

## Kosovo Chronicle 1 – Human Security in Kosovo

by CRDP

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Human security holds that a people-centered view of security is necessary and a precondition for national, regional and global stability. A more simplified concept of Human Security is articulated as: "...the basic quality-of-life of an individual or household at home, in one's community, and in the world - if that person is wealthy, 'middle class', 'working class', or poor." If one asks "What is the difference between human security and well-being?" the reply might be: "Very little, except that most descriptions and indicators on wellbeing seem focused on the middle class and above. Human security, on the other hand, focuses on all people – thus on about twice as many people in relatively egalitarian societies, and rather more than twice as many people in other economies/environments/societies." Experimentation demonstrates that there are common issues, but also differences in concepts and enumeration of Human Security components for the middle or upper classes, or for the people as a whole. <sup>1</sup>

The idea of human security is precisely based on this perception of interrelatedness: "In general, human security is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an ethnic tension that did not explode in violence, a dissident who was not silenced. Human Security is not a concern with weapons – it is a concern with human life and dignity" (UNDP 1994: 22) <sup>2</sup>

The recent 2013 UNDP Global Human Development Report says that "The South needs the North, and increasingly the North needs the South". Subsequently, the leading countries of the developing world, including key countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, are together reshaping global power dynamics in a new era of human development progress. <sup>3</sup> Although Kosovo is not listed in the recent Global Human Development Report 2013, based on calculated indices, Kosovo ranks between Sri Lanka ranked as 92 on the list and Algeria ranked 93. Furthermore, according to Kosovo UNDP indices, Kosovo marked progress this year for the first time in terms of the human development index, being ranked within the group of developed countries. It is not known however, whether this is good or bad news for Kosovo, for the fact that when a state is categorized under the group of developed countries, it moves out of the donors' focus, who, in the proven past practice, usually focus primarily in underdeveloped countries and those in development. <sup>4</sup> It is difficult then to understand how it happened that Kosovo has moved forward in terms of human development, when local and international reports have raised concerns about the difficult economic and financial situation, high unemployment, poverty and extraordinary bad conditions in education and health system.

*In a short questionnaire for the purpose of this chronicle, several respondents answered in one of our questions of what makes them secure and insecure in a day to day life in Kosovo. Following answers reveal that insecurity more than security concerns them.*

*"The circle of people whom I know makes me feel safe, while the state and its institutions make us all insecure. In addition corruption is the most frightening thing".*

*"The only thing that makes me feel safe is speaking my own language, but the hardship of living in Kosovo makes me insecure".*

<sup>1</sup> Hastings, D. A., 2011. *The Human Security Index: An Update and a New Release*, s.l.: Humansecurityindex.org.

<sup>2</sup> Werthes, S., Heaven, C. & Vollnhals, S., 2011. *Assessing Human Insecurity Worldwide: The Way to A Human (In)Security Index*, Duisburg-Essen: INEF-Report.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, 2013. *Human Development Report 2013 - The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*, New York: United Nations development Programme.

<sup>4</sup> Berani, E., 2013. *Kosovo not part of the HDI*. [Online] Available at: <http://eng.infoqlobi.com/kosovo-not-part-of-the-hdi/> [Accessed 20 March 2013].

*"Family and friends makes me feel safe, but the political situation makes me insecure claims another respondent".*

*"I sort of feel as a nomad, since I do have a permanent place to live (as a no-man'-land), but this create kind of a temporary security. What makes me even more insecure is the fact that the state is dysfunctional, and people are losing even hope".*

*Another youth voice claim: "Insecure make us the lack of simulative politics in jobs creation for young people, and its socio-economic stagnation. Secure though is the fact that we are not in the state of war, thus, being close to family gives us sense of security".* Unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, is worsening as an increasing number of young people enter the job market with certificates or degrees but cannot find work, and public sector jobs are perceived to be given based upon patronage. Other factors of insecurity are but not limited to: The judiciary' inability to provide justice and security creates the feeling of injustice, and poor state leadership and political gridlock which is reflected in unresponsive and ineffective governance. Other factors are the disappointment over the EU's position on visa liberalization for Kosovo, which creates sense of ghettoicizm and shorten opportunities to travel in the West for jobs opportunities. The least, but not the last is corruption in various forms (grand corruption in privatization, petty corruption in public services) and beliefs that the political system is increasingly controlled by shadowy networks creates deep insecurity.<sup>5</sup>

An acute issue not only relevant for Kosovo but throughout the region is the missing persons. Since 1999, the bodies of around 1,800 people registered as missing have been found, identified, and returned to their families for burial and an estimated 1,797 people remain unaccounted for. Families in both Kosovo and Serbia are still waiting for the bodies of their relatives to be exhumed, identified and returned to them for burial.<sup>6</sup>

War Veterans are far more a complex group than most citizens are able to perceive and they pose a real threat to peace and stability in Kosovo.

Once the war is over, the civilian population tends to see them as a constant threat to life in peace, while international organisations involved, and most local peace-builders alike, have them down as "spoilers" of agreements and sustainable peace. Some of them are in very influential positions, in or out of the government. Therefore, integrating them in society is crucial and this is very clear in context of Kosovo, when very often they rebel against government inability to improve the Law on war values. Inability to integrate them has a chain effect, thus if we add to each of the veterans another 3-4 family members, we then have an enormous number of persons directly or indirectly afflicted by war (trauma), which will taint most of their decisions in some way.

In order for the Rule of Law to be supremacy of regular power in Kosovo, not only the institutions and civil society needs to work hand in hand, but EULEX also must demonstrate its commitment to strengthen the rule of law and not shy away from taking on cases that are difficult or concern high-ranking officials.

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<sup>5</sup> USAID/Kosovo Conflict Assessment, November 2012, *Breaking Down Invisible Walls*

<sup>6</sup> *The Right to Know: Families still in the dark in the Balkans Index: EUR 05/001/2012 Amnesty International August 2012. Retrieved from: [http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/AL\\_TheRighttoKnow.pdf](http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/AL_TheRighttoKnow.pdf)*