



Introducing the “Human” into Philippine Security Discourses: Convergence or Dialogue?

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ABSTRACT. This paper reviews the history of the introduction of the concept of human security into security discourses in the Philippines. Gasper’s (2005, 2010) understanding of the concept as a “boundary object” and its roles inside and between discourses, are especially considered for the study. We start by briefly describing the way the concept emerged in the international community and how it was received in Southeast Asia, pointing out the weak connection between the external and the domestic development of the concept. The predominant association of security with armed conflict in the Philippines offered a more likely niche for actors’ engagement in the security discourse. Based on their differing general visions of the armed conflict and its resolution, at least three distinct discourses of security are identified: the peace movement, the national security framework, and the anti-terrorism legislation. The entry points for human security rhetoric are described for each discourse, and related developments are presented. Finally, we describe the boundaries between the intellectual communities represented by the three discourses, as well as how human security is—or could be—helping to mediate between those boundaries. We favor a framework in terms of dialogue rather than convergence, given the magnitude of the challenges implied. The article offers a guide for newcomers to the debate, contributing to fill the gap in the literature on domestic analysis about the concept’s operationalization.

KEYWORDS. human security · peace movement · terrorism · human development · boundary object · Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Made famous by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1994), the concept of human security has been around for more than fifteen years. The provocative idea of understanding security that is concerned with more than the state and its traditional apparatus has been appealing to a variety of actors, which include middle powers, international organizations, practitioners, and some sectors of academia. Not without controversy, and even with the lack of an agreed definition, human security is increasingly used as a concept when addressing a

broader set of threats to people's lives, welfare, and dignity (UN Secretary-General 2010). Yet, discussions have tended to overemphasize the failures of the state to propose international action to help unprotected people, while domestic analyses looking for people-centered solutions are ironically scarce. Prominent exceptions are the UNDP's National Human Development Reports that have engaged local researchers to reframe major concerns using the new concept. Jolly and Basu Ray (2007) present a review of thirteen of these reports since 1997, exalting the unexpected and insightful results of those endeavors. The authors counter charges of vagueness against human security by stressing the importance of not defining boundaries or parameters of the concept *a priori*, leaving this for local researchers to define based on the context. But, even if context-specificity is "the most fundamental strength" of the concept, it does not mean that only one version of human security will spontaneously emerge in any country's public sphere. This paper intends to take the discussion a step forward by addressing the question of domestic focus, while describing the problem of internal consensus surrounding the concept. The case of the Philippines has many advantages, not only because of the intensity of the threats affecting the population—a two-front, prolonged armed conflict, seasonal typhoons, active volcanoes, organized crime, among others—but also because the concept of human security has already been employed for some time by different local stakeholders, usually from contrasting perspectives, with varied objectives and outcomes. Such multiplicity of understandings can help in foreseeing potentialities and shortcomings in the operationalization of the concept, which can improve its application in other contexts.

To distinguish the actors by their actual usage of the concept, the analysis proposed in this paper requires moving the crux of the question out of human security's normative conception and its substantive concerns. Given the complexity of facts, situations, and agents that converge around its proposition, the investigation is less about what human security *means* and more about what the concept of human security *has become* in the Philippines. In this sense, the work of Gasper (2005, 2010) offers a productive starting point. First, it introduces discourse as a more elaborate—and probably fruitful—source for analysis; and, second, drawing from the sociology of science, it uses the framework of "boundary objects" and "boundary work" to deepen the understanding. The term "boundary" here refers to the interface between different intellectual communities, for example

politicians and scientists, or scientists and practitioners, or even across different disciplines. “Boundary objects” are practices, ideas, or sets of ideas that are employed for intercommunity exchanges (Star and Griesemer 1989, cited by Gasper 2005, 235). Given the characteristics of each community, it may not be altogether surprising that they tend to have different understandings of the boundary objects, usually implying a conflict of interests. But those shared objects allow them to explore together the disagreements and, hopefully, advance in the objectives at stake. This mediation process is the boundary work, which Gasper (2005, 242) sees as the emotional, intellectual, ethical, and political framework for “embedding priority human concerns into analytical and policy agendas.”¹

The boundary approach allows Gasper (2010) to identify at least five roles of the human security discourse, namely “1) to provide a shared language, to highlight and proclaim a new focus in investigation; 2) to guide evaluations; 3) to guide positive analysis; 4) to focus attention in policy design; and 5) to motivate action.” These roles that the human security discourse plays, combined with keen theoretical examination of the concept, make possible a critical and productive engagement with the major criticisms leveled against the concept of human security. Said roles also offer a guide to critically assess the impact of introducing the idea of human security, highlighting in particular how it was deployed.

In this paper, we use the human security discourse and its roles to distinguish the actors welcoming or reacting against the new concept, to characterize the nature of their engagement, and to understand better the tensions that the introduction of the discourse generates. We put aside the normative discussion on the meaning of human security, which is nevertheless embedded in the actors’ use of the concept. We start by briefly describing the way the idea of human security emerged inside the international community and how it was received in Southeast Asia, pointing out the important discussions that its introduction generated. Those debates were to inform the adoption of the concept. Subsequently, we examine the three discourses on security in the Philippines that offer contrasting conceptions of human security: the peace movement, the National Security Framework (NSF), and the anti-terrorism legislation. The analysis includes a short account of how they originated and the possible entry points for a new conception of human security. The final section considers the three discourses jointly, highlighting the tensions engendered, the boundaries

in dispute, and the arena for dialogues opened through plural views of the concept.

EXTERNAL INOCULATION?

The UNDP first introduced human security in the Human Development Report of 1993. Further elaborations on the concept were made in the following year's edition (UNDP 1994).² Tapping into a generalized concern over the future of security after the Cold War, the authors advanced a new consideration of the concept that moved the focus from states to individuals and communities. The proposed goals were *freedom from fear* and *freedom from want*, relying on a classic formula made famous by Franklin D. Roosevelt, codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Those freedoms were then equated to a comprehensive list of securities—health, food, environmental, economic, political, personal, and community—which entailed a second change to the traditional paradigm: the horizontal broadening of security issues. Furthermore, the report characterized the concept as universal, interdependent, and preventive, while stressing the subjective feature of any approach to security—that is, people's perception and agency.

There are two additional reports that have framed the understanding of human security internationally. The first report was by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS 2001), advancing the "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P). ICISS argues that the international community has a duty to act when states fail to protect their own citizens. As expected, the report exacerbated the apprehension about the intention to justify intervention through a new conceptualization of security. Since then, the UN has tried to disentangle R2P from human security ideas (UN Secretary-General 2010, 6-7). The second report is the *Human Security Now* from the Commission on Human Security (2003). The report widened human security's theoretical base and also addressed a series of situations, such as post-conflict or migration. Two major ideas advanced by the commission were the concept of a "vital core" and a dual strategy of "protection and empowerment" for operationalization. The purpose of the former is to orient action on the different threats covered by human security, focusing on a set of rights and liberties to be determined in context, while the latter implies that the traditional, top-down protective approach to security must be complemented with bottom-up, empowerment-oriented efforts.

Alternative conceptions of security were already present and accepted in the Southeast Asian region, conceptions that implied some degree of horizontal and vertical expansion, though not to the degree proposed by the UNDP. For instance, the comprehensive security paradigm, which originated in Japan around 1980 and was initially adopted in the region under the shape of “regional resilience,” embraces more than just military threats though it does not shift the focus to people (Hoadley and Rüländ 2006; Acharya 2001). Some track-two and track-three³ processes with agendas similar to those embedded in human security propositions were already present in the background of regional states relations (Kraft 2000). Consequently, human security as a new concept did not have an immediate effect in the Southeast Asian community. It was not until the 1997 Asian financial crisis that the concept was taken into serious consideration (Caballero-Anthony 2004; Nishikawa 2009). It was in 1998 when the Japanese government first adopted human security to guide its foreign policy on cooperation. Later, in 1999, Japan created the UN Trust Fund for Human Security to support the implementation process. It also financially backed the 2001 UN Commission on Human Security, which made further elaborations on the concept (Gómez and Fujisaki 2009). Nishikawa (2009, 218) marks the first introduction of human security into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) during the post-ministerial conference of 1998. From then on, the concept has informed ASEAN’s notion of security community, especially concerning challenges posed by nontraditional threats. However, it has yet to be included into the organization’s charter. Such reluctance is mainly due to concerns about the interventionist side of the concept and some suspicion over the western values implied (Nishikawa 2009, 226-227; Acharya 2001). On the other hand, in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), where the linkage is among economies instead of states—and, importantly, agreements are non-binding—human security has been recognized since 2003 and it is already consolidated as a section of the Leaders’ Declarations, where a wide array of threats menacing peoples, including threats to sustainable economic growth and trade, is addressed (Gómez and Fujisaki 2009).

Whereas the regional second track of diplomacy has tended to reinforce the view of states, the third track, facilitated mainly by civil society organizations, has had less trouble adopting human security (Kraft 2000; Caballero-Anthony 2004). Caballero-Anthony describes the ASEAN’s People Assembly (APA), in promoting a human-centered

understanding of security and development, as "a vessel for articulating and conveying the people's views and interests outside formal political channels" (Third APA, cited by Caballero-Anthony 2004, 179). Established in 2000, the APA has kept an inclusive agenda, evident in the sixteen panel discussions held in 2007, where issues as diverse as labor, migration, violence, security sector reform, life sciences, and energy security, among others, were considered (ISDS 2008). Kraft (2000) though presents a mixed picture of track three processes in Southeast Asia. Though NGOs advance a human security agenda, serious failures menace their success, namely lack of an audience able and willing to do something, inadequacy of the human infrastructure, and inability to agree on priorities. The last of Kraft's concerns seems unaltered.⁴

Finally, Thailand's leadership in pushing for human security in Southeast Asia must be mentioned. It has buttressed the concept on both the international and domestic levels. Thailand is an active member in the two groups of countries supporting the concept, the Human Security Network and Friends of Human Security. It also supports various activities to broaden the concept's application (Heller and Takasu 2008). Of special importance is the existence in Thailand since October 2002, of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. The ministry aims to "empower families to be self-reliant and to strengthen social capital using local wisdom, local resources, and good governance" (UNDP 2010). Surin Pitsuwan, the Thai ASEAN secretary-general since 2008 has been the prime mover for a human security approach in the region and in Thailand.

PHILIPPINE DISCOURSES ON (HUMAN) SECURITY

During the last of a series of policy dialogues organized by the University of the Philippines's Third World Studies Center (TWSC) to develop a Philippine version of human security, Deles (TWSC 2007, 96) said that the concept of human security was introduced to the Philippines in 1995 through the conference "The Gathering for Human and Ecological Security" organized by the Department of Interior and Local Government. In the same policy dialogue, Dionisio (TWSC 2007, 101) commented that, during the Asian financial crisis, a senator also proposed a framework for the country's human security in economic terms. Those two early attempts seem to indicate that the concept was introduced into the domestic arena following the external

inoculation just described. However, after decades of armed conflict, the idea of security in the country is deeply entwined with violence; the version of human security that got into the mainstream discourse originated from the existing understanding of security, somehow in a bottom-up manner. This does not preclude the broader vision of security beyond violence, but rather gives to the introduction the context through which violence is connected to a wider set of factors. We identify at least three discourses of (human) security based on their general vision of the armed conflict and its resolution; namely, the peace movement, the national security framework, and the anti-terrorism legislation. The categories are far from comprehensive, and many of the actors move across them depending on the circumstances. Despite this, these categories are useful in understanding the general attitudes toward the concept, as well as the process of its introduction. While the first two represent well-established institutions, the last is a special case in the Philippines that plays a motivational role for subsequent work on fleshing out human security ideas.

The Peace Movement and Human Security

The human security concept has found an accommodating niche inside the peace movement. It has helped in framing comprehensive pictures of what peace in the country could or should mean, despite the unambiguous defiance of the establishment. Yet, despite the early voices propounding Filipino human security policies, the concept did not move straightforward into the movement's tool kit. The first wave of peace activism which we can locate between the two EDSA People Power revolutions (1986 and 2001) already had a concrete discourse that covered all the sectors of society. But then, during Estrada's presidency, the government posture towards the armed conflict in the country changed, wreaking havoc especially in Mindanao. The aftermath of Estrada's aggressive fight for peace offered the opportunity to renovate the discourse using human security as an alternative way forward. Since then, several applications of the concept have been developed by actors under the peace umbrella, who also suggested institutional changes that have not been successful. We include in the following account some of the most salient.

The Philippines has witnessed two major violent confrontations during the last four decades: the Moro separatist movement in the Mindanao region and communist guerrilla activities across most of the country. Both groups have their proximal origins during the Marcos

regime (1965-1986), although their causes are centuries old (Abinales and Amoroso 2005; Coronel Ferrer 2009). During the dictatorship, direct confrontation was the most common approach to conflict, but after the EDSA People Power Revolution in 1986 and the subsequent democratization process, developing an all-inclusive agenda of peace became one of the main objectives of the government. It was out of the "spiritual unity" engendered during the 1986 revolution that, aside from the formal government plan, multiple forms of civil society organizations emerged throughout the country, especially for the promotion of peace (Coronel Ferrer 2005). These actors, supported by the international community, the church, business groups, and sectors of the academia, came to be labeled as the "peace movement."

The institutions that would later support the introduction of human security into the peace movement rhetoric were created during the presidency of Corazón Aquino (1986-1992) and Fidel Ramos (1992-1998)—the appointment of a peace commissioner under the first administration and the formulation of a complete framework under the latter (OPAPP 2006). The Philippine's peace program was designed by the National Unification Commission, an advisory body tasked with this goal in 1992. The work of the commission included public consultations all around the country, including dialogues with the rebel groups and preparing technical papers for academic support. The main contribution of the report, which was submitted in July 1993, was the "Six Paths to Peace," which stressed the root causes of armed conflict and the need to empower the populace. Concerns on culture and the environment were included alongside economic and political dimensions. The commission recommended the creation of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), which has since played the leading role in peace activities in the country. The commission's proposed reforms for peace gave way for OPAPP to develop "The Social Reform Agenda" in order to propose concrete plans to alleviate poverty and rampant inequalities. The agenda was the source of many programs and legislation centered on the most vulnerable, including farmers, fisherfolk, the urban poor, indigenous peoples, and the informal sector. It also considered among its pillars the access to ecological security (OPAPP 2006, 21).

Although this comprehensive plan is, in essence, a human security framework, the peace movement already had a consolidated discourse in terms of sustainable development, poverty, human rights, and of course, peace. Some of the interviewees for this research had an initial uneasiness about the concept, especially fearing cooptation by the

traditional security establishment, in order to bypass their obligations in protecting constitutionally recognized rights. The turning point for the peace discourse was President Joseph Estrada's (1998–2001) declaration in 2000 of an "all-out war" in Mindanao, a step back from the peace aspirations. The strategy produced some military gains, but heavily affected the civilian population, causing "over 100 deaths, over 9,000 homes destroyed, and over one million internally displaced persons in the course of the year" (Oquist 2002, 12).

The abrupt removal from office of then President Estrada in the EDSA People Power Revolution of 2001 gave the peace movement a chance to reflect on the experience and rethink its strategy. Human security emerged as a viable alternative after the release of UNDP's *Mindanao and Beyond: Competing Policies, Protracted Conflict, and Human Security*, the fifth peace assessment mission report on the Mindanao peace process, written by Paul Oquist (2002). In the report, he described the shortcomings of a policy of military victory to regain peace in Mindanao, as well as the shallowness of a pacification approach that merely concentrated on the signing peace of agreements. Therefore, Oquist (2002, 14–15) asserted "the need for an integrated, holistic policy framework," what he called the human security option of institutional peace. Such a framework "could promote safety, well-being, dignity, rights, and justice for all," achieving this in a "consultative, participatory fashion to ensure ownership by key actors, stakeholders, and the public in general." The call for the larger consensus needed for the human security option to become real was extended to the media, the academia, the private sector, and civil society. After the disastrous consequences of Estrada's war, Oquist's human security-based strategy to achieve peace gained the necessary momentum to bring the concept to the fore and was embraced by the mainstream peace movement.

From then on, it is possible to find a broader use of human security inside the rhetoric of the peace movement. It can be found in the work of the Bangsamoro Development Agency and the Assisi Development Foundation, a well-recognized local NGO. Ambassador Howard Dee, a prominent figure in the peace process and then head of the foundation, urged "the government [to] adopt a paradigm shift from a militaristic concept of national security to that of human security and social justice" (Abadiano 2004b, 4). The succeeding president of the foundation, Benjamin Abadiano, received the Ramon Magsaysay award, considered the Asian Nobel Peace Prize, for emerging leadership. His acceptance lecture uses the human security concept to describe his

work and that of the Assisi Foundation (Abadiano 2004a). Subsequently, the foundation has introduced the concept to its flagship strategy in Mindanao, "The Peace Sanctuaries," where human security has helped in the refinement of tools for the mapping of the conditions of communities under the threat of conflict. This strategy has been diversified, creating specific programs for indigenous peoples and for tri-people communities (Muslims, Christians, and indigenous peoples). Although there is some skepticism in general about buzzwords coming from the international community, Abadiano recognizes the advantages of the concept when fostering self-determination.

Another hallmark in the widespread acceptance of human security is the 2005 Philippine Human Development Report (PHDR), *Peace, Human Security and Human Development* produced by the Human Development Network (HDN) (de Dios, Santos, and Piza 2005). The authors embarked on the task of giving full substance to Oquist's proposition of institutional peace, doing it *in extenso*: there are fourteen background papers drawing from different disciplinary approaches among social sciences, five policy notes, four development research news reports and a national survey. The main concerns of the leading chapter are the roots and costs of conflict, analysis of which concludes in eight suggestions reinforcing peace efforts. Throughout the report, the human (in)security concept plays mostly a rhetorical role, representing at the same time the consequences of conflict and the symptoms of low human development. In one of the annexes, a first set of indicators of human insecurity in the country is proposed, using an econometric model of the conflict to identify correlated variables. The report presents some inconsistency in trying to balance the utilitarian tone that the determination of costs entails with the deontological position derived from a rights-based approach, which is defended by the peace movement. The epitome of this tension is the inclusion in the report of a box on the measurement of the value of human life, in stark contrast with their support for human security as a human right, expressed toward the end of the leading chapter. Otherwise, the report thrives, setting the trend for subsequent studies on human security.

Also worth special mention are the efforts by the UP TWSC to contextualize the concept in the Philippines. The center's involvement could be traced back to a summer course on globalization and human security in 2004, an issue of TWSC's journal *Kasarinlan* on human security in conflict situations released in the same year, and another

issue on human security published two years later (Tadem 2006). Within the initial scope were issues related to conflict and human rights. Then, in 2006, with the support of OPAPP and UNDP, the center focused its effort on defining the human security framework in the Philippine context (TWSC 2007). Under the main question “How can we promote and protect human security?” four thematic dialogues on different dimensions of the concept were held as follows: human security and development, human security and governance, human security and culture, and human security in violent conflict situations. A fifth dialogue brought forth a human security framework partly based on the results of the preceding dialogues, and partly enhanced by a revision of previous proposals regarding human security at the local and international levels. In their conclusions, the Philippine way includes its own typology of securities, identifies actors, describes three important processes—defining the threat, deciding priorities, and involving the community—and makes some policy proposals. In a subsequent effort (Atienza et al. 2010), TWSC made an initial attempt to develop a human security index for the country. The initiative, mostly undertaken from mid-2007 and throughout 2008, consisted of a series of key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and a survey in selected areas of the country.

There is a more pragmatic explanation for the enthusiastic adoption of human security discourse into the peace movement rhetoric: financial and political support from the UNDP. This organization has been behind the work of the OPAPP from the start, first taking a leading and later a supporting role, through which the agency could introduce the concept as a guiding principle. In addition, as have most of the initiatives mentioned above, the OPAPP itself has adopted human security, the concept being also part of the contents used on peace education all over the country; jointly with the UNDP, they have funded other initiatives and research on human security. An example worth mentioning is the report in 2009 on mining and indigenous peoples (Lusterio-Rico et al. 2009). The study presents additional tensions that the human security discourse may help to mediate—between the common vision of development and the rights of indigenous peoples. In fact, the Peace Institutions Development Office (PIDO) of the OPAPP offers through the *Guidebook on Conflict-Sensitive and Peace-Promoting Local Development Planning* (OPPAP 2009) an example of how to apply human security, especially based on the PHDR findings. Also supporting the implementation of the concept are other UN and

international agencies, such as Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which has human security achievement included in its mandate, and projects financed by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security.⁵ Finally, through the active inclusion of human security into the rhetoric, actors in the peace movement have tried to engage more actively the security apparatus into the construction of peace. This is more evident when the discourse is contrasted with the other boundaries mediated by "human security."

The National Security Framework, 1936–2010

During the presentation of the aforementioned human security index development project, one of the commentators asked, "Why is it the case that in spite of the fact that the state has been claiming that the notion of national security is multidimensional and has several elements, there is this prevailing notion that national security is still all about the military and defense?" (Atienza et al. 2010) The claim is grounded in several historical facts that at the same time support the inclusion of the human into security discourses in the country.

From its origins, the national security framework has contained developmental objectives. Jose (1992, 27) notes how, during the setting of the legal base for national defense of the Commonwealth period (1935–1946), the development of the military side by side with the civil-industrial sector was considered key for successful defense. Hernandez (2005) describes the way in which, from the beginnings of the Philippine Republic after the Second World War, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) deployed a mixed strategy in order to contain insurgency. In response to the Huk Rebellion in the 1950s, soldiers were given authority in civic activities as part of the government approach, including "the provision of horticultural, medical, dental, and legal assistance to local communities; the construction of roads, bridges, irrigation dams, and schools; and other physical infrastructure" (2005, 1). This was known as the "left hand" part of the strategy—what can be considered a *de facto* human security—while the "right hand" represented traditional military activities. The author shows that this twofold approach was present, at least as an idea, in all of the ensuing operation plans to date, even during the dictatorship years. Development operations are still delivered, especially infrastructure projects, but upon request from the community and under civilian command.

Changes triggered by the EDSA People Power revolution in 1986 also demanded a renewal in the national security framework. During

Corazon Aquino's administration, "the 'New AFP' redefined national security as the 'security of the people.'"⁶ A key figure in this reframing was Fidel Ramos, who, prior to becoming the president from 1992–1998, was a member of the army, got involved in the coup attempt that triggered the 1986 revolution, and later protected then President Aquino from seven coup attempts while serving first as the AFP chief of staff, then as defense secretary (Romero and Tang 2008, 15). National security under his administration was broadly defined as "a condition wherein the people's way of life and institutions, their territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as their welfare and well-being are protected and enhanced" (National Security Council in 1993, cited by Morada and Collier 1998, 566). Hence, at the same time that his administration was creating the above mentioned peace framework, the broadening of the national security framework was also contemplated. In 1992, seven comprehensive dimensions were adopted by the National Security Council (NSC): (1) moral/spiritual consensus; (2) cultural cohesiveness; (3) economic solidarity; (4) sociopolitical stability; (5) ecological integrity; (6) territorial integrity; and (7) external peace.⁷ Aguirre (1998) observes that among three other bodies that can be consulted by the president in relation to national security, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) is included. Furthermore, Ramos openly recognized the developmental role of the AFP, as he stated in a speech delivered during the army's anniversary in 1993:

Traditionally, the formal purpose of the Armed Forces is to act against foreign enemies, but in reality they have other and varied functions. The Armed Forces have a critical nation-building function. Our engineering units are employed in building infrastructures and in rehabilitating calamity areas. Military units provide assistance for health, education, peace and order, environmental protection programs throughout our vast archipelago in our remotest communities. (Ramos 1993, cited by Acop 2006, 142)

However, the "left hand" did not work as expected. Either because results that were delivered were too little and came too late, or because the army was not able to perform those tasks adequately (Hernandez 2005). Hernandez affirms that one of the difficulties in this divided approach is that the left and the right hands each use a distinct framework and language. After Estrada's incomplete presidency, when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was elected in 2004, human security rhetoric tried to conciliate this split. Her administration created a National

Task Force on Convergence Strategy between 2004 and 2005, an interagency group chaired by the OPAPP and tasked to explore ways to harmonize both approaches—i.e. the “right hand” that predominated in the army with the “left hand,” then assumed by the peace movement and officially represented by the OPPAP. According to Hernandez, “the task force has taken the position that not only would it be necessary to adopt a common framework and language for the two approaches, but it would also use the concept of *human security* as part of the common framework” (2005, 19; italics provided). Deles (TWSC 2007, 95–100), then head of the OPAPP, affirmed that the outcome of the task force was a major input to the national strategic planning process convened by the NSC in 2005; however, no practical result has been evident.

In sum, the inclusion of the “human” in the security discourse consolidated under the national security framework could be understood as reflecting the concern about the evolution of the traditional security apparatus and the armed conflict. The inclusion of human security in the rhetoric helps encompass the two major challenges such an evolution implies: on the one hand, there is the narrow question about armed conflict, the institutional role of the military inside domestic politics, and how the latter could lead to the end of the former. For instance, Hernandez’s (2005) concern is about civil checks on the military, which might not have been achieved through democratization. There is also the work of the Institute of Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS) that seeks to develop a Security Sector Reform Index (ISDS 2009) with the objective of identifying how the core security forces are being governed and how oversight institutions are performing their tasks, and developing a security sector constituency in the Philippines. In this initiative, human security appears as a guiding concept. The volume by Santos and Santos (2010) entitled *Primed and Purposeful: Armed Groups and Human Security Efforts in the Philippines* makes an extensive review of the situation of the main armed groups in the country, including paramilitary groups and private armies. Although the focus tends to overlap with the peace movement discourse, its developmental component is less marked, and what is considered human security measures relevant to armed groups are primarily limited to political dialogues, ceasefires and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

On the other hand, the inclusion of human security in the discourse motivates research on a set of emerging challenges in the

transformation of the traditional security apparatus. Closer to armed conflict is the issue of small arms control (Galace 2007; PhilANSA 2008; Quilop 2010). The threat entailed by the unrestrained spread of small arms among the population goes beyond the Communist and Muslim fronts, reinforcing problems of organized crime and violence. Another challenge increasingly gaining attention is the response to natural disasters and emergencies. In the aftermath of the devastating flood that paralyzed Metro Manila and several areas in North Luzon in 2009, the role of the military during and after natural disasters once again drew the attention of researchers and the public, promising an area of study that can help to further enlighten a new pact on civil-military relations. For instance, the compilation of analyses edited by Arcala-Hall (2009) examines the problem from several angles—i.e., the 2004 tsunami experience in Indonesia seen from both local forces and external cooperation, the role of transnational society, and the situation in the Philippines—highlighting the interface for cooperation needed, as well as the pros and cons on the development of domestic capacities for emergency relief inside the armed forces. Partly linked through human security rhetoric, the upcoming research in these two areas promises to be a determinant in the configuration of post-conflict society in the country.

The Human Security Act and the Human Rights Discourse

Anti-terrorism legislation was not necessarily an issue linked to human security in the Philippines, like the two discourses previously reviewed. In fact, there seems to be no precedent connecting both issues in the domestic arena, although terrorism has been on the human security agenda of APEC since 2003 (Gómez and Fujisaki 2009) and, of course, a concern addressed by the ASEAN (Nishikawa 2009). Nevertheless, in March 2007, the Philippine Congress approved Republic Act No. 9372, in order to “secure the State and protect our people from terrorism.” The law is better known for its official name—the “Human Security Act” (HSA). Because of its significance in the interpretation and future applications of the concept, it deserves to be considered as a separate discourse that is worthy of particular attention.

The HSA is designed to grant special powers to state agents whenever there is suspicion of terrorism, including indefinite detention periods without arraignment or trial (Diokno 2007). The law is conceived in the same vein as the post-9/11 US legislation, or the legislation of some regional neighbors, such as Indonesia (Kwe 2007).

Even detractors recognize that the country required such legislation since terrorist plots are not unheard of in the archipelago. However, because of its possible misuses, it is strongly opposed by human rights groups, while some scholars point out several deficiencies that could make it impractical.⁸

In relation to human rights, arguments against the law assert that many rights protected by the Constitution would be *de facto* violated. After the bill was passed in the House of Representatives, the Philippine Human Rights Information Center (PhilRights 2006) presented a checklist of provisions from the "Anti-Terrorism Act" that contravened the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Although the approved version of the act provides that, "In the implementation . . . the State shall uphold the basic rights and fundamental liberties of the people as enshrined in the Constitution," at least four of the petitions for abrogation base their claims in the contravention of basic rights. The rights violated include freedom of expression, association, speech, movement, and due process, among others.

Paradoxically, Lyew's (2010) defense of the appropriateness of the HSA is partly based on a human rights argument. He places the law in the context of the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions (Alston 2010). The report presents a grim picture of executions during President Arroyo's term, with possibly more than eight hundred deaths after 2002 linked to the counterinsurgency strategy and the profiling of political groups from the Left. Denials from the armed forces are complemented by failure to prosecute. So, "unlike the secrecy surrounding the pre-HSA extrajudicial killings," maintains Lyew, "the new law makes the prosecution of terrorists a transparent matter that proceeds under the supervision of the Philippine judiciary." The author cites the remark of Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr. (one of the main supporters of the final version of the law) on the anxiety that some sections of the bill could generate, but which the whole act manages to balance. Lyew even describes the act as strengthening of democratic ideals, because of its reliance on the division of powers. However, he fails to address Alston's concerns about the functioning of the criminal justice system. A tacit recognition of this dichotomy—of whether the problem is of the law or of the system—can be found in the final question of a report made by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines—"how can the State—which stands criticized for tolerating if not authorizing the gross and systematic violations of human rights—guarantee that in

implementing the Human Security Act the people's civil and political rights are not trampled upon?" (2007, 70). The question remains unresolved, yet it is worth noting how McCoy's (2009) account of the history of domestic security in the country signals a more transcendental issue at stake, one beyond just anti-terrorism—the way the country is to be policed.

On the other hand, Human Rights Watch (2007), an international NGO, criticizes the vagueness of the HSA's language, asserting that it may be open to misuse by the government. The vagueness starts with the very problem of defining terrorism, a task that even the international community has found difficult to complete (PhilRights 2006). In its first versions, the bill contained a list of crimes to be considered terrorist acts, but after one senator recalled the international definitional conundrum, the last version resorted to aggravated crimes that were already included in the Revised Penal Code of the Philippines (Bagayaua 2007). Nevertheless, that amendment was not enough to resolve doubts about the difference between insurgents and terrorists, or to distinguish between purposeful terror and incidental terror, among other issues. Hence, all of the existing petitions to annul the act, a total of six according to Santos (2010), draw attention to the issue of vagueness in the definition of terrorism.

Setting aside the discussion about how to appropriately frame anti-terrorism legislation, we should clarify how HSA came to be branded. The history of the bill dates as far back as 1996, when the first bill on terrorism was filed by Senator Juan Ponce Enrile (Bagayaua 2007). According to Bagayaua (2007), "the anti-terror bill was refiled by its proponents every subsequent Congress but never came close to being approved." Finally, House Bill 2137 found its way through the House of Representatives, and after several discussions and amendments, it was approved in April 2006. Until that moment, the bill was still considered under the name "Anti-Terrorism Act."⁹ In fact, the critique to the preliminary bill passed by the House published by the Philippine NGO PhilRights in November 2006, used human security as an argument against its final approval. But, the bill was drastically transformed in the Senate, with the notable intervention of Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr. who alone introduced roughly one hundred changes before casting his vote for it (Bagayaua 2007). Pimentel wrote later that a colleague suggested re-branding the bill (Bagayaua 2007).

So far, HSA has not been invoked to prosecute any crime. Although the TWSC (2007), through a series of interviews held in

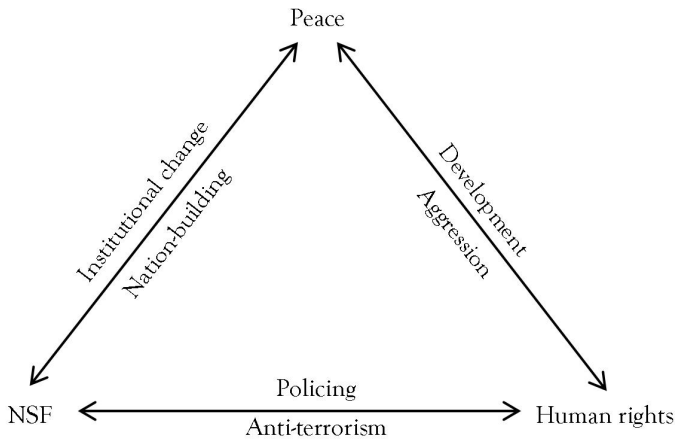


Figure 1. Human security boundary work in the Philippines

2007, noted that the HSA did affect some key informants' view on human security. This, however, seems to be a passing effect. The opposition to the law has managed to neutralize this discourse, while other actors keep using the rhetoric without limiting it to anti-terrorism. In his petition to nullify the act, Soliman Santos, co-author of the Philippine Human Security Report in 2005, affirmed that “[to] frame counter-terrorism as human security is not only deceptive to our people but also dishonest as a misappropriation—somewhat like theft of intellectual property.”¹⁰ Based on this, Santos argues that the act violates the Philippine Constitution because it purports information given out deliberately to deceive, a position shared by all the academics and NGO workers consulted in the field.

“HUMAN SECURITY” BOUNDARY OBJECT AT WORK

Through this review, it has been possible to distinguish the roles proposed by Gasper (2010) in the different Philippine discourses surrounding human security. Not only are the basic roles of language and motivation present, but elaborate analysis, evaluations, and policies have also been undertaken, thus promoting meaningful debates. Those exchanges are perhaps the most conspicuous characteristics of the three discourses on security engaging the human—the variety of boundaries sketched in and the bridges conceived for the possible transitions. Figure 1 presents the intellectual communities

linked to the security discourses identified, suggesting some keywords that depict the boundaries between them that human security is—or could be—helping to mediate.

As a boundary object, human security is helping to catalyze the *institutional change* that has been called for in order to achieve peace. Oquist's institutional peace is about connecting the larger picture, of society sectors to overcome root causes of conflict. A central effort in the PHDR 2005 is to make explicit the effects of conflict beyond casualties, while at the same time linking conflict incidence to unsatisfied social needs and median income inequality. This approach entails not only a new set of priorities for action, probably changing the way budgets are allocated among different agencies in charge, but also the reform of state structures that could be hindering the end of violence. Hence, the big picture of people's peace and progress has to deal forcefully with the reform of the security sector. The introduction of human security into the discourse especially resonates with this task, helping to mediate between otherwise different visions of reform. The ideal of human security, whatever it means, is common to the actors involved in this boundary, serving as a guide to the process underlying the transformation (ISDS 2009).

For the actors on the other side of the boundary, the security-development nexus brings back to the table the primordial role of the traditional security apparatus in the consolidation of the state. Both the "left hand" strategy of the army and the explicit recognition of "people's security" as the aim of the NSF reflect a broader agenda that is characteristic of armies all around the world, but which the armed conflict in the Philippines severely truncates. Such an agenda can be recognized in what former President Fidel Ramos (Acop 2006) called "nation-building," an idea that has regained relevance at the international level after the incapacity of civilians to deliver development in the military incursions of the United States, but which is equally valid in developing countries' struggle to face new and old challenges in the future. Nation-building does not go uncontested, being mainly lambasted for its lack of transparency. Also subject to skepticism is the success in handing back the process of nation-building to civilian checks and balances (McCoy 2009). Nonetheless, Oquist (2002) prized the comprehensive vision introduced by Ramos, which was in stark contrast with Estrada's all-out war approach. Hence, the army's "left hand" remains a legitimate component of the strategy and, in fact, it is brought up by personnel of the institution when asked about their

human security activities (Atienza et al. 2010). If we also take into consideration the emerging research on the role of the traditional security apparatus in addressing new challenges, such as natural disasters and climate change, it is easier to see human security's boundary work facilitating the process of rethinking the military institution under a broader set of public demands. In other words, human security boundary work points at the preparations for the postconflict Philippines—or at least a new face of armed conflict in the country.

Anti-terrorism legislation represents another face of human security as a boundary object in the conception of the postconflict situation. The HSA fosters a transition in the logic of armed conflict in the Philippines, even if its soundness is disputed. Not only does it attempt to consolidate a domestic (legal) agreement on what constitutes terrorism, but it also serves as an intermediate step to reframe the insurgent side of the conflict from enemies to criminals. That was, in some sense, the idea behind the National Task Force on Convergence Strategy, where the initial claim was that "the military continued to view the insurgents and separatist forces as 'enemies' or 'pests' that need to be defeated or weeded out" (Hernandez 2005, 19). Senator Aquilino Pimentel maintains that the objective of all the changes introduced to the bill was to uphold the human rights of the people (presentation cited by Bagayaua 2007). Thus, this boundary also makes explicit the prominent role that human rights discourse is due to play in this transformation. For instance, absent from the discussion is the well-accepted fact that security measures imply to some extent a weakening of rights, something that Philippine society has to recognize and negotiate after pondering divergent viewpoints. The inclusion of human security in the discourse can facilitate such dialogue. Petitions to nullify the piece of legislation are not the place for the necessary debate because they are limited in that they can only react against the contents of the bill. A proper debate about how to deal with terrorism using the human security approach has yet to be held. Actually, the allegation of deception may fail to hold ground since not even in the international community is there an agreed definition of human security, as is the case with terrorism. A larger debate would be necessary to consolidate the substantial content of the concept in an inclusive network of social actors, which may resemble an expanded version of the TWSC's pioneering work.

Even more significant, the discussion on terrorism may serve as an overture to the more complex, but usually overlooked, discussion over the *policing* model a given country's constituency wants for itself. McCoy's (2009) portrayal of more than a century of establishing a surveillance state in the Philippines, initiated and thereafter supported by the United States, makes clear the impact of the security framework and how sociopolitical forces shape the country. He maintains, for instance, referring to the outcome of the Huk rebellion, that "American intervention tipped the local balance, defeating peasant rebels with sheer force of arms, thereby preempting any serious attempt at land reform that was, in retrospect, essential to the country's long-term social progress, economic growth, and political stability" (McCoy 2009, 538). Prohibition of personal vice—mainly gambling and drugs—with the consequent emergence of crime syndicates and corruption, also plays a prominent role behind the forces that perpetuates conflict. McCoy also observes that much less is written about police issues because of the secrecy that such activities involve, thus the integration of the corresponding actors into the discussion through human security is another major boundary at work.

There is a final boundary that is envisioned by the broader discourse of the peace movement and made clear by the addition of the human rights perspective to the discussion. It stems from a simple truth—*development* as a strategy to move out of armed conflict is easier said than done. One way or another, economic growth has been the goal of all the recent Philippine governments. Human rights NGOs recognize that "the country is relatively efficient in enacting economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights-related laws" but the problem lies in the "lack of resources and promotion, limited application and implementation, monitoring and evaluation" (Philippine NGO Network 2009). Thus, the pursuit of development requires action beyond limited versions of advocacy and legalistic rights-based approaches, and depends much on the broader set of tools available to the peace movement.¹¹ However, development can become *aggressive* if the pursuit goes unbridled. The case of extractive industries' impacts on indigenous people communities epitomizes the pleas against the aggressions coming from development, marking the limit where profit turns against people's traditional livelihood or even their survival. Human security as a boundary object provides an ethical ground for the dialogue among conflicting visions of progress. Without closing the eyes to the reality of tradeoffs implied by development, the inclusion

of human security into the discourse makes it hard to forget what the main goal of the whole social project is.

The interaction of these strands of human security rhetoric has so far been modest, but there are some signs of improvement. Deles, for example, who returned as head of OPAPP under the current administration, has publicly used human security rhetoric to advance security sector reforms in the Philippines, promising a new round of dialogues around this boundary. Moreover, it could be expected that, through her leadership, projects on the concept implementation will continue. The last years of the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo presidency were not stable enough to promote public discussions on terrorism in the Philippines and on policing, as the disputes over the legality of the HSA have not been resolved. The recent compilation of works by Santos and Santos (2010), although framed in terms of human security, has a very narrow scope in relation to the potential of the rhetoric, failing to address the bigger questions of the borders at stake. Besides, intermittent dialogues with the two most prominent armed groups in the country may also hinder public discussion in any topic that could interfere with the negotiations.

The interaction with respect to nontraditional threats to people's security has also raised concern in the country, mainly because of mining and extreme weather emergencies. The former is an iconic case of the conflicts between development paradigms, over which there is already some work framed in terms of human security. About the latter, the floods that paralyzed Metro Manila because of the typhoon Ondoy in 2009 gave some momentum to discussions about the role of actors in situations of extreme distress. Around these issues, academic research keeps on supplying inputs to the discussions in the public sphere. Nonetheless, their impact, as well as the usefulness of a human security rhetoric, depends much on the success in achieving solutions for traditional security threats.

CONCLUSION: CONVERGENCE OR AN UMBRELLA FOR DIALOGUES?

A domestic account of the use of human security in Philippine security discourses offers a plural picture of boundaries in dispute. Far from being a claim made in unison, human security is used in different discourses to press forward particular agenda with conflicting interests. Probably because of this, the introduction has been framed in terms of convergence: explicitly to close the gap between the approaches of the

armed forces and the peace movement—to the two fronts of the armed conflict, and implicitly to call for a peace constituency (de Dios, Santos, and Piza 2005). That human security discourse offers a promising platform for engagement in the process of realizing civil-military coordination has been recognized in the country and elsewhere (Kaldor, Martin, and Selchow 2007), while security per se is a concern binding societies together. Proponents of a broader conception of human security may question the limited scope of this convergence. Yet, it reminds all the actors that any enlargement of the security discourse has to be preceded by a change in the conditions framing the current perception of security. In other words, resolving the long standing armed conflict in the country is necessary to sustain the enlargement of security's picture. Therefore, testing ideas concerning this boundary has a natural priority, more pressing because of the silence surrounding the real impact of the National Task Force on Convergence Strategy.

Views on security never fully converge, and the process is a long and thorny one. Failure to achieve convergence in one of the boundaries at work should not affect other ongoing discussions. These discussions are important for building a sustainable postconflict society in the country. For instance, the openness of human security discourse allows de Dios, Santos, and Piza (2005) to point out the existing bias against Muslims in Philippine society, a stigma that hinders the long-term aim of coexistence. Uncertainty about the consequences of the development paradigm imposed on society in general, and minorities in particular, may increase the distrust over the legitimacy of the government, a factor buttressing the conflict. An agreement over what terrorism is and over the tougher question of how the country should be policed may be essential to sustain the new concept of security in the post-conflict era.

We propose then, to understand the introduction of human security into the different discourses as the opening of an umbrella for dialogues. This view encompasses the different boundaries without arrogating to any of the actors sovereignty over the final meaning of the concept. It is, after all, through dialogues that threats are identified and priorities set, key processes behind any shared conception of security (TWSC 2007). All the works cited contribute to the effort to keep deconstructing and reconstructing security as the social conditions and challenges change. This is probably the only alternative to the tendency to mistake some means of security, such as the army, for its ends, the well-being of the people. A framework of dialogues steps back to

acknowledge one of the most important gains of bringing the concept of human security to the forefront of discussion—to break the monopoly of the state in the rhetoric of security, thus weakening secrecy and engaging the security apparatus as another of the actors of knowledge construction. The arguments of Lyew (2010), (defending the HSA) and McCoy (2009) (exposing the faults of policing in the Philippines), both derive mainly from the secrecy surrounding the traditional deployment of security. Perhaps some level of shadow dealing with threats is unavoidable, but being such an important component of societies, the checks and balances from the public sphere are warranted.

A first step to institutionalize these dialogues is to recognize their structure and promote the exchanges between the parties in each boundary. The HSA motivated reaction from those who see in the concept an opportunity for change, but it also confirmed fears of those who cannot see security beyond the reach of the state. Visualizing once more the whole picture of discourses may not dissipate all the fears, but it can at least signal different ways to engage with the concept. Our structure of human security boundaries in the Philippines, or improved versions of it, is also useful in the task of designing meetings around the concept that, because of the variety of related topics, often complicates the maintenance of a minimum of coherence. It is possible to find in the Philippines an abundance of researchers and initiatives trying earnestly to flesh out the concept to different contexts. Yet, a narrow normative guide—e.g., only security sector reform—can withhold a broader spread of the results of these experiences. Of course, our structure of dialogues implies certain normative implications that might be contested, but while the broadest dialogue on meanings of human security in the Philippines takes place again, it can serve as a start.

Finally, it does not hurt to remember that the strength and appropriateness of the dialogues have to be reflected in the well-being of the population. The appeal of the new concept hinges on the ethical difference of any resolution or action in the name of human security. Yet there is a risk that enlargements of security's conception remain episodic, the rhetorical product of crises, while a consistent transformation in society's security is left to contingency. In other words, security is a learning process, one that could advance a bit out of every tragedy, or use the capacity of all society's actors to try prevention, improve protection, and increase resilience. Dialogues based on human security have the potential to bring about exchanges

across divergent positions, enhancing the learning capacity of the society at large. Eventually, from those dialogues some agreements, in the form of policies, sectoral reforms, education programs, partnerships, or any other strategy to face the major threats of the moment, might become respected and followed by the actors. Those agreements and their consequences are nothing less than what human security is in the Philippine context. Without them, the concept is left prone to co-optation, and the opportunity of its boundary work could be lost in the trash bin of securitizations. ❁

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NOTES

1. Besides the original work of Star and Griesemer, Gasper follows St. Clair's (2006) experience on the "boundary" approach, especially about "poverty" as a boundary object.
2. The issue of the exact origin of the concept has generated some debate in the human security scholarship. On the one hand, the framing in terms of two freedoms is linked to the origins of the United Nations, and a speech by American President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941. On the other hand, similar phrasings and ideas about security had been present during the emergence of security as a concept, tracked back in the European literature as far as somewhere between the eighteenth and nineteenth century (Rothschild 1995), although some scholars would like to venture an archeology of security digging far deeper into the past. Some recent examples using the wording "human security" include two international commissions in the 1980s dealing with development and security (Bajpai, quoted in Atienza et al. 2010). Nonetheless, if we are to concede some credit to recent efforts to quantitatively analyze culture through digitalized books (Michel et al. 2011) then the UNDP reports are the practical origins of the present buzz around the concept. You can check by looking up "human security" at <http://ngrams.googlelabs.com/>.

3. Tracks two and three denote in international relations channels of diplomacy different from formal contacts between nations. Track two refers to interaction among research institutes, organizations, and figures close to the government, while track three refers to the exchanges between organizations detached from the government.
4. Chandra (2009) points out the emergence of other civil society fora and networks looking for direct interaction with ASEAN, partly because of the modest interaction achieved through the APA. The APA was created by the track-two ASEAN Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS), in turn a network of like-minded think-tanks with strong linkages with the policy makers. The domination of the latter network over the exchanges in the APA was a source of disappointment for some organizations, which out of their experience in advocacy, including their role in APA's work, decided to engage vis-à-vis ASEAN. Nevertheless, the argument of track-three actors' relatively easier embracement of human security still holds ground.
5. Further information can be found in the web page of the fund: <http://ochaonline.un.org/TrustFund/tabid/2107/language/en-US/Default.aspx> (accessed May 14, 2010).
6. The quotation is extracted from "The Framework of National Security" by Serafin D. Talisayon, Assistant Director-General for Policy and Plans of the National Security Council during Ramos's term. The document was provided by the TWSC, but the original source is unknown.
7. Talisayon emphasizes that the dimensions are presented in descending order of importance, but a later presentation of the same framework by Aguirre (1998), who writes during the Estrada presidency, inverts the list from items 1 to 6, while keeping external threats in the last position. It has to be observed that in Article 2 of the Philippine Constitution, the country "renounces war as an instrument of national policy, adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the law of the land, and adheres to the policy of peace, equality, justice, freedom, cooperation, and amity with all nations."
8. According to Santos (2010, 112n25), the leading case against the Human Security Act is the *Southern Hemisphere Engagement Network, Inc., et al. vs. Anti-Terrorism Council, et al.*, G.R. No. 178552 filed in July 2007.
9. Previous versions, as well as the approved act, can be found online. Bagayaua (2007) offers a complete source of materials in this respect, while the UNODC database of International Legal Resources also has digital versions: https://www.unodc.org/tldb/international_instruments.html (accessed May 20, 2010).
10. The quotation is from the leading case mentioned in note 8.
11. This may partly explain why human rights groups are sidelined from a recent synthesis about the lessons of civil society peace building (Coronel Ferrer 2005, 29).

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