at least four IMU camps in the Afghan provinces of Kunduz, Balkh and Samangan. In 2000, the United

States added the IMU to its list of foreign terrorist organizations. In the US-led anti-terrorist operation, IMU units were destroyed, although it cannot be confirmed that the network is not still alive with small groups across Central Asia.

### **Drugs**

In the wake of the Cold War, there was some hope of restoring the famed 'Silk Road' to link East and West and to develop trade, tourism and new communications between peoples. Instead, a notorious drug road emerged that connects Afghanistan with the Russian Federation and Western Europe via the Central Asian states. Drug trafficking is becoming one of the few examples of negative inter-ethnic 'cooperation'. Illicit drug traffic and criminalization of the Central Asian states is enabled by pervasive unemployment and corruption. Women are becoming increasingly involved in the drug trade. Drug dealers use them in smuggling operations for many reasons: they can pay women a smaller amount than men for carrying and selling drugs and, in addition, they can threaten women.

The war and protracted instability in Afghanistan have greatly contributed to the narcotics industry and trafficking in the Central Asian region. The Taliban drastically eradicated opium cultivation in 2001 (Table 9). After their defeat, the flow of drugs from Afghanistan to neighbouring Central Asian countries significantly increased. The democratic leadership of Karzai seems to be powerless to prevent a rocketing rise in opium production. More than sixty heroin factories in northern Afghanistan alone operate because of protection by the warlords who strengthened their power after the Taliban (Filipov, 2002). According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Afghan opium economy is valued at US\$2.8 billion, equivalent to about 60 per cent of Afghanistan's 2003 GDP. Meanwhile, the number of families involved in opium poppy cultivation was estimated to be 356,000 in 2004, a 35 per cent increase on the

previous year (IRIN, 2004a). In addition, illicit cultivation of opium has increased in Pakistan. In 2004, 67 per cent of the global opium poppy cultivation took place in Afghanistan, the world's largest source of opium. In fact, all countries adjoining Afghanistan have become main transit corridors for Afghan opium and heroin. In Western Europe, for example, 70 per cent of the heroin consumed comes from Afghanistan (UNODC, 2005, p. 39).

**Table 9. Illicit cultivation of opium in Afghanistan and Pakistan (1990–2004)**

	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Afghanistan	41 300	82 171	7 606	74 100	80 000	131 000
Pakistan	7 488	260	213	622	2 500	1 500

*Source:* UNODC (2005, Vol. 2, p. 203).

Despite some cooperation between law-enforcement organizations in the Central Asian states, the windfall profits of the narcotics industry tempt a number of public servants throughout the region. The accumulation of revenue and weapons from the operation of these criminal networks poses a serious threat to political stability in all eight countries. Weak border controls, a shortage of regional counter-narcotics resources, disagreements over borders, custom rules and widespread corruption facilitate drug and weapon trafficking. Certain officials, directly or indirectly, assist drug trafficking in their own countries. The number of drug-related crimes has greatly increased: some law-enforcement officers and even high-ranking police officers engaged in the fight against drugs have facilitated illicit business. This dangerous connection between cartels and officialdom has a negative impact on elections and the media system. Nicole Jackson noted that the narco-trade thrives on corruption 'fed by many factors such as low wages, an unprofessional bureaucracy, decades of patronage, lack of confidence in the state and weak state institutions'. However, the particular situation of each country requires a different approach

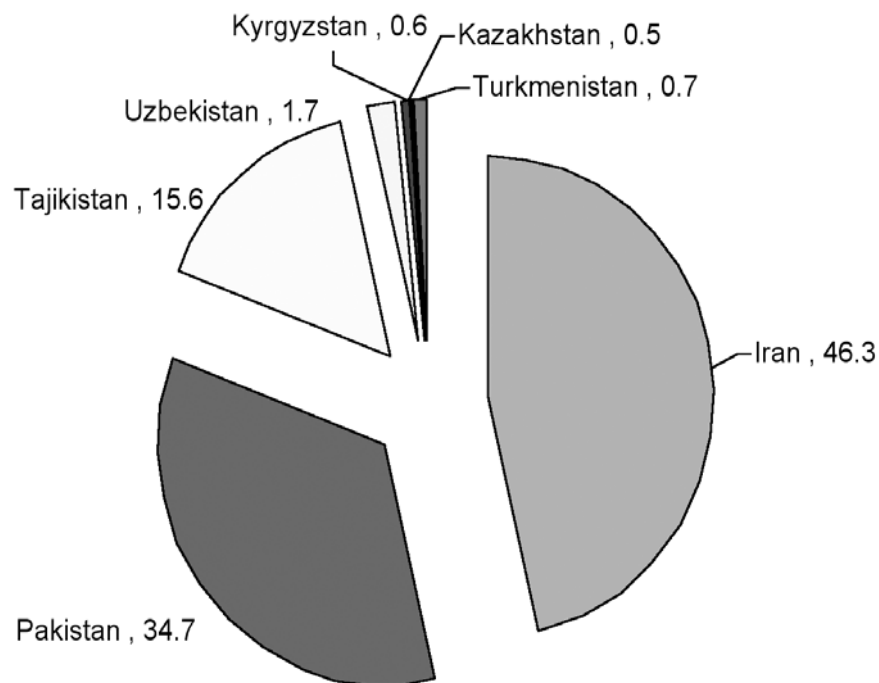
in combating drug trafficking. He recommends distinguishing between Northern Central Asia (Kazakhstan) and Southern Central Asia (the rest) in identifying strategies for each of the two subregions (Jackson, 2004).

Isolated from the rest of the world, both state and non-state actors need to be trained and familiarized in combating narcotics and crime problems. The drug trade facilitates the trafficking of small arms. In Tajikistan, clashes between border troops and drugs and weapons dealers happen almost on a daily basis<sup>19</sup>. More than 60 per cent of global opiate seizures take place in countries adjacent to Afghanistan. Most seizures have been made by Iran, followed by Pakistan and Tajikistan (Figure 7) (UNODC, 2003). The Turkmenistan leadership denies the magnitude of the country's problems, whereas the governments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan admit the threat, but neither one can, on its own, tackle drug trafficking and drug-related corruption.

A substantial amount of certain chemical compounds, known as precursors, is needed to turn opium into morphine or heroin. The smuggling of precursors from neighbouring states to Afghanistan has become more frequent. The UNODC is strengthening control over precursors in Central Asia in order to prevent their smuggling and use in drug production, and has recommended that Central Asian states improve precursor control. This agency provides serious support to the Counter-Narcotics Directorate established in 2002 (UN Economic and Social Council, 2004). As part of its regional project 'Control over Precursors', the UNODC currently provides assistance for Central Asian countries to improve legislation on importing and exporting chemical substances, supplies necessary equipment and offers consultation and training (Kabar, 2003).

19 [https://www.cc.columbia.edu/sec/dlc/ciao/olj/sa/sa\\_nov00cob01.html](https://www.cc.columbia.edu/sec/dlc/ciao/olj/sa/sa_nov00cob01.html)

**Figure 7. Percentage of opiate (heroin and morphine) seizures (2001)**



Source: UNODC (2003).

The eight Central Asian states face common challenges and need to cooperate in their war against illicit trade.

### **HIV/AIDS epidemics**

The narco-trade in the region is further complicated by a serious problem of intravenous drug use and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Central Asian region is experiencing a rocketing increase in the number of HIV/AIDS cases along drug routes, which is undermining the secure future of the populations. In Iran alone there are an estimated 2 million drug users<sup>20</sup>. In post-Soviet Central Asia, half a million intravenous drug users (IDUs)

20 See *The World Factbook*. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ir.html>

at risk of HIV infection need help via harm reduction packages to minimize the risk. According to UNAIDS (2003), there are 23,000 people with HIV/AIDS in Kazakhstan, and about 80 per cent of reported cases are due to unsafe injecting drug use, whereas sexual transmission accounts for 8 per cent. Interestingly, drug abuse in Afghanistan is still low compared with neighbouring countries Iran, Pakistan and post-Soviet Central Asia (UNODC, 2003).

National governments and local medical systems would not be able to deal with a rapid increase of cases of the deadly infection. To respond to the HIV epidemic, Central Asian governments have adopted strategy documents. However, state policy that contradicts the international normative framework continues to hamper HIV prevention measures. The local drug laws and police drug war challenge the implementation of AIDS programmes. Such struggles against drugs lead to the arrest, prosecution and imprisonment of thousands of IDUs for the possession and use of heroin. In many cases, national legislation considers drug addicts as criminals. Such conflicting policy undermines preventive actions supported by UNAIDS, Global Fund, the World Bank, the Open Society Institute and other agencies.

In everyday life, people living with HIV/AIDS face stigmatization and discrimination in medical clinics, education organizations, work places, local communities and families. In Central Asia, the high rates of HIV will rise further if punitive legislation is not changed and police corruption is not reduced. In addition, a new ethical framework for promoting human security for those affected is urgently needed. In several cities of the region, harm reduction projects and some faith-based organizations advocate the human rights of drug users and people with HIV/AIDS.

A lack of horizontal cooperation between states and the absence of a normative approach to a regional anti-drug and anti-AIDS strategy partly explain why in Central Asia a war on drugs and the HIV epidemic has not been effective. Underestimation of

these problems and a lack of political motivation to cooperate at international, regional and national levels have a negative effect on the entire Central Asian region.

### **Forced migration and human trafficking**

Insecurity and despair push the people of Central Asia to migrate and adapt to a new environment. Migration and displacement increases the threat to human security in the host countries.

Since the defeat of the Taliban, over 3.5 million Afghans have returned to their country. The international community with the Bonn Agreement offered political stability and socio-economic development in Afghanistan. UN agencies, including the UNHCR, enormously helped refugees and internally displaced persons to integrate with society. The UNHCR, in cooperation with partner agencies and the Afghan authorities, has helped to build 100,000 shelters since 2002, providing homes for up to half a million Afghans. In 2004 alone, the UNHCR allocated some US\$22 million to finance the construction of another 20,500 shelters.

The consequences of war and insecurity in Afghanistan have negative implications for the entire Central Asian region. Afghanistan alone cannot tackle the consequences of war, such as the presence of illegal paramilitary groups, an accumulation of arms, the drug industry, refugees, and many other problems, which should be resolved by appropriate collective measures. The largest number of refugees under UNHCR care come from Afghanistan: in 2004, 78 asylum countries recorded more than 2 million Afghan refugees, comprising 23 per cent of the world refugee population. The burden of refugees lies heavy on Iran and Pakistan, the largest asylum countries in the world (UNHCR, 2004, p. 3). Millions of Afghan refugees in these countries still fear returning to a homeland that is insecure for them and their families. Voluntary repatriation programmes from both Iran and



Pakistan are governed by tripartite agreements scheduled to end in March 2005 for Iran, and a year later for Pakistan. The UNHCR and other agencies have met with the governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan in search of comprehensive regional solutions for Afghan refugees who may choose not to repatriate. Even with the largely successful efforts by the UN and other international agencies at voluntary repatriation, thousands of Afghan refugees will not return from Iran and Pakistan in the near future.

As a result of the slow and uneven cooperation between Central Asian states, groups of refugees wander from one country to the next, as governments often have no regional or even bilateral deportation and re-admission procedures. Migrants face bribery when they need to cross borders and produce various documents. Public monitoring of migration and related legislation would effectively prevent numerous cases of violation of the rights of illegal and legal migrants.

Since ex-Soviet citizens are fluent in Russian, which is still a *lingua franca* across the former USSR, hundreds of thousands of them migrate to parts of the Russian Federation suffering from labour shortages. In the last decade, an increasing number of able-bodied citizens of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan left for the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. A strong migratory trend is partly monitored by state statistics. Experts on migration in Tajikistan point out that the real scale of migration from the country 'far exceeds official figures because its dominant feature, temporary labour migration, is extremely difficult to track'. Government statistics are highly unreliable: figures of different state agencies and research centres vary from several thousands to hundreds of thousands. According to the State Border Committee, some 1.2 million Tajik citizens were working abroad in 2001 (Olimova and Bosc, 2003, p. 20). According to unofficial estimates, upwards of 800,000 Tajiks working in the Russian Federation every year remit as much as US\$400 million to their relatives (EurasiaNet, 2003b). The first Tajiks came to Russia and other CIS countries as refugees during war 1992-1997, and since that time many economic migrants

legally and illegally leave for the Russian Federation. In Tajikistan, almost 10 per cent of the population, one in every four households, claims that a member of the family is a labour migrant (IRIN, 2003). Similar trends emerge in Kyrgyzstan and probably in Uzbekistan: thousands of families in these countries survive thanks to remittances from the main receiving countries, the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Likewise, external migrants and expatriots largely support families in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

Statistics on trafficking in women, men and children for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour are not satisfactory or accurate, as the Central Asian states lack the methodology to identify the problem and an adequate normative framework to prevent and combat human trafficking. Each year, thousands of women and children from post-Soviet countries are trafficked to Western Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. According to the *Trafficking in Persons Report* (US Department of State, 2004b), women and girls from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Iran, Burma, Nepal and post-Soviet Central Asia are trafficked to Pakistan for sexual industry and labour. In addition, in Pakistan adolescent boys are vulnerable to forced recruitment from local *madrasas* by armed groups fighting in Afghanistan and Kashmir. In Afghanistan, abducted women and girls are sold for forced marriage and prostitution in Iran and Pakistan. Moreover, women and girls are trafficked within the country 'as a part of the settlement of disputes or debts as well as for forced marriage and labour and sexual exploitation'.

As a rule most migrants, irrespective of their gender and origin, know very little about their rights and the normative frameworks in the host and transition countries, thus putting them at great risk – especially women and children.

### **Environmental disasters**

Insecurity arising from environmental problems constantly challenges Central Asian populations. Annual droughts, mudslides

and floods force people to move to a safer place. Such movements often raise social or ethnic tensions between newcomers and host populations. In December 2003, a major earthquake devastated the city of Bam in Iran, killing 26,271 people. Another devastating earthquake of magnitude 7.6 in October 2005 killed more than 30,000 people in northern Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. At a regional level, neighbours immediately provided help and technical aid to these countries. In post-Soviet Central Asia between 1992 and 2005, natural disasters killed 2,600 people, made 130,000 homeless and negatively affected 5.5 million or one-tenth of the population (IRIN, 2005*a*).

Man-made ecological problems greatly disturb thousands of people. For example, thousands of Karakalpaks, an ethnic minority population in Uzbekistan, have migrated from their home to Kazakhstan because of the Aral Sea catastrophe. This, together with droughts in Central Asia, constantly threaten human security. Such crises are exacerbated by problems of governance, regional fragmentation, lack of confidence between neighbours and irrational use of water and energy resources in the region.

Emergency programmes are not well prepared to provide human safety in Central Asia, which is prone to ecological disasters and frequent natural catastrophes. Much more needs to be done in the area of normative and ethical frameworks for promoting human security, and particularly in the case of an emergency.

## **8 Human security for women**

From the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, the plight of women in traditional societies was similar across all Central Asian states, but today, the two groups of countries, post-Soviet and Islamic republics, differ in relation to women's status and participation. The highly literate post-socialist women have inherited a relatively good economic and social infrastructure.

Since devastating wars and Taliban tyranny, human insecurity and the low literacy rate have affected women in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, they also face many problems with normative and educational frameworks that undermine women's status and well-being. However, gender inequality and discriminatory traditions, influential at family, community and national levels, challenge women in all eight countries. Regional cooperation creates mutual benefits and opportunities for women to address common obstacles that hamper their advancement.

### **Political participation**

With the aid of the international community, the Central Asian states have made substantial achievements in developing normative and ethical frameworks in promoting women's rights. UN-led initiatives have greatly contributed to understanding and implementing gender equality policies, such as UN Security Council (2000) Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which emphasizes women's security in war and conflicts.

All Central Asian states except Iran have signed the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Yet this has had little overall impact on the improvement of women's status in society. The fall in the number of women as a percentage of the population in post-Soviet Central Asian states (except Kazakhstan) in the past decade is one factor indicative of the gravity of transition problems.

The percentage of women in parliament varies throughout Central Asia (Table 10). Although Turkmenistan, under authoritarian rule, has 26 per cent of women in parliament and Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan with their more liberal regimes have together only 13.6 per cent<sup>21</sup>, these figures do not illustrate the actual political participation of women. Some women's NGOs and

21 There have been no female MPs in the parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic since the revolution of March 2005.

movements advocate a restoration of the quota system as a way of ensuring women's political participation. However, the Soviet case clearly illustrates the ineffectiveness of such an approach: the token participation of women in political life supported by a 30 per cent quota system did not lead to the real political empowerment of women. Another example of a normative framework for promoting human security is the Afghanistan Constitution, which protects women's rights and provides for a quota of two seats per province, one quarter of the lower house of parliament. The international community and Afghan liberal leaders are thus encouraging the political participation of women. For example, in 2005 the first female governor was appointed in Bamyan province in central Afghanistan. Judy Benjamin, former UNDP senior technical advisor in Afghanistan, points out that the Constitution reserves 68 seats in the Wolesi Jirga (lower house of the bicameral national assembly) for women, however, warlords use this quota to their gain by supporting female allies. One of her proposals is the promotion of men in government who have gender equality in politics on their agenda (USIP, 2005).

**Table 10. Women in parliament and government at ministerial level, as percentage of total (2005)**

Country	Lower or single house	Upper house or senate	Ministerial level
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	4.1	–	6.7
Kazakhstan	10.4	7.7	17.6
Kyrgyzstan	3.2	–	12.5
Pakistan	21.3	18.0	5.6
Tajikistan	–	11.8	3.1
Turkmenistan	26.0 (1990)	–	9.5
Uzbekistan	17.5	15.0	3.6

*Source:* UNDP (2005).

In the post-Soviet states, women's participation in formal political structures has declined although, interestingly, female relatives of the ruling elite enjoy more access to power: daughters of the presidents of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan have

actively participated in politics. In some cases, by manipulating the women's movements, the male-dominated authorities have exerted a monopoly on female votes to legitimize their power.

In general, although there are several female leaders of political parties, women are more active and prevail in NGOs. In post-Soviet states, transition led to mass unemployment and women were the first to lose their jobs in public sectors, so some women moved to the non-governmental sector. Women are alienated from political life and decision-making in all countries; so very often they express their concerns by joining dissident forces, as editors of newspapers or journalists, as scholars, or as activists of political parties and human rights NGOs. The impact on the government of women's NGOs and other civil society organizations is not sufficient to change the current trends. However, thanks to persistent pressure and advocacy of civil society groups, some progress in women's empowerment has been made in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and other countries.

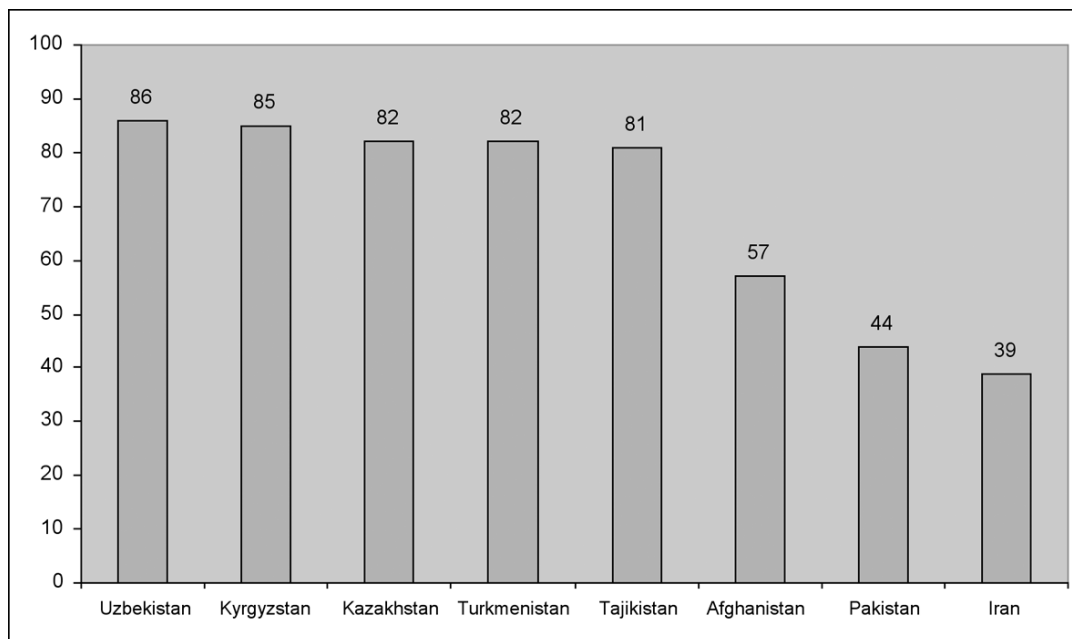
As a rule, women's groups have had very restricted access to observe and participate in discussions about the state budget and foreign aid. Women's NGOs do not intervene in the distribution of donor aid and the structure of investments. In recent years, these countries have allocated more state money to defence by cutting welfare and social services.

### **Gender-discriminative traditions**

Women's access to land and other assets is the most complex problem in Muslim countries. Economic activity and the legal framework of women's property rights differ in the post-Soviet states and in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. Since the forced and unforced emancipation of women during the Soviet era, a number of achievements in women's rights have been made: in general, legal provision is made for gender equality. The female economic activity rate as a percentage of the male rate in the five post-communist states is 81–86 per cent, whereas the picture in other states where

the role of religion in society is stronger is very different: the female economic activity rate is estimated at 39 per cent in Iran, 44 per cent in Pakistan, and 57 per cent in Afghanistan (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Female economic activity as percentage of male rate (2003)**



\*Share of the female population aged 15 and over who supply, or are available to supply, labour for the production of goods and services.

Sources: UNDP (2005a; 2005b).

However, in the post-communist states, despite being well-represented in (written) laws, many women are losing plots of land and assets. Customary law, local traditions of Muslim families only welcome the inheritance of land and real estate by male relatives. The other side of the coin of the transition to a market economy and the privatization of land is the expropriation of land in favour of men. Following tradition, daughters, daughters-in-law and divorced women lose land and assets. Female relatives (mothers and sisters) of men are often among the supporters of gender-discriminative traditions at family and community levels.

The predominance of customary law in inheritance, women's access to land and tenure rights are little discussed issues in society. For many, traditions and a culture of shame are more important than the unfair distribution of wealth within the family and written law. There is massive misunderstanding of legal rights among young women. Decision-makers and donors are facing gender discrimination in the privatization of land in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. It appears that many of them are unprepared to deal with this negative implication of traditional society. The most acute dilemma of tenure security is observed in polygamous families. In post-Soviet countries, wives who are not legally married have no right to land. Overall, despite the privatization of land and real estate, in practice women receive fewer benefits than men.

Another important issue is the restoration of patriarchal institutions under the pressure of traditionalists, the proponents of gender discrimination. Some Muslim leaders and politicians have begun to restore discriminative interpretations of the Koran and some Muslim families have brought back traditions discriminating against women. Polygamy, under-age marriage and the seclusion of women, especially in rural areas, are seen by some politicians, local sponsors of the national way of life, as a fair restoration of ancestors' traditions. In the Central Asian context, early marriages mean a vicious circle of poverty, especially in rural areas.

Leaders of the newly independent Muslim countries in search of a national ideology have promoted the veneration of medieval figures and praised wartime rulers. Furthermore, the restoration of medieval gender relations is seen as part of their ethnic and religious identity<sup>22</sup>.

22 An Iranian woman was sentenced to death by stoning in Tehran, according to the state-run daily Etemaad. The 25-year-old woman, only identified by her first name Fatemeh, was given two death sentences, for murder and for the alleged affair. The court also sentenced her husband to prison for taking part in the murder (Iran News Watch, 2005).



In the post-Soviet states, *mahalla*, neighbourhood organizations and courts of elders have been used to control grass-roots groups. Sponsored by the state, both institutions play a controversial role in the security of women. Human Rights Watch has documented cases where *mahalla* committees coerced women to remain in abusive marriages that threatened their safety and mental health, documenting that:

Serving as a gatekeeper to law enforcement and the courts, *mahalla* committees frequently deny battered wives access to both, deny them permission to divorce, and hold women responsible for violence they face in the home (HRW, 2003).

If in Afghanistan polygamy is common and legal, in the post-socialist states the criminalization of polygamy does not prevent its spread as a new fashion among well-off families, which may close their eyes to other Muslim duties that contradict this practice. The uncertain economic and political situation may drive women to agree to the humiliating status of co-wife. In the post-conflict societies, a number of widows and their families have had to accept this practice in order to survive.

However, the post-Soviet legislation does not consider the property rights of co-wives and their children caused by the restoration of plural marriage. The complexity of the legal, economic and political aspects of polygamy in these transition societies may often be underestimated. A regional survey on polygamy in Central Asia is needed, especially in post-communist societies. There is also plenty of anecdotal evidence of arranged under-age marriages because parents of daughters have to repay a debt or the bride-price for their son. In the five post-Soviet states, official statistics ignore the revival of customary law, including religious marriage and divorce, especially in rural areas. The spread of polygamous unions also outwits any state records.

## **Domestic violence**

Violence against women is a most sensitive issue in Central Asia. Domestic gender violence is a markedly under-reported crime and little understood. The problems of parental intolerance to the decisions of their sons and daughters and the plight of young people forced to marry as their parents wish and in observance of ethnic or religious traditions are not often discussed.

The practice of self-immolation as a protest against gender violence is also known in Muslim countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Self-immolation is seen as the last resort in demonstrating women's intolerable situation as victims of traditional society. According to Afghan doctors, the majority of women who commit self-immolation are between 16 and 20 years old. Among their many motives are the appalling fate of married women and the tradition of forced marriage (Walsh, 2004). In 2000, in the Samarkand region of Uzbekistan, officials reported some 209 cases of women attempting suicide; seventy-one cases ended in the death of the woman (Burke, 2001). Every year, doctors in Samarkand operate on around forty women with burns received in such acts, and 80 per cent of them cannot be saved (Samari and Sadykova, 2003). To address the problem, the NGO Umid in Samarkand was founded as a shelter and rehabilitation centre for female survivors of self-immolation (Campbell and Guiao, 2004, p. 789). However, the authorities in these countries do not fully acknowledge the issue and do not collect statistics on the incidents.

In Pakistan, *purdah* honour killing is an ancient practice in which men kill female relatives for sexual activity outside marriage or for being victims of rape. There are no precise data on these cases because they are not always reported. Human rights organizations claim that, in 2002, around 823 women were killed in the name of honour, most of them in the province of Sindh

(423). In 2003, 1,261 women were killed in this way, of which 638 in Sindh and 463 in Punjab (IRIN, 2004*b*).

Bride kidnapping is also regarded as an ethnic practice by Kyrgyz and Kazakh families. According to a survey in Kyrgyzstan, 19 per cent of kidnapped women did not know their kidnappers. Approximately 17 per cent of kidnaps do not result in marriage (Kleinbach, 2003, p. 3). All these traditions ruin many people's lives: the plight of men who are encouraged to kidnap a bride is also little discussed.

A human security strategy needs to be developed to halt the decline in the status of women. The search for ethnic identity has also manifested itself in the pretext of a struggle against outside influence and in self-glorification. Within the Central Asian states, a legislative foundation is needed that provides for the coexistence of different ideologies and that does not contradict women's rights. International guidelines on human and women's rights should be adopted and followed. Externally, international organizations must be sensitive in their advocacy of change in the region. Indigenous efforts urgently need support, and great care should be taken to understand the peculiar blend of colonial and traditional patterns of gender relations that determine the status of Central Asian women today.

## **IV**

### **Regional and international cooperation, a promising approach?**

#### **9 Regional cooperation**

To respond to the challenges of state and human security the Central Asian countries have established regional and subregional organizations, loose coalitions and bilateral relations. The slow pace of regional cooperation, however, reflects the conflicting interests and disagreements among the Central Asian neighbours. As Robert Keohane points out:

cooperation should be defined not as the absence of conflict – which is always at least a potentially important element of international relations – but as a process that involves the use of discord to stimulate mutual adjustment (Keohane, 2005, p. 309).

In general, regional organizations have only a modest impact on political and economic developments in the region. The post-Soviet states (excluding Turkmenistan) attempted to cooperate when faced with the threat from the Taliban. Since the removal from power of the Taliban in 2001, many multilateral efforts to discuss regional problems have remained theoretical – little has been done on the ground. In contrast, bilateral relations have developed rapidly among the other Central Asian neighbours and there are numerous good examples of partnership and support in promoting human security. For

example, Persian-speaking Tajikistan and Iran have signed more than 130 government agreements, some of them already successfully implemented. Similarly, the increasing economic cooperation of Iran with other post-Soviet states changes the post-Cold War divisions, as no similar relationship existed before. Another recent example of neighbourly relations can be seen in Pakistan's support for Afghanistan following the war in 2001 and its promise of US\$100 million for reconstruction (US Department of State, 2005).

Examples of some important regional organizations and regional dynamics are given below. Note that Turkmenistan, proclaiming its neutral status, is reluctant to cooperate with Central Asian regional organizations.

#### *Economic Cooperation Organization*

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. In 1992, Afghanistan and the six post-Soviet states Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan joined ECO, which has expanded into an organization representing over 300 million people. Designed to improve transport communications and trade between the post-Soviet states and to balance the dominance of the Russian Federation and other great powers in the region, the organization has been successful in developing cooperation in transport and trade among member states. However, contradictory interests and lack of finance have stopped the parties from overcoming a number of obstacles to achieving regional cooperation.

#### *Central Asian Cooperation Organization*

One of the regional political responses to radical movements, conflict potential and faltering economies was the creation of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO)

that comprised four states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Russian Federation joined in October 2004. The members established the Water-Energy Consortium, a significant step in regional cooperation. Cooperation looks more effective on paper, however, despite many hopes that this intergovernmental agency would resolve numerous problems in the common agenda of Central Asian states. The gap between rhetoric and reality is widening, despite the fact that the four presidents have frequently met and have signed cooperation agreements. This slow pace can be partly explained by regional rivalry between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and by the differences among Central Asian countries in implementing political and economic reforms. As an International Crisis Group report assumes, small and poor states such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan could not compete in a 'regional arms race, and a more aggressive regional policy by Uzbekistan would likely have damaging impact on regional cooperation' (ICG, 2001, p. 21). Personal relationships between the Central Asian leaders play an extremely important role in establishing a constructive or competitive climate for discussion of human security issues. At the October 2005 St Petersburg Summit, the presidents decided to wind up CACO by merging it with the Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC) that includes Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and countries having the status of observers – Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine.

*Central Asia Regional Cooperation Organization: ADB-led*

In 1997, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) encouraged several Central Asian states to set up the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) that includes Azerbaijan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. One of the organization's goals is economic cooperation in the priority areas of transport, energy and trade. The initiative has been supported by a number of international

financial institutions and UN agencies such as the EBRD, IMF, IDB, UNDP and the WB. To enhance its presence in the region, CAREC opened a field office in Almaty (Kazakhstan) in 2004<sup>23</sup>.

### *US presence*

On the whole, US policies consistently support strengthening the sovereignty of Central Asian states and regional stability. Concerning energy, the inflow of US private investments prop up the free market and competitiveness in Central Asia and counterbalance the Russian pressure on the energy policies of the post-Soviet countries.

The Central Asian regimes respond differently to American support in promoting human rights and civil liberties. In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, thanks to US aid a large proportion of civil society groups are working together with the state on development and democratization. Despite the overriding importance of aid to civil society groups, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have often curtailed the activities of local human rights organizations and discouraged any efforts to build a vibrant civil society in their countries.

### *Russian Federation and China-led regional cooperation*

Founded in 1992, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) comprises Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan. The organization provides leverage for the Russian Federation to influence security issues in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Unlike small Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Uzbekistan was able to implement a policy to diminish Russian influence: the country signed the Collective Security Treaty in 1992, but did not extend its CSTO membership until 1999, after its five-year term had expired.

<sup>23</sup> The ADB approved seven regional investment projects totalling US\$275.1 million and mobilized co-financing of US\$135.2 million for three of these projects.

After September 11, the military cooperation of Central Asian governments with Washington alarmed the Kremlin, which sees the former Soviet countries as close in terms of both proximity and sphere of influence. The US presence in Central Asia was understood to be an acknowledgement of the end of the Russian imperial power. As Boris Rumer points out, 'the top echelon of armed forces and security services are traditionally anti-American. They are not likely to remain docile if Central Asia jumps out of Moscow's orbit and accept US patronage' (Rumer, 2002, p. 60). Another regional expert, Olivier Roy, notes that 'Russia has effectively failed in the transition from a traditional imperial structure to the setting up of a modern strategic sphere of influence, principally because of a lack of economic tools, but also because of its narrowly neo-imperial, territorial and military view of political influence' (Roy, 2000, p. 195). Using anti-terrorist rhetoric, the Russian leadership attempts to regain its influence in Central Asia, essentially seeking to maintain a military presence there. The CIS loose coalition is also used to keeping the post-Soviet Central Asian states in the Russian orbit of influence. In terms of military presence, the Russian Federation has never left Tajikistan. Military and economic weakness and a US\$300 million debt to the Russian Federation make Tajikistan a long-term 'partner' of Moscow, despite the fact that Tajik debt was restructured in an agreement signed in December 2002, according to which some debt was written off and the repayment period was extended to 2017.

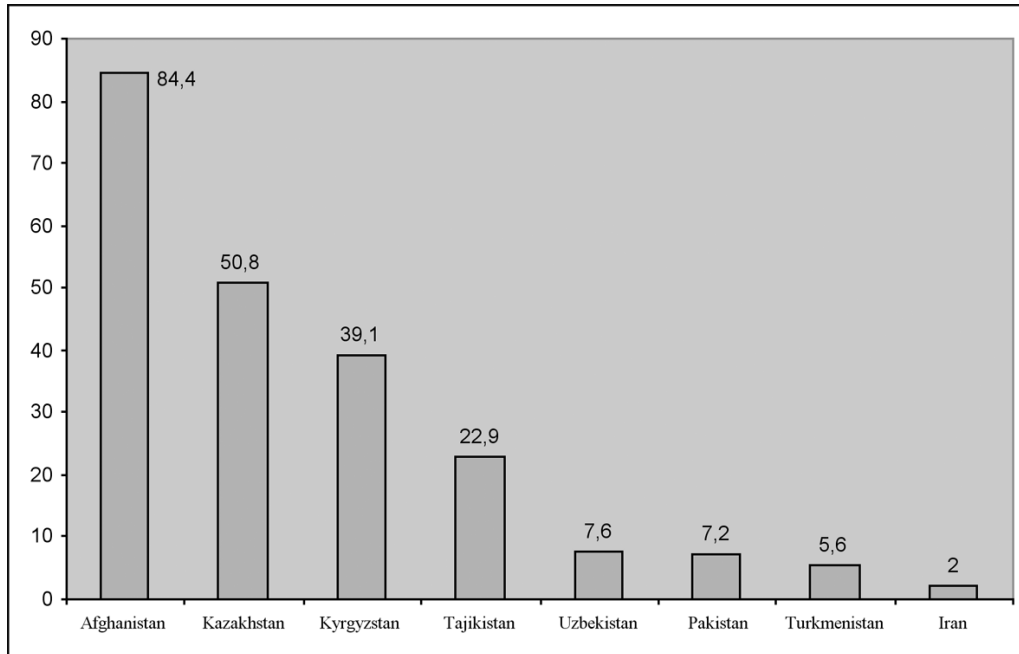
Beijing has influence over security issues in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which includes China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Two countries, Iran and Pakistan, may be willing to join the organization. The SCO was established in 1996 and was effectively developed to counterbalance NATO. Furthermore, China requested that its troops be located in Kyrgyzstan within the framework of the SCO (Eshanova, 2003).



### *International assistance*

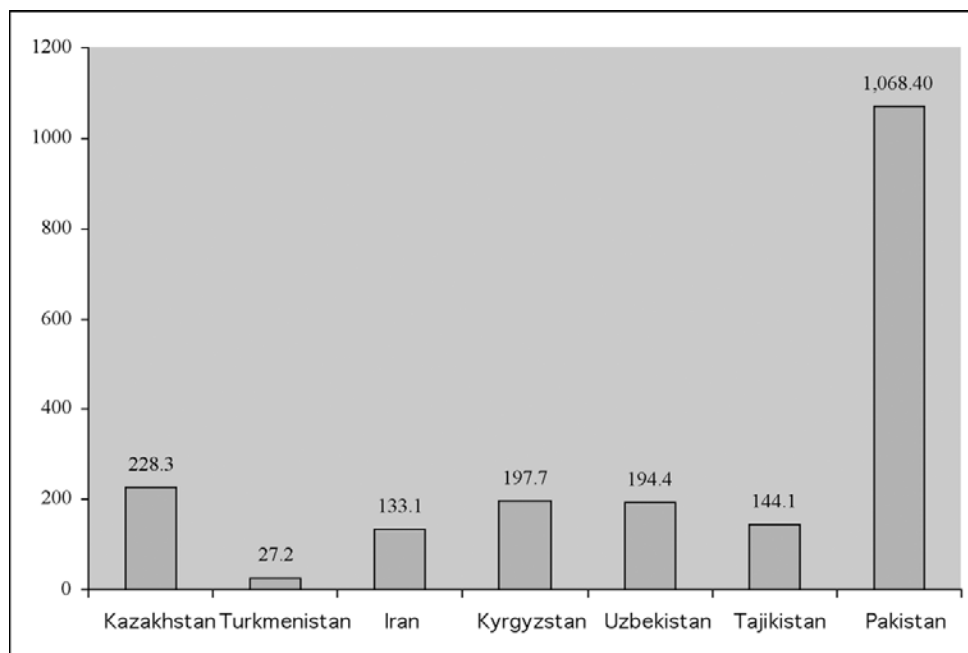
Interested in promoting human security in the region, donor countries support all Central Asian states. However, aid is not evenly distributed: the favourite reformers – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – received per capita Official Development Assistance (ODA) several times higher than their neighbours (Figure 9). The countries with poor human rights records – Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – were given much less assistance. Donors provide the largest amount of aid to the country at risk, Afghanistan, and the most populous country, Pakistan (Figure 10). International agencies enhance cooperation in supporting the fragile state of Afghanistan: 90 per cent of its total budget includes international aid, the US alone contributing US\$15 billion annually (Wadhams, 2005, p. 8). Japan gives significant assistance for projects relating to human security in Afghanistan. However, the implementation of international aid projects has been criticized by many, including journalist Ahmed Rashid: ‘the money is there but the projects are not, due to bureaucratic bottlenecks that paralyse major aid donors such as the European Union, the US and the World Bank’ (Rashid, 2005). Although donors have pledged US\$13.4 billion, only US\$3.9 billion has been provided for reconstruction.

**Figure 9. Official Development Assistance (ODA) received per capita, US\$ millions (2003)**



Sources: UNDP (2005*a*, 2005*b*).

**Figure 10. Official Development Assistance (ODA) received total, US\$ millions (2003)**



Source: UNDP (2005*b*).

## **10 Recommendations**

The Central Asian case illustrates the overriding importance of the regional dimension of human security. Central Asian countries face similar problems in human security, although the extent and precise nature of their problems may differ.

The value of human security is based on its positive connection with human rights and individual freedoms such as those of women, youth, ethnic and religious minorities, migrants, and representatives of groups at risk. There is an obvious need to discuss normative, ethical and educational frameworks for promoting human security in the region. Central Asian states should jointly respond to the common challenges of human insecurity and conflict, by overcoming the legacies of colonialism and the Cold War that have affected their relations in the past. Human security depends heavily on each country's structural and functional capacity to prevent domestic conflict and protect all population groups from fear and want, although each country could set different priorities in its human security policy. Based on a critical evaluation of the regional situation, however, a set of general recommendations for the promotion of human security in Central Asia can be drawn up, as follows.

### *Prioritizing the human security agenda*

Governments and non-state actors need to place human security higher on the agenda of their countries and that of the region. Central Asian regional and national forums could be organized to discuss the efficacy of the approach to human security. Human security could be used as a multidisciplinary framework at regional and national meetings, linking common problems such as education and health, conflict prevention, religious and ethnic tolerance, anti-corruption, combating drug and human trafficking, and migration, in a more coherent and coordinated fashion. A holistic approach to human security in

Central Asia is an important step towards a more people-centred strategy.

*Discussions on normative, ethical and educational frameworks for promoting human security*

National and regional actors could set the priorities for normative, ethical and educational frameworks in the promotion of human security in Central Asia. Neighbouring countries need to exchange ideas about normative and ethical approaches to human security at national and regional levels. Greater attention should be paid to harmonization across borders. Education is crucial to human security in the region, especially the education of young men, to stimulate a positive effect that could help to prevent their recruitment by extremist movements.

A joint programme of researchers and representatives from governments and civil society groups needs to be established to identify national and regional priorities and advocate a holistic approach to human security problems together with policy recommendations. These working groups could develop monitoring and evaluation tools and methodologies on human security in the Central Asian context. Efforts should be made to collect standardized and systematized data on human security. Within regional institutions, country representatives might be encouraged to urge their national governments to participate in common censuses and surveys.

*Participation and vibrant civil society*

Central Asian people should be the first to decide their own destiny. National and international actors need to increase support for democratic institutions and civil society groups that are addressing human security and human rights. It is urgent to enhance the capacity and expertise of civil society groups in relation to human security. For example, independent scholars

and civil society groups could produce and translate literature on issues relating to human security.

#### *Economic reforms and poverty reduction*

The establishment of macroeconomic sustainability is an important prerequisite for human security in Central Asia. Fostering an economically strong middle class and developing small and medium-sized enterprises will be effective tools in long-term regional stability. There is a vital need to diversify the economy to expand employment opportunities, especially in densely populated areas. Poverty reduction programmes are essential for the whole region. Access to health and education services is one of the central issues for poor communities.

#### *Bridging ethnic and religious divides*

Central Asians should build upon past instances of overcoming ethnic and religious divides, and draw from their rich history the many examples of ethnic and religious tolerance, traditional methods of conflict prevention and the means to achieve greater human security for all population groups. An extended dialogue on tackling cultural diversity in the region would have a positive impact on bridging ethnic and religious divides.

#### *Combating the drug industry and human trafficking*

Central Asian countries need to further discuss the regional anti-drug platform and involvement of civil society groups in combating these issues. To eliminate drug trafficking and drug use, Central Asian governments and the donor community must address the economic sources of the mass involvement of people in illicit trade in drugs and human trafficking.

### *Human security for women*

National and regional efforts to empower women and promote women's rights need support. The reality in Central Asia is a long way from gender equality, from signing international conventions to the actual elimination of discrimination against women. The role of customary law at national, community and family levels ought to be discussed in a human security context. Women should have more access to decision-making positions and economic resources. Regional cooperation in human security would also benefit women.

### *International and regional cooperation*

Central Asian cooperation could be helpful in setting regional benchmarks of progress and in sharing experience in the implementation of human security reforms. Regional frameworks for economic, political and environmental cooperation, joint water management, migration strategy and cooperative efforts against terrorism, organized crime, corruption, drug and human trafficking would be advantageous to neighbouring states. To promote human security, prevent conflict and combat threats, international donors and agencies need to better coordinate their programmes among themselves and national actors, and to support more regional than national projects in the Central Asian states.

### *Helping Afghanistan*

Stabilization and reconstruction in Afghanistan are the most important steps to achieving human security in the Central Asian neighbourhood. International aid for post-conflict state-building, counter-narcotics programmes and many other human security problems in Afghanistan will benefit all Central Asian states.

### *Promoting Internet and computer technology*

The Internet remains an expensive luxury for most Central Asian peoples. International organizations and private sponsors could greatly contribute by widening access to information and discussions on human security locally and internationally. New technology through satellite links could bring together all the members of the Central Asian neighbourhood. Exploring digital satellite possibilities is a new step in South-South networks towards the sharing of knowledge and skills. The gap between urban and rural youth in access to the Internet and information about human security issues needs to be addressed.

### *Supporting improvement of national and regional statistics and data collection*

In the light of promoting human security, national statistics organizations should better identify their approach to collecting social and educational data and align their methodologies with international standards. National and regional reports, produced by the UNDP together with local actors, need to provide clear definitions, compatible data, analysis and policy recommendations on human security problems.

### *Enhancing cooperation among local stakeholders and international organizations*

Teamwork between national governments and civil society groups on the one hand, and agencies such as ADB, OSCE, UNDP, UNESCO and the World Bank on the other, in promoting human security in Central Asia would have a lasting impact.

## ***UNESCO and National Commissions for UNESCO***

### *Encouraging regional and interregional cooperation*

UNESCO, together with other UN agencies and organizations engaged in Central Asia, could promote regional and interregional dialogue and provide a platform for cooperation to integrate human security priorities in domestic and external policies in each country. There is a need for further UNESCO assistance in encouraging and facilitating national and regional discussions on a holistic approach to ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security between state and non-state actors. Joint analytical work on the elaboration of a human security strategy in Central Asia under the auspices of UNESCO should be continued with the support of the donor community.

UNESCO and its National Commissions should support cooperation among local civil society, academic and state organizations in establishing national and regional websites promoting human security in the vernacular.

Exchange of ideas on education, culture and science carried out under the auspices of UNESCO and its National Commissions will greatly contribute to understanding human security strategies in the region. Particular attention should be paid to e-education and networking relating to the promotion of human security in Central Asian universities and research institutions.



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## **Acronyms and abbreviations**

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CACO	Central Asian Cooperation Organization
CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IDU	Intravenous Drug User
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IWPR	Institute for War & Peace Reporting
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSI	Open Society Institute
SOC	Shanghai Organization of Cooperation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## **Appendices**

## **Ms Anara Tabyshalieva's brief biography**

Anara Tabyshalieva studied at the Kyrgyz National University, Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan). She received her training as a historian and social scientist at Kyrgyz National University (M.A. 1979; Ph.D. 1985) and Johns Hopkins University (Washington DC, USA) (Master in International Public Policy, 2003).

For fifteen years she lectured at various universities in Kyrgyzstan. Between 1994 and 2001, she worked as a director of the Institute for Regional Studies. She was a visiting research fellow at Selly Oak Colleges (Birmingham, UK), UN University (Tokyo, Japan), US Institute of Peace, and the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. She led a research project on regional cooperation in Central Asia supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (USA) and the UN University (Japan). In 1999, her report *The Challenge of Regional Cooperation in Central Asia. Prevention of Ethnic Conflict in the Ferghana Valley* was published by the United States Institute of Peace (Washington DC, 1999). She has published over forty articles and several reports on development and politics in Central Asia and the Caucasus, and two books on the history of religions in Central Asia (Bishkek, 1993) and traditions of gender discrimination (Bishkek, 1998). Her book on the history of faith in Central Asia was translated into the Kazakh language and published in Almaty in 2004. Among her recent articles are 'Conflict prevention agenda in Central Asia' (*Conflict Prevention from Rhetoric to Practice. Vol. 1. Organizations and Institutions*, edited by Albrecht Schnabel and David Carment, Lanham, Md., Lexington Books, 2004). She has worked as a consultant for the World Bank, ABD, UNDP, OSI,

A.R.S. Progetti and other agencies to assess the development problems in the post-Soviet Central Asian states, the Caucasus, Pakistan and other countries.

Ms Tabyshalieva has been involved in several UNESCO programmes as a member of the UNESCO Steppe Route Expedition in Central Asia (1991), a recipient of the Hirayama Silk Road Fellowship for travel and research in Eurasia, a member of the International Scientific Committee for the Preparation of the (UNESCO) History of Civilizations of Central Asia (1995-present). She is co-editor with Dr Madhavan Palat of Vol. VI of *History of Civilizations of Central Asia, 1850–1991* (Paris, UNESCO). For this volume, she wrote two chapters on the social structure of Central Asian society and the history of Kyrgyzstan (1850–1991). She is also co-editor of *Challenges of Rebuilding Post-Conflict Societies and the Need for Woman and Child-Sensitive Peacebuilding Policies/Approaches* (with Dr Albrecht Schnabel, Bern/Tokyo, Swiss Peace Foundation/UN University,) and *Conflict Prevention in Central Asia: Bridging Ethnic and Religious Divides*, with Dr Laura Adams (Princeton University, N.J., USA) supported by the US Institute of Peace and the Institute for Regional Studies (Kyrgyzstan). Since 2003 she has been research associate at the Institute for Regional Studies (Bishkek) and visiting fellow at the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University.

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## Final Recommendations

First International Meeting of Directors  
of Peace Research and Training Institutions

on the theme

*What Agenda for Human Security  
in the Twenty-first Century?\**

1. Human security can be considered today as a *paradigm in the making*, for ensuring both a *better knowledge* of the rapidly evolving large-scale risks and threats that can have a major impact on individuals and populations, and a strengthened *mobilization* of the wide array of actors actually involved in participative policy formulation in the various fields it encompasses today.

As such, it is an adequate framework for:

- accelerating the transition from past restrictive notions of security, tending to identify it solely with defence issues, to a much more comprehensive multidimensional concept of security, based on the respect for all human rights and democratic principles;
- contributing to sustainable development and especially to the eradication of extreme poverty, which is a denial of all human rights;
- reinforcing the prevention at the root of the different forms of violence, discrimination, conflict and internal strife that are taking a heavy toll on mainly civilian populations in all regions of the world without exception;

\* UNESCO, Paris, 27-28 November 2000.

<http://www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001162/116272e.pdf>



- providing a unifying theme for multilateral action to the benefit of the populations most affected by partial and interrelated insecurities. The importance should be underlined of the multilateral initiatives taken in this respect by Canada and Japan as well as by other countries.

2. The ongoing globalization process offers new opportunities for the *strengthening of large coalitions working to further human security, at the multilateral and national levels, and in particular at local level involving all actors of society*. This in turn requires a much stronger participation of peace research and training institutions, institutes for security studies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other bodies dedicated to the promotion of peace and human security, with a view to enhancing the involvement of civil society in all aspects of policy formulation and implementation of actions aimed at enhancing human security at the local, national, regional and international levels.

3. The promotion of human security today therefore requires an *enhanced exchange of best experiences, practices and initiatives* in the fields of research, training, mobilization and policy formulation, in which UNESCO can play a major role as a facilitator, forum and amplifier of proactive human security initiatives, in particular in the framework of the UNESCO SecuriPax Forum website launched in September 2000 for that purpose (<http://www.unesco.org/securipax>).

4. *The strengthening of the action of the United Nations and, in particular, of UNESCO in favour of human security is essential today*, taking into account the objectives set out in the UN Millennium Summit Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, and the Declaration and Plan for an International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, as well as on the measures

being taken to reach internationally agreed development targets, in particular in the fields of poverty eradication; education for all; the preservation of the environment and notably of water resources; and the struggle against AIDS.

5. The compounded impact of a growing number of threats to the security of populations requires the establishment of *innovative interdisciplinary approaches geared to the requirements of inducing participative preventive action, involving all social actors*. The intimate links that should exist between research projects and policy formulation in the field of prevention must also be stressed from the outset, taking into account the fact that current research on various dimensions of security is still largely dissociated from the existing policy formulation mechanisms, particularly at the national and subregional levels. On the basis of a common agenda for action, the peace research and training institutions, institutes for security studies and the NGOs working in related fields can play an essential role in creating these links, building bridges between the academic world and the policy formulation mechanisms, contributing to the establishment of such mechanisms wherever necessary, identifying priority fields to be tackled and the populations that merit particular and urgent attention.

6. *Regional and subregional approaches* should be elaborated for the promotion of human security in order to more precisely identify the nature, scope and impact of the risks and threats that can affect populations in the medium and long term. UNESCO should contribute to the elaboration of these regional and subregional approaches, in cooperation with national and regional organizations and institutions and on the basis of the regional round tables (on Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean) held during the First International Meeting of Directors of Peace Research and Training Institutions. Urgent attention should be paid to the reinforcement of the struggle against AIDS, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, which is a real threat to peace and security, as stated by the United Nations Security Council.

7. Special attention should be paid to the *most highly populated countries*, given the fact that in these countries the interrelationship between population growth, diminishing natural resources, environmental degradation and the overall impact of ongoing globalization processes is of great complexity and must consequently be dealt with, in particular in terms of designing local approaches focusing on specific population groups.

8. *The development of human resources is a key factor, if not the most important, for ensuring human security.* Basic education for all and the building of capacities at the national level must therefore be placed high on the human security agenda. Institutes for peace and human security can play an important role in national capacity building in fields such as the setting up of early-warning mechanisms related to major risks and threats to human security; and high-level training for the elaboration of regional and subregional long-term approaches for ensuring human security and the formulation of preventive action policies.

9. Critical post-conflict issues such as *reconciliation processes and mechanisms and the often harsh impact of sanctions on populations* merit more in-depth analysis in terms of human security, in the framework of an enhanced respect for international instruments, in particular of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Concerning reconciliation processes and mechanisms, due attention should be paid to the adequate dissemination of best experiences and practices and to the comparative analysis of these experiences and practices, especially of the work of the various truth and justice commissions set up in last two decades in various countries. Concerning the impact of sanctions on populations, note should be taken of ongoing initiatives within the United Nations in order to review the modalities of the imposition of such sanctions and the action of UN Specialized Agencies to alleviate their impact on civilian populations.

10. The impact on human security of *migrations* and of movements of *populations displaced due to conflict* should be highlighted. Concerning migrations, attention should be paid to countering practices in host countries that discriminate against legal immigrants, and in the case of populations displaced due to conflict, the efforts of the international community should be reinforced, especially when the displacements take on a semi-permanent character.

11. Due attention should be paid to countering the impact of *negative paradigms* (such as ‘clash of civilizations’, ‘African anarchy’, etc.), based on stereotypes and simplistic analyses of the interactions between cultures, societies and civilizations and which aim at fostering new divisions and fractures at the international and regional levels. The principles underlying the notions of cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, tolerance and non-discrimination should be stressed and due attention should be paid to the follow-up to the Plan of Action of the World Conference against Racism and Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Durban, South Africa, 2001).

12. *The role of the state* in the promotion of human security must be addressed on the basis of an exhaustive analysis of challenges in matters relating to human security, both from within to ensure sustainable development, and from the rapidly evolving international processes linked to economic and financial globalization. States should be encouraged to establish ways of enlarging their cooperation with civil society, in particular with those NGOs and institutions that can contribute effectively to policy formulation and collaborative action in the field.

## Some UNESCO publications on Human Security, Peace and Conflict Prevention

*Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in the Arab States*, UNESCO, 2005

In English: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001405/140513E.pdf>

In Arabic: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001405/140513a.pdf>

*Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in Latin America and the Caribbean*, UNESCO, 2005

In English: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001389/138940e.pdf>

In Spanish: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001389/138940S.pdf>

*Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in East Asia*, UNESCO, 2004

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001388/138892e.pdf>

*Proceedings of the International Conference on 'Human Security in East Asia'*, UNESCO/Korean National Commission for UNESCO/Ilmin International Relations Institute of Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 2004

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001365/136506e.pdf>

*International Conference on Contemporary International Security: Consequences for Human Security in Latin America*, Santiago, Chile, August 2003

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001406/140625S.pdf>

<http://www.flacso.cl/flacso/biblos.php?code=642>

*Human Security, Conflict Prevention and Peace*, Proceedings of the Expert Meeting on 'Peace, Human Security and Conflict Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean', UNESCO/FLACSO–Chile, 2002

<http://www.unesco.org/securipax/flacsoeboletin.pdf>

In Spanish: [http://www.unesco.org/securipax/seguridad\\_humana.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/securipax/seguridad_humana.pdf)

In English: [http://www.unesco.org/securipax/seguridad\\_humana-english.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/securipax/seguridad_humana-english.pdf)

*Peace, Human Security and Conflict Prevention in Africa*, Proceedings of the UNESCO–ISS Expert Meeting held in Pretoria, South Africa, 23–24 July 2001

[http://www.unesco.org/securipax/UNESCO\\_ISSfinal.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/securipax/UNESCO_ISSfinal.pdf)

*What Agenda for Human Security in the Twenty-first Century?*, Proceedings of the First International Meeting of Directors of Peace Research and Training Institutions, UNESCO, 2001;

<http://www.unesco.org/securipax/whatagenda.pdf>

2nd edition, UNESCO, 2005

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001405/140553E.pdf>

*Cooperative Peace in Southeast Asia*, UNESCO/ASEAN, 1999

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001162/116272e.pdf>

*What Kind of Security?*, UNESCO, 1998

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001096/109626eo.pdf>

*Quelle sécurité ?*, UNESCO, 1997

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001096/109626f.pdf>

*From Partial Insecurity to Global Security*, UNESCO/IHEDN, 1997

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001106/110639e.pdf>

*Des insécurités partielles à la sécurité globale*, UNESCO/IHEDN, 1997

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001106/110639fo.pdf>

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