



Human Security and Security Sector Reform in Eastern Europe

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STUDY

- Human security and security sector reform: experience of Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, Lithuania, and Slovakia. Best practices, common problems, and important lessons learned.
- Though the traditional threats are still vital, the human security paradigm placing people at the centre should be a hallmark for the security sector reforms in countries that have chosen a modern democratic model of development.
- In democratic societies, human security and state security are interconnected components that complement each other. Only those societies can be resilient, where people are properly protected from the entire range of threats, and where human security is guaranteed in its modern and inclusive sense.

Contents

Human Security: World's Practices and Ukraine's Perspective 5
Maksym Khylo, Oleksandr Tytarchuk, East European Security Research Initiative Foundation, Ukraine

Human Security vs. National Security 14
Natalya Belitser, Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy, Ukraine

Human Security – Important Element for Democracy Building in Armenia 24
Hasmik Grigoryan, Stepan Grigoryan, Analytical Centre on Globalization and Regional Cooperation, Armenia

Human Security and Security Sector Reform in Georgia: A Critical Reflection 31
Bidzina Lebanidze, Georgian Institute of Politics

Political Security as one of the Main Conditions for Human Security in Moldova. 36
Ion Manole, Promo-LEX Association, Moldova

Rights and Security of a Person in Belarus. 42
Andrei Porotnikov, Belarus Security Blog

Assessing the Essential Elements for Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Lithuania 48
Grazvydas Jasutis, General Jonas Zemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania

Human Dimension and Security Sector Reform in Slovakia: Mission (In)complete? 56
Samuel Goda, Slovak Foreign Policy Association

Human Security and Security Sector Reform in Georgia: A Critical Reflection

Bidzina Lebanidze, Georgian Institute of Politics

The concepts of Security Sector Reform and Human Security

Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Human Security (HS) are relatively new concepts that emerged in the developmental studies and political practices after the end of the Cold War and since then belong to the democracy- and a state-building toolbox of the Western community. Both of them and especially HS represent “a paradigm shift from traditional national security approaches”¹ toward a new understanding of security that puts the individual in the center and questions the centrality of the state’s role. The HS re-conceptualizes the concept of security significantly by “moving away from traditional, state-centric conceptions of security that focused primarily on the safety of states from military aggression, to one that concentrates on the security of the individuals, their protection, and empowerment.”²

To analyze the various aspects of human security in Georgia the paper employs the analytical mechanism developed by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) and the United Nations Human Security Tool (UNHST) – the key UN bodies responsible for the development of human security strategies.³ In the UN conceptual document, seven types of HS are identified: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political.⁴ Based on various sources, this pol-

icy paper proposes four basic types of HS that in SSR (Table 1). The remainder of the paper follows this categorization and explores the role of HS in SSR and broad security strategy of Georgia in four main security areas: personal and community, political, environmental and economic security (Table 1).

Table 1: Reconceptualization of the concept of security on basis of Human Security and Security Sector Reforms (Author’s compilation based on various sources⁵)

Types of Human Security
<p>Personal security <i>Threats: Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor</i></p> <p>Community security <i>Threats: Inter-ethnic, religious and other identity-based tensions</i></p>
<p>Political security <i>Political repression, human rights abuses, absence of democratic checks and balances, autocratic governance</i></p>
<p>Environmental security <i>Threats: Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution</i></p>
<p>Economic and social security <i>Threats: Food security, hunger, famine, unemployment, healthcare</i></p>

Relativization of the state’s role

According to D.Law, “at their core human security and security sector reform are both critical reac-

1. Kaldor, Mary, Martin, Mary, and Selchow, Sabine, ‘Human Security: A European Strategic Narrative’, 2008 <<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/05172.pdf>>, 2.

2. United Nations, ‘Human Security in Theory and Practice. An Overview of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security’ <http://www.un.org/humansecurity/sites/www.un.org/humansecurity/files/human_security_in_theory_and_practice_english.pdf>, 6.

3. The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) <<https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Background%20on%20the%20UNTFHS.pdf>>

4. United Nations, ‘Human Security in Theory and Practice. An Overview of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security’ <http://www.un.org/humansecurity/sites/www.un.org/humansecurity/files/human_security_in_theory_and_practice_english.pdf>, 6.

5. Law, David M., ‘Human Security and Security Sector Reform. Contrasts and Commonalities’, *Sicherheit und Frieden (S+ F)/Security and Peace*, 2005, 14–20; United Nations, ‘Human Security in Theory and Practice. An Overview of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security’ <http://www.un.org/humansecurity/sites/www.un.org/humansecurity/files/human_security_in_theory_and_practice_english.pdf>; United Nations, ‘Human Security – Trajectory and Application at the United Nations’, 2016 <http://www.un.org/humansecurity/sites/www.un.org/humansecurity/files/untfhs_ppp_-_human_security_may_2016.pdf>; Renard, Thomas, ‘The European Union: a new security actor?’, *Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Research Paper No. RSCAS*, 45 (2014).

tions to the state in its role as a security provider.⁶ From the perspective of SSR that became a cottage industry after the Cold War, the support of Western donors to SSR in developing countries should have been focused on both efficiency and political accountability of state services.⁷ As D. Law argues, “security sector reform recognizes that the security of individuals and that of the state are not necessarily identical, and that not all security problems will have a state-centric solution.”⁸ On the other hand, the concept of human security, “usually identified with the thinking of the UNDP and the Commission on Human Security, tends to downplay the role of the state and the legitimate use of force, and play up the importance of indirect threats and human development.”⁹

Yet it should be also noted that Georgia experiences today acute forms of very traditional threats that had been buried in oblivion in the majority of Western countries where the concept of human security has emerged in the first place. Whereas the international terrorism remains the only traditional threat in the Western societies, in countries like Georgia there are a whole range of existential dangers that belong to traditional threats: military conflict with neighboring country, occupied territories, a very fragile ceasefire and shifting demarcation lines in conflict areas, security and military accidents on daily basis. Therefore, it is no surprise that traditional state-centered aspects of security reforms are still deeply ingrained in thinking of Georgia’s political elites. In conflict-ridden societies like Georgia, human security dimension can only supplement but not substitute the traditional state-centered dimensions of security and security sector reform. It is similar to the democracy-stateness dilemma: stateness should always precede democratization.¹⁰ One can only have a democracy if there is

a functioning state in place.¹¹ For instance, the most severe human rights violations especially but not exclusively in the conflict zones of Georgia happen not because of the Hobbesian nature of state but because of its ineffectiveness to fulfill its main Weberian functions such as having a monopoly on violence or protecting basic rights and freedoms of its citizens. Therefore, whereas the incorporation of HS in SSR is a welcome development and shall be part of any SSR reform in developing countries, the Western donors shall also pay their attention to traditional security threats which are derived from specific local contexts. By doing so the core liberal-democratic values should not be compromised. In the case of conflict-ridden countries, such as Georgia, the best approach would be not to replace “state security” by “human security” as some supporters of the HS concept would argue,¹² but to combine the two approaches in order to get both efficient and accountable civil-military management of security and military sectors.

Personal and Community security

Human rights violation based on inter-ethnic tensions in the conflict areas remain one of the main challenges for HS in Georgia. After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War, Georgian governments have pursued a double-track strategy towards conflict regions. On the one hand, their strategy was aimed at preventing the recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia on the international stage. On the other hand, they tried to engage local communities on the site. However, little has changed after the war. Despite the presence of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) the human rights violation frequently happen in the areas where neither the EUMM nor Georgian authorities have access to monitor the situation and prevent crime. The 2008 war which was dubbed by Human Rights Watch as “a disaster for civilians”,¹³

6. Law, David M., ‘Human Security and Security Sector Reform. Contrasts and Commonalities’, *Sicherheit und Frieden (S+ F)/Security and Peace*, 2005, 15.

7. Ibid, 16.

8. Ibid, 16.

9. Ibid, 17.

10. Fukuyama, Francis, ‘“Stateness” First’, *Journal of Democracy*, 16/1 (2005), 84–8.

11. Ibid.

12. See: Law, David M., ‘Human Security and Security Sector Reform. Contrasts and Commonalities’, *Sicherheit und Frieden (S+ F)/Security and Peace*, 2005, 14–20.

13. HWR, ‘Georgia: International Groups Should Send Missions’, 2008 <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/08/18/georgia-international-groups-should-send-missions>>.

was accompanied by grave human rights violations. 160 000 people were displaced in Georgia, a significant amount of whom have not yet returned to their homes. Since then, the protection of the basic right of internally displaced people (IDPs), for instance by the provision of living spaces, has been a priority of Georgian government.¹⁴ However, and despite the financial support by the West, the governments finds it hard to allocate sufficient resources in the state budget to secure the housing space for all IDPs’.

After the 2008 War, the HS has become a key component of Georgia’s strategy of engaging the local communities on the other side of the conflict lines. For instance, thanks to a special program launched by the Georgian government, the residents of the breakaway regions can receive a “high-quality medical treatment in Georgia at no cost.”¹⁵ “State Strategy on Occupied Territories: Engagement Through Cooperation” – a main strategic document adopted by Georgian government after the 2008 War also lists mostly the HS measures as the key mechanisms of conflict resolution.¹⁶ Most of them are target the local communities on both sides of the conflict.¹⁷ The measures include facilitation economic interaction and improvement of socio-economic conditions, improved mechanisms for human rights protection, better healthcare, rehabilitation of infrastructure and preservation of cultural heritage and identity.¹⁸ However, the Georgian government has so far been lacking concrete action plan of how to implement the declared goals on the ground. Hence, with a few exceptions, the majority of the HS goals has so

far remained on paper.

Protection of basic human and community rights is also problematic in the Georgia proper. Whereas the overall situation in terms of human rights and political and civil freedoms has improved after the 2012 electoral power change, in certain areas it remained same or even deteriorated further. This primarily concerns the protection of LGBTI rights and also in some cases religious communities. On a positive note, it should be noted that despite the strong societal opposition, the Georgian government adopted the Anti-discrimination legislation in 2014,¹⁹ however, its proper implementation remains a challenge.

Democratic control and Checks and balances

One of the key aspects of any security sector reform is a civil control of state security, military, and police services. Until recently Georgia had a strong presidential system and oversight functions on military and security apparatus were monopolized by dominant position of the president. After recent constitutional changes, however, Georgia abandoned strong presidentialism and adopted the mixed presidential-parliamentary system. Accordingly, the parliamentary oversight over military and security agencies has increased dramatically and presidents influence was downgraded. Today, parliament enjoys a veto power on declaring the martial law and state emergency by the president, it approves the use of military force and approves the documents adopted by the National Security Council and activates the law on the strength of military personnel.²⁰ Parliament has oversight authorities on issues of state secrets and on decisions on Georgia’s participation in peacekeeping missions.²¹ Hence, also formally president remains the Commander-in-Chief of the military forces,

14. Kakachia, Kornely, Lebanidze, Bidzina, Larsen, Joseph et al., ‘The First 100 Days Of The Georgian Dream Government. A Reality Check’, 2017 <<http://gip.ge/the-first-100-days-of-the-georgian-dream-government-a-reality-check/>>.

15. Menabde, Giorgi, ‘Why Are Ossetians and Abkhazians Coming to Georgia for Medical Treatment?’, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 12/43 (2015) <<https://jamestown.org/program/why-are-ossetians-and-abkhazians-coming-to-georgia-for-medical-treatment/>>.

16. Government of Georgia, ‘State Strategy on Occupied Territories: Engagement Through Cooperation’ <<http://www.civil.ge/files/files/SMR-Strategy-en.pdf>>.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid, 2.

19. Civil Georgia, ‘Anti-Discrimination Bill Adopted’, 2014 <<http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=27192>>.

20. Atlantic Council of Georgia, ‘Georgia’s Security Sector Review Project’, 2014, 104–5 <http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00K6SB.pdf>.

21. Ibid, 106.

his competences are quite limited and mostly encompass representative functions.

Natural disasters and environmental degradation

Overall, Georgian authorities have been paying a very little attention to environmental and natural challenges and problems. Especially under the previous government of Mikhail Saakashvili the neoliberal economic policies and multiple waves of deregulation resulted in environmental disaster. According to the special report by international Energy Agency (IEA) in 2012 Georgia became a number one country in the world with mortality rate attributed to air pollution²² surpassing all other countries of the world. High rates of air pollution have a number of reasons. Public transportation system is not sufficiently developed and as a result, the majority of the population uses private cars as the preferred mode of transport.²³ According to one source, the amount of privately owned cars has almost doubled within the last five years.²⁴ Most of them are second-hand vehicles imported from the EU, US, and Japan and with an average age of 10-15 years.²⁵ Moreover, due to liberal deregulation reforms in the transportation area, such as removal of roadworthiness testing of vehicles since 2004, and the recent suspension of periodic testing of exhaust gases, there are currently no control mechanisms left leading to high emissions from motor transport in Georgia.²⁶

Economic security

The strategic documents adopted both by the current and previous governments acknowledge the central role of economic development for Georgia's national security. The 2011 National Security Con-

cept (NSC) considers the sustainable economic development to be a key ingredient for guaranteeing country's national security.²⁷ The NSC acknowledged the security threats related to low employment and economic backwardness such as social cleavages, the absence of middle class, and increased criminal activity.²⁸ Moreover, the fast economic development is also directly related to the resolution of territorial conflicts since Georgian strategy mostly draws on its own soft power – or its economic and cultural attraction to the population in conflict areas.²⁹ Hence, improvement of socio-economic conditions for the population has been a key component of Georgia's broad security strategy including the SSR. However, the approaches of previous and former governments significantly differ from each other. Whereas Mikhail Saakashvili's government mostly resorted to the neoliberal policies focusing only on growth component but neglecting the area of social welfare.³⁰ The current Georgian Dream (GD) government has been doing the opposite: it implemented a number of bold social initiatives including the universal healthcare reform but does not have a comprehensive strategy how to achieve a sustainable economic growth.³¹ Overall, it can be said, that, in practice, the GD government pays more attention to social aspects of human security, however, due to the absence of sufficient economic growth the long-term sustainability of a welfare state established by the GD is anything but guaranteed.³²

Conclusion

Table 2 summarizes the HS-related best (and worst) practices and the main challenges in

22. International Energy Agency, 'Energy and Air Pollution', 2016 <<http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/WorldEnergyOutlookSpecialReport2016EnergyandAirPollution.pdf>>, 34.

23. Caucasus Business Week, 'Georgia is No. 1 Among the Deadliest Air Polluted Countries', 2016 <<http://cbw.ge/georgia/georgia-no-1-among-deadliest-air-polluted-countries/>>.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Of Georgia, 'National Security Concept of Georgia', 2012 <<http://www.mfa.gov.ge/MainNav/ForeignPolicy/NationalSecurityConcept.aspx?lang=en-US>>.

28. Ibid, 4.

29. Government of Georgia, 'State Strategy on Occupied Territories: Engagement Through Cooperation' <<http://www.civil.ge/files/files/SMR-Strategy-en.pdf>>.

30. Kakachia, Kornely, Lebanidze, Bidzina, Larsen, Joseph et al., 'The First 100 Days Of The Georgian Dream Government. A Reality Check', 2017 <<http://gjp.ge/the-first-100-days-of-the-georgian-dream-government-a-reality-check/>>.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

Georgia’s SSR and beyond. Overall, we can draw a few lessons from how Georgian governments have utilized the HS components in the SSR and broad security strategy of Georgia. Georgian governments have successfully incorporated the aspects of HS in their strategies of conflict resolution, however, their practical implementation

remains limited in scope. Democratic oversight of military, security and police forces has also increased recently. Overall, however, the “humanization” of Georgia’s Security Sector remains a work in progress and social, economic, political and even physical security of country’s citizens remains under threat.

Table 2: Utilization of HS components in Georgia’s SSR

Types of Human Security	Best practices	Main challenges
State-centrism and human-centrism	The importance of individual rights and freedoms is acknowledged by all strategic documents; However, state-centrism has not been abandoned.	The presence of traditional threats (occupation, breakaway regions, wars, security accidents) prevents the shift from state-centric to human-centric thinking.
Personal and community security	Human Security - the key component of the Soft Power-based conflict resolution strategy; Utilization of healthcare and other social services to attract Abkhaz and Ossetian citizens; Housing for IDPs’.	Frequent security accidents; The absence of basic human rights for the local population including physical security; Inability of state to establish monopoly on violence in occupied zones.
Political security	Strong parliamentary oversight of military and security structures; Parliament has veto power in most military and security-related affairs (state of emergency and martial law, military missions, size of army).	Checks and balances under threat due to upcoming constitutional amendments; The inclusion of civil society actors in SSR-related legislative and implementation processes insufficient.
Environmental security	The world’s highest mortality rate caused by air pollution.	Uncontrolled deregulation leads to increased air pollution and other environmental problems.
Economic and social security	The importance of socio-economic development for national security acknowledged in all strategic documents.	Low economic growth endangers the sustainability of currently developing “welfare state” that may potentially result in intense social cleavages and societal fragmentation.