Forming Connections between Security Sector Reform and Sustainable Development: The Potential of the Human Security Paradigm

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Abstract: Many interlinkages already exist between security and development, despite the fact they traditionally maintained separate bodies of literature and compartmentalized presence in policymaking. This introductory article to the special issue seeks to provide guidance on how to bridge the gap between Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Sustainable Development Goals. It focuses on the nexus between the two concepts particularly SDG-16 devoted to effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. It argues that the human security paradigm provides the most rewarding approach for bridging the gap between these two, as it centres the focus on the human element of these two endeavours. It first provides an overview of the security-development nexus, followed by a discussion of the commonalities and differences between SSR and SDG-16 specifically, outlining how human security provides a better connection between the two. It concludes that the bottom-up and multistakeholder approaches of the human security paradigm and its context-specific perspective ensure that the SSR missions and attainment of the SDG-16 targets will be more effective and efficient.

Keywords: security sector reform, sustainable development goal-16, UN Agenda 2030, human security

Introduction

There are many interlinkages between Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-16. Today's challenges rarely happen in isolation from each other. In fact, many of the challenges that we face in the world today are interconnected and complex in nature. These range from failed and failing states to radicalization, and extreme poverty to organized crime and corruption. Practitioners and academics need to

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recognize the interlinkages between security and economic development issues, as such complex challenges require coordinated and multifaceted action from different actors both within and across nations. In this introductory article to the special section, which is a follow-up to the discussions at the Academic Event of the 2022 Belgrade Security Conference, we argue that the human security paradigm provides the most rewarding approach for bridging the gap between SSR and SDG-16, as it centres the focus on the human element of these two endeavours. Two articles in this special section provide an exploration of the interlinkages between SSR and SDG-16 from distinctive perspectives.

SDGs are the culmination of the increasing recognition by the international community over the last decade or so that security and development issues need to be concurrently tackled. SDG-16 does an excellent job in attempting to address the SSR- and SSG-related issues, by seeking to tackle corruption, establish the rule of law, provide access to justice, build peaceful and inclusive institutions, and protect the most vulnerable populations everywhere. The COVID pandemic has exacerbated the already complex challenges, leading to growing disparities across and within national boundaries. More recently, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has also made it clear to global audiences that there are problems with access to food and energy-security related issues that need to be tackled all at once.

This article first provides a historical overview of the security-development nexus in order to reflect the growing recognition of the need to address both realms concurrently. It then analyzes the commonalities and differences between SSR and SDG-16. The article unpacks the human security paradigm to map its strengths and weaknesses in bridging the SSR and SDG-16. Finally, it provides a synopsis of the articles in this special section, to be followed by the conclusion section.

Historical Overview of Security-Development Nexus

Despite the Bretton Woods system being founded based on the assumption of inextricable linkages between security and development (Zoellick 2008), security and development have traditionally maintained separate bodies of literature and compartmentalized presence in policymaking. There has been much mistrust between these epistemic communities (Dursun-Özkanca 2021).

In the colonial era, attention to 'security' was a pinnacle of much 'development' strategy, whilst the Marshall Plan offers an example of 'development' concerns as central to Western security policies (Glušac 2023, 23). As noted by Chandler (2007, 362–363), "since the end of the 1990s, and particularly after 9/11, the framework of the 'security-development nexus' has been hailed as a way of cohering national and international policy-making interventions in non-Western states".

Since the 1990s, there has been a growing recognition of the need to tackle security- and development-related challenges simultaneously. All leading international organizations

have published important documents acknowledging this point. For instance, in 1992, then-Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Boutros-Ghali published a report called, "An Agenda for Peace" (UNSG 1992), encouraging addressing of the post-conflict reconstruction challenges in the post-Cold War era. Boutros-Ghali, in his "Agenda for Development" report (UNSG 1994, Paragraph 3), identified development as a "fundamental human right." In 2004, then-Secretary-General of the UN Annan published his "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility" report, arguing:

> Development and security are inextricably linked. A more secure world is only possible if poor countries are given a real chance to develop. Extreme poverty and infectious diseases threaten many people directly, but they also provide a fertile breeding ground for other threats, including civil conflicts (UN 2004, vii).

This citation depicts the richness of the link(s) between security and development, uniting different historical trajectories, approaches, and narratives. As demonstrated by Stern and Öjendal (2010, 22), references to 'a more secure world' draw upon the framing of 'globalized security–development', which arguably lends legitimacy and urgency to the call for 'giving the poor countries a real chance to develop' as the only viable way out of the implied 'insecure' world in which we now live. The threats emanating from 'extreme poverty' arguably draw upon the 'broadening, deepening and humanizing' discourse in its depiction of human insecurities and symptoms of arrested human development or underdevelopment. The citation then shifts to the 'modern teleological narrative' as a source for presenting the scenario of 'other threats', civil conflicts, and the violence and destruction they wreak (Stern and Öjendal 2010, 23). These authors see the depiction of a 'fertile breeding ground for threats' as evoking the image of the political body/society as an infested wound, which must be cured of its 'germs' for it to be secure (Stern and Öjendal 2010, 23). This part of the quote brings in an understanding of security as a 'technique of governmentality' (Stern and Öjendal 2010, 23).

Two major contextual factors contribute to establishing a firmer connection between development and security. Firstly, development was no longer equated with economic growth. Secondly, the rise of the human security concept within the development community has provided a rich playground for a more comprehensive understanding of both security and development (Dursun-Özkanca 2021; Khagram, Clark, and Firas Raad 2003). The policy documents started to talk about the joining of practices and theories in these two policy areas as a way of creating a 'joined-up government' or of facilitating multilateral intervention under new 'holistic', 'coherent', or 'comprehensive' approaches to non-Western states (Chandler 2007, 362–363). This process also included adding the prefix 'sustainable' to development, recognizing that development is not an exclusively positive notion (Glušac 2023, 23). It may indeed bring negative effects on nature, human development, and human rights.

The security apparatus is increasingly involved in large-scale development projects, particularly when such projects do not enjoy the support of the local community (Glušac 2023, 23).[1] Sometimes, they are employed to clear the terrain, in other places to enforce expropriation, elsewhere to keep protesters away, or even run the projects themselves. Understood in narrow terms and applied selectively, security and development may indeed contribute to authoritarian tendencies. To make development sustainable, good governance and human rights have to be added to the equation. This essentially means guiding the development by the principles of good governance and good security sector governance. Here the SSR comes into the picture.

The focus on SSR similarly came in the post-Cold War era, as a result of an increased interest in civil-military relations (Bruneau and Matei 2008; Chuter 2006; Crossley-Frolick and Dursun-Özkanca 2012; Edmunds 2007). SSR has significant implications for democratization, good governance, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction (Hänggi 2003; OECD 2008; Dursun-Özkanca 2014; UN Peacekeeping 2020). The UN defines SSR as "a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law" (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2012, 2). The OECD-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) is one of the main actors that work on SSR, and it increasingly defines SSR as a "development activity" (Baldassini et al. 2018, 43).

SSR emerged from the development donor debate regarding the best ways to implement development assistance in the security realm (Baldassini et al. 2018; Brzoska 2003). It serves to advance human security and human development (Schnabel and Farr 2012). In his 2008 report, then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for a coherent system-wide approach to SSR to "provide a basis for a transparent framework for reform and international principles" (UNSG 2008, 2). For instance, it is important to establish a reliable police force and armed forces in fragile states, as "ill-trained forces" may undermine a government's legitimacy and worsen the situation (Zoellick 2008, 6). Therefore, effective SSR, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) through "job training and placement for ex-combatants" are critical for peacebuilding (Zoellick 2008, 6).

As a recent study notes, if SSR's "development roots" are not acknowledged, "the supposed responsibility and professed enthusiasm of the SSR/G community towards upholding and serving broader development goals through SSR remain ambivalent at best" (Baldassini et al. 2018, 43). SSR, however, is both a "preventive" measure and a "long-term development" goal (UN Peacekeeping 2020). The UN employs SSR in peace operations as well as "non-mission settings, in response to national requests, and in transition settings, where

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1 This applies to both national and international forces. For instance, NATO has struggled to establish partnerships with local humanitarian actors in their missions (from Kosovo to Afghanistan). See more in: Gheciu 2012.

peace operations are withdrawing but where ongoing security sector assistance is needed" (UN Peacekeeping 2020).

Against the background of the expiration of the mandate of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015, the UN adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which contains 17 SDGs (UNGA 2015). The SDGs are a welcome development as they bring together security and development spheres under one roof, as "prior to the SDGs, development actors did not show much interest in security affairs and security circles did not sufficiently emphasize development" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 25). Many emphasize the priorities given to national interests in SSR missions (Justaert 2012), which more often means practical prioritization of security over development (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). Some scholars criticize the development community for opposing cooperation with security sector players (Brzoska 2003; Farr et al. 2012). However, experts who work in development are typically sensitive to the dangers of linking development and security under the framework of SDG-16, which focuses on accountable, inclusive and transparent institutions (Möller-Loswick 2017; Dursun-Özkanca 2021). Critics frequently argue that it leads to the securitization of development (Duffield 2010; Duffield 2014; Wulf 2011; Short 2014; Möller-Loswick 2017; Lazarus 2020), and "militarization" or "misuse" of development aid (Schnabel and Farr 2012; Wulf 2011, 342).

In UN Agenda 2030, the goal is to address factors that cause violence, injustice, inequality, corruption, poor governance, illicit financial flows, and illicit arms flows all at once (UNGA 2015). In this context, SDG-16 emerges as an important goal, emphasizing building "peaceful, just, and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions" (UNGA 2015, 9). By setting the goal of promoting just, peaceful, and inclusive societies, SDG-16 emphasizes peacebuilding, good governance, and sustainable development and focuses on ending violence, promoting the rule of law, strengthening institutions, and increasing access to justice through responsive and representative decision making and transparency (UN 2023; Dursun-Özkanca 2021). In that sense, it contains elements that emphasize negative peace as well as positive peace (Radović 2019; Dursun-Özkanca 2021). To illustrate, it targets negative peace measures, such as the reduction of "physical violence and homicide rates, as well as positive peace measures, such as combating corruption, establishing the rule of law, transparency, accountability, and responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision making" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 25). The next section discusses the similarities and differences between SSR and SDG-16.

SSR-SDG-16 Similarities and Differences

SSR is closely related to SDG-16 in the sense that they both seek to ensure the safety of citizens to live their lives free from fear of violence (UN 2018). As such, it would be appropriate to note that both focus on negative peace measures (Dursun-Özkanca 2021).

SDG-16 seeks to implement institutional reforms, which is key to SSR missions as well. Consequently, it is possible to argue that they are interested in positive peace by reforming the justice system, policymaking, and law enforcement. SDG-16 highlights the need for having good SSG (Myrttinen 2019). Target 16.3 on the promotion of the rule of law and equal access to justice, Target 16.4 on the return of stolen assets, the reduction of arms flows, and fight against organized crime, Target 16.5 on the reduction of corruption, Target 16.6 on accountability and transparency, Target 16.7 on responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making, Target 16.a on the strengthening of relevant national institutions for building capacity at all levels to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime are commonly shared between SSR and SDG-16.

As put by one of the co-authors of this article, "Inclusivity, context specificity, and governance and institutionalization concepts of transparency, democratic oversight, accountability, legitimacy, and the rule of law" are aspects that are shared between SSR and SDG-16 (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 33). For instance, in SSR, there is a growing emphasis on local ownership, which is directly related to the concept of inclusivity and participative approaches that are emphasized in SDG-16. Local ownership is a central concept for both SSG/R and development. It is widely regarded as the bedrock and main precondition for successful SSR (Gordon 2014). The concept of local ownership has its roots in the development circles that emphasized the importance of 'empowering local communities and encouraging local participation' in peacebuilding and democracy promotion (Dursun-Özkanca and Vandemoortele 2012, 150).

As argued by Gordon, if SSR programs are not locally owned, security sector institutions, processes, and policies will likely be less able to respond to local needs; if they do not respond to local needs, efforts to increase security and the rule of law will be compromised, public trust and confidence in the state and its security institutions will be limited, and institutions and other outputs may be rejected (Gordon 2014, 127). Local ownership ensures accountability as well as the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the reforms of the security sector. Similarly, there is an emphasis on the uniqueness of the context in both SSR and SDG-16 (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). Another important theme emphasized by both SSR and SDG-16 is governance and institutionalization. These are goals that can be achieved through "transparency, democratic oversight, accountability, legitimacy, and the rule of law" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 37).

Notwithstanding the commonalities outlined above, there are some notable differences between SSR and SDG-16. One such difference is that while the SDGs are universal in focus, SSR primarily focuses on developing and post-conflict countries (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 38). Moreover, the focus on combatting organized crime and reducing illicit financial and arms flows is more prevalent in SDG-16 than in SSR, except in the cases of DDR in post-conflict contexts (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). SDG-16's mandate is arguably more expansive because the provision of legal identity for all is not directly under the purview of SSR, although it is possible to make the argument that legal identity would be a precondition for effective justice reform (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 39). Furthermore, security sector

actors may play an important role in realizing the right to legal identity (SDG 16.9). The same applies to oversight bodies, such as ombuds institutions (Glušac 2023; Alunni and Steyne 2024). For instance, in Kenya, the police and security service conduct security vetting for people living in border regions, checking if they are born in Kenya or neighbouring countries, which is a factor in deciding whether they are eligible for personal documents. Another difference is that SDG-16 is a clearly defined goal declared by the UN and part of its wider UN Agenda 2030, while SSR is a policy concept that encompasses a wide range of practices guided and supported by a wider set of actors. Last but not least, while SDG-16 emphasizes longer-term goals, SSR might be more prone to emphasize shorter-term goals due to donor interests. Consequently, human security is better positioned to provide a bridge between SSR and SDG-16. SDG-16 and SSR both highlight peace, security, institution-building as well as justice and human rights, however, unlike SDG-16 and the human security paradigm, SSR does not typically place a high priority on sustainable development (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 40).

Human Security's Potential to Provide a Stronger Bridge between SSR and SDG-16

Human security evolved considerably since its initial conception in the 1994 Human Development Report of the UN Development Programme (UNDP). More and more actors acknowledge the importance of human security in human development (The Commission on Human Security 2003; Bueger and Vennesson 2009). Its original definition involved freedom from fear and freedom from want. UNDP lists seven components of human security: economic, food, health, environment, personal, community, and political security (UNDP 1994, 58). Under Canada's sponsorship, there was a renewed interest in the concept at the end of the 1990s (Baldassini et al. 2018). With the establishment of the Human Security Network (HSN) under the leadership of Austria, Norway, and Canada in 1999, human security has gained further prevalence internationally (PreventionWeb 2020).

Human security embodies a shift from a state-centric security approach to a human-centric approach (UNDP 1994). This coincides with the main message of the SDGs. In the words of the UN Secretary-General, "human security embodies the core promise of the 2030 Agenda: to leave no one behind" (Guterres 2019, xi). Guterres captured the strong nexus between human security and sustainable development, which is further enveloped in the UN General Assembly Resolution 66/290 of 2012. The Resolution underlines that, a common understanding of the notion of human security includes, inter alia, the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair; and a strong emphasis on the interlinkages between peace, development and human rights (UN General Assembly 2012; from item 3). Indeed, SDG reporting, analysis, and policy preparation can benefit from principles and methods that have been articulated and applied in human security studies (e.g., Martin and Owen 2014; Gasper 2020). Gasper et al. (2020) suggests comparing and contrasting perceptions of priority values, threats and security; identi-

fying 'hotspots', and using indexes; using flexible focusing; and systematic comparisons between alternative policy routes.

An important connection between human security and SDGs is the emphasis on both positive and negative peace (Galtung 1964). Human security essentially embraces both. It holds the assumption that the international community should not only seek to establish negative peace, which means the absence of violence and war; but should also strive to establish positive peace by integrating all members of the society and ensuring their well-being and welfare. In that sense, the human security paradigm provides a great bridge between SSR/SSG and SDG-16, accentuating security's bottom-up nature. Human security is not state-centric in its approach and requires multi-stakeholder involvement in the solution of today's complex problems, by creating inclusive, peaceful, and just institutions. There are a lot of commonalities between SSR, SDG-16, and human security in the sense that they all seek to establish inclusive institutions with accountability and oversight powers accrued to people (Dursun-Özkanca 2021).

Freedom from fear, which is an important piece of the human security concept, falls under negative peace. It highlights the fact that each member of society should be safe against any potential attacks and violence. At the same time, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity, the two remaining human security concepts, fall under positive peace (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). These are collectively important to achieve the comprehensive goals that the international community is seeking to achieve through SDGs. The human security paradigm also recognizes the need for local ownership. This is something that has been increasingly emphasized in peacebuilding missions (Ejdus and Juncos 2018), which have to be "embedded in local realities… for realising civil-military effectiveness and sustainability on the ground", as argued by Vogelaar (2018, 125). The same author observes that the implementation of the human security approach calls for the protection and empowerment of local populations, implying the need for both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' measures (Vogelaar 2018, 125). Only with a stronger focus on inclusivity and local ownership peacebuilding missions will be able to better address the needs, concerns and interests of those most affected by these operations.

Human rights lie in the front and center of the human security paradigm and the development-security nexus. It is especially evident in the UN Agenda 2030, and more specifically in SDG-16. Following the lessons drawn from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), governance received increased attention from the international community in the implementation of goals (The Global Alliance 2019; Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 23). SDGs are both universal and intersectoral and reinforce each other (Tosun and Leininger 2017; Nilsson et al. 2016; UNGA 2015; Weitz et al. 2017). For instance, SDG-10 and SDG-16 "serve to guide investments in human capital development, poverty eradication, inequality reduction and boosting inclusion, thus helping reduce bases for conflict" (SDG-16 Conference 2019, 2) and "serve as catalysts for achieving many other SDG targets" (SDG-16 Conference 2019, 6).

In that regard, "SDG-16 is arguably the most ambitious among all 17 SDGs and will have a multiplier effect on other SDGs, as its mandate crosscuts the mandates of many other SDGs" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 25). Development-security nexus underlines the aspiration to protect human rights. SDGs set these goals to protect human rights. There is a give-and-take between human rights and SDGs. The fact that it tries to protect the world's most vulnerable populations, through creating and supporting institutions that are just and inclusive, is a good testament that these goals and targets were identified with the need to improve human rights, directly and indirectly. Human rights are not a factor or outcome of these SDGs, but there is a full life cycle between human rights and SDGs. There is also an underlying assumption that culture change may result from institutional change.

The human security concept highlights protection as well as empowerment, with particular attention paid to the most vulnerable populations around the world (Stern and Öjendal 2010). In that sense, it is possible to make the connection between the negative peace and positive peace concepts created by Galtung. He defines negative peace as "the absence of violence, absence of war," and positive peace as "the integration of human society" (Galtung 1964). The emphasis on protection is key to obtaining negative peace, and the emphasis on empowerment is key to positive peace. Targets that especially illustrate the empowerment element in SDG-16 are Target 16.8 to broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance, and Target 16.10 to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Human security also acknowledges that today's problems are increasingly complex and interdependent and that there are no one-size-fits-all solutions to such problems (Stern and Öjendal 2010; Dursun-Özkanca 2021). SSR, SDG-16, as well as human security all highlight the importance of reducing violence, enforcing the rule of law, promoting access to justice, and combatting corruption (Dursun-Özkanca 2021).

SDGs directly involve multiple human security concepts, including the universality principle, which is seized by the "leave no one behind" motto in the 2030 Agenda (UNGA 2015, 3). The people-centered approach by human security "is a good starting point for bridging" the SSR and SDG-16 more closely (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 44; Steiner 2019). The emphasis placed on "the dignity of the human person" is central to SDGs, which underlines the importance of human security as well as human rights for the UN Agenda 2030 (UNGA 2015, 3). For instance, the UN and the World Bank in their 2018 report call for "mainstreaming citizen engagement in development programs and local conflict resolution" by especially integrating voices from underrepresented groups including women and young people in order to achieve the targets of SDG-16 more effectively (UN and WB 2018, xxvii). The people-centered approach and leave no-one behind principles are common to both human security and SDG-16, however, SSR typically does not hold these aspects as central (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). The SDGs incorporate a multi-stakeholder approach (The Global Alliance 2019). A multi-stakeholder and multidimensional approach to human security has a significant potential to boost the effectiveness of SSR missions

and the meeting of SDG-16 targets (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). Cooperation and coordination between local people, national agencies, and international organizations have vital repercussions for the success of SSR missions as well as SDG-16.

"Comprehensive, integrated, localized action is central" for the UN Agenda 2030 (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 50). Human security has multiple strengths to serve as a bridge between SSR and SDG-16 through its context-specific solutions to problems, emphasis on "inclusivity, integrated and multidimensional attributes of response to threats to human survival, livelihood, and dignity" (UNTFHS 2016, Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 50). Human security prioritizes the "tangible results" at the local level (Grabek and Engwicht 2019, 2) and underscores "cross-cutting issues, such as threats to human life, livelihood, and dignity" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 50). Due to human security's multidimensional emphasis on personal, community, health, economic, food, and environmental security, there is potential for a greater connection between the security and development realms. Human security holds that economic and security vulnerabilities must be tackled together, early and preventive action is necessary to build resilience against conflict, and context-specific solutions provide better inclusivity and address inequalities more effectively (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). Human security's relatively novel emphasis placed on "the freedom to live in dignity" underlines the "need to address problems at the personal, regional, and global levels simultaneously" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 52) to provide protection and to empower people (The Commission on Human Security 2003).

In recent years, there has been a greater emphasis on the assessment of SSR missions, an emphasis that human security literature has also increasingly shared over time. A common concern regarding the SDG-16 targets is the challenges of monitoring progress due to "the complexity and evolving nature of the issues to measure" and their "political sensitivity" (SDG-16 Conference 2019, 3; Hope 2020). There has been more emphasis put on the data collection procedures in human security over the course of years (Cárdenas et al. 2002; Kondouri and Dellis 2022; Adger et al. 2021). However, as acknowledged by the UNDP report recently, "the broad nature of the [human security] approach makes operationalization difficult because the vast number of elements make prioritization difficult – a challenge that afflicts the humanitarian–development–peace nexus" (UNDP 2022, 37).

About the Special Section

The SSR, SDG-16 and human security all underline the people, as individuals, as ultimate beneficiaries of good security governance. How does that reflect on the role of the state and its institutions?

The state remains the primary security provider, even though it is widely acknowledged that in many cases it serves as the threat producer. Who is the actor that should protect people and provide them with security, if their home country is unwilling to do so (Lipovac and Glušac 2011, 65)? Building on the understanding that the international communi-

ty should react and intervene if the actions of the state constitute the crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine emerged.

In regular circumstances, the people still turn to the state to secure their security, and fundamental rights. Indeed, it is the state as a duty-bearer that has an obligation to provide for its citizens, to create preconditions for the full realization of their individual potentials. To that end, it should prevent structural violence and enable emancipation, to recall Galtung and Booth. Structural violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations (Galtung 1969, 168). On the other hand, emancipation is the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from those physical and human constraints which stop them from carrying out what they would freely choose to do (Booth 1991, 319). Those constraints include war and the threat of war, but also poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on (Booth 1991, 319). They, indeed, greatly coincide with the threats recognized by the 2030 Agenda. What the SDGs clearly recognize is the multifaceted, interconnected and transborder nature of the causes of human suffering. With SDG-16, the 2030 Agenda posits what kind of institutions (at all governance levels) the world needs in order to achieve sustainable development.

This special section of the *Journal of Regional Security* aims to address some of these pressing issues related to the SSR-SDG-16-human security nexus. The special section emerged from the discussions at the Academic Event of the 2022 Belgrade Security Conference, organized by the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP), held on 27–28 October 2022 in the Serbian capital. The Academic Event, supported by DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and the OSCE Mission to Serbia, consisted of two panels: (1) exploring the security-development-human rights nexus in theory and practice; and (2) security and development in fragile and conflict environments (BSC 2022). Two articles, selected for this special section, deliberately approach the security-development-human security connections from different perspectives, to demonstrate various manifestations of this nexus.

It is widely understood that climate change as one of the biggest challenges of our time has important consequences on security and development. Climate change is, in fact, transforming the way we think about security. "This will not be the first-time people have fought over land, water and resources, but this time it will be on a scale that dwarfs the conflicts of the past", said the Congolese representative at the UN Security Council debate in 2007 (Parry 2007). Indeed, in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa, climate change severely affects the natural resources needed for the survival of the local population. With increased local and cross-border migration, the eventuality of local conflicts over resources is not only rising but is already manifested.

The first article in this special section seeks to address the scarcity of resources through the lenses of SDG-16, that is, ensuring access to justice through the equitable governance

of scarce resources, and mechanisms to promote equal and structural access to opportunities across society. Jaynisha Patel and Amanda Lucey (2024, this issue) explore the relationship between scarce resources and political conflict in three specific regions – Central Mali (land), Northeastern Kenya (water), and northern Mozambique, where critical resources are causes of high tensions, namely, land, water and natural gas, respectively. They delve into how these resources are currently being distributed and what formal or informal governance mechanisms are in place to manage access to them. They suggest measures to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to the distribution of local resources. This article deepens our knowledge on how and why climate-related security risks arise, and how these risks can be mitigated, strengthening human security and long-term sustainable peace, connecting SDGs 13 and 16.

Climate change does not only intensify the fight over resources, it also brings extreme weather conditions, such as draughts, flooding, disease and famine, resulting in migration on an unprecedented scale in areas of already high tension. Migrations are a particularly relevant phenomenon for the security-development nexus. Migrations can be both a cause and a result of conflict and are recognized as a security issue (Bigo 2001; Bourbeau 2015; Huysmans 2000; Sørensen 2012; Glušac 2014). At the same time, migration is central to development (King and Collyer 2016; Geiger and Pécoud 2013; de Haas 2010; Gamso and Yuldashev 2018). Yet, relatively few studies address how migration, development and security are interrelated (McConnon 2022; Smith 2016; Sørensen 2016; Williams 2016).

The literature on the migration–SSG/R nexus is scarce, mostly confined to either the externalization of destination countries' migration and border policies to transit and origin countries or the narrow consideration of police and border forces' role in controlling migration (Wolff 2021, 16). Wolff argues that it is obvious that migration and SSG/R are intimately linked, as migrants and refugees and the security sector are constantly interacting (2021, 16). Migration, development and security are integrally linked but habitually studied either individually or in "pairs". As Sørensen (2012, 63) points out the body of literature on the linkages between security, development and migration is not as comprehensive. There is more research on the theoretical and conceptual side of this relationship than on practical concrete examples (McConnon 2022, 1386). The article by Aleksandra Krstić (2024, this issue) in this special section contributes to filling this empirical gap, by analysing the nexus between security and migration in the case study of Serbia. She demonstrates how the concept of the border has been used as a powerful visual narrative in the media representation of the relationship between security and human rights in the context of migration throughout Serbia, a transit country alongside the Western Balkans migration corridor. Based on a mixed-method analysis of 300 images published in national and regional print and online media from the beginning of the migrant crisis in 2015 until the end of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, her article shows how political officials and the media have jointly framed migrants as violent and deviant and as a threat to borders, local population and national security. This article adds new evidence to what Bello (2017) describes as the "spiralling securitisation of migration" where both

state and non-state actors contribute through policy, language, bureaucratic processes and practices to the framing of migrants as a security threat.

Conclusion

More than 20 years ago, Roland Paris argued that "human security is like 'sustainable development'—everyone is for it, but few people have a clear idea of what it means" (Paris 2001, 88). After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, we all much better understand what is sustainable development and what steps are needed to achieve it. Furthermore, despite the "resovereignization" and the subsequent regression in human rights over the last two decades, human security holds a key importance at the individual level (Benedek 2023, 19).

Both human security and SDGs put the individual in the center. The human security framework has grown out of a concern for individual humans as objects of value and hence as priority foci in thinking about what 'security' activity should try to make secure (Gasper 2020, 161). Human security thinking combines a normative ontology of the value of human persons, as in human rights work, and an explanatory ontology of interconnectedness (Gasper 2020, 161).

This interconnectedness was reaffirmed in September 2023, when the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) convened under the auspices of the General Assembly. The Heads of State and Government and high representatives underlined that "sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development" (UN General Assembly 2023, para. 20).

This article argued that both negative peace- and positive peace-related aspects of SDG-16 have the potential to be better accomplished through the use of the human security paradigm, as it would forge a closer relationship between SSR and SDG-16. Having said that, the latest report published by the UNDP on Human Security acknowledges that "Measurement [of human security] also remains unresolved, as it would be difficult enough to identify the variables and indicators that could describe the elements of human security in a meaningful way for the different contexts existing in a given moment around the world" (UNDP 2022, 37). Therefore, there is a need for harmonizing the data collection methodologies across the world (Dursun-Özkanca 2021). The SDGs share this problem. Furthermore, there is inflation of various world indexes produced by think tanks and research institutions, which rely on already existing data and the assessment by individual experts. SDGs have one major competitive advantage over those indexes – they are negotiated and adopted by the States, under the UN auspices. Although defining the current SDG indicators was an arduous task, here lies the untapped potential to unite the technical expertise and political will to come up with the robust variables and revised indicators which would integrate human security dimensions into the SDG indicators re-

affirming the strong nexus between peace, security and development, and reassuring the inseparability of human security and human rights. This may potentially require the states to create new data(bases) to be able to report back, which is always challenging to negotiate. Yet, no other global endeavour has such legitimacy and ability to inspire change.

Better indicators and a standardized methodology for collecting data on SDGs would allow for rigorous and meaningful cross-national comparative analyses on the topic. They could also influence policy changes and reinvigorate the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the complex and multidimensional problems in accomplishing the SDG targets (Dursun-Özkanca 2021; UNDP 2022) and "created an unprecedented scale of threats to people's health, livelihood, dignity," which in turn highlighted the deep interconnections between "health, economic, political, food, environmental, and community security" (Dursun-Özkanca 2021, 28). The Special Report on Human Security published by the UNDP notes that with regard to the efforts to meet the SDGs, such "efforts remain largely compartmentalized, dealing separately with climate change, biodiversity loss, conflicts, migration, refugees, pandemics and data protection" (UNDP 2022, 7). Thus, it is important to develop more holistic policies in order to address the issue of compartmentalization. Our world's complex problems dictate solutions that require multiple stakeholders to address these problems in a comprehensive way. The sooner the policy world recognizes the need, the more effective solutions will be in addressing the complex problems.

As established in this article, the bottom-up emphasis of the human security approach ensures that the needs of the most vulnerable populations are prioritized (UNDP 2022). Local capacity-building and local ownership emerge as key policies for guaranteeing human security and building more resilient societies. Consequently, the human security paradigm has an unmet potential to simultaneously address the security and development-related problems that we face today.

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