

HUMAN SECURITY: EUROPE, CANADA, AND THE CULTURAL CHALLENGE

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At the Canadian Embassy Berlin

What is the “cultural challenge” of Human Security? For too long on the global level, discussions regarding “security” have placed more emphasis on armaments, intelligence gathering, and geopolitical security strategies than on the creation of conditions in which individuals can live safely and in dignity – that is, on *human* security. For the past two years, a group of European and Canadian scholars have been studying the notion of “human security” and its application in practical terms.

It is a concept that is already widely used in international relations for formulating policy in the areas of security and development. But it goes beyond these areas as it also concerns key human values for society as a whole. Human Security represents an essential concept both for policy-makers and administrators in the field to concentrate attention on the security environment of the individual. These ideas have clearly entered the mainstream of foreign policy circles both in Canada and the EU.

The Berlin Conference is a pioneer project. It brings together high-level political practitioners with artists and intellectuals. The central goal is to illuminate the significance of the *cultural* aspects of Human Security – whether in regions of political instability and life-threatening circumstances such as poverty and hunger, or in the megalopolises expanding on every continent.

Upon the basis of the insights gained in this process, we plan to establish specific policy recommendations to be presented to the Canadian Government and the European Union.

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