

# Understanding Human Security in the Age of Compounded Crises

On August 2, 2023, Prof. Mely Caballero-Anthony, President's Chair in International Relations and Security Studies at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, and Dr. Akihiko Tanaka, President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) engaged in an in-depth dialogue covering the nature of compound crises the world faces, the birth of the concept of human security and its significance today, practical approaches to ensure human security, and prospects for mainstreaming human security in Southeast Asia and beyond. The dialogue was moderated by Prof. Yoichi Mine, Executive Director, JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development.



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### Akihiko Tanaka

President, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Dr. Akihiko Tanaka obtained his Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His career includes being appointed as an Executive Vice President, University of Tokyo, and the President of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. Dr. Tanaka is currently the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. His main expertise lies in international politics, with major publications including *The New Middle Ages: The World System in the 21st Century* (The International House of Japan) and *Japan in Asia: Post-Cold-War Diplomacy* (Japan Publishing Industry Foundation for Culture). In 2012, Prof. Tanaka received the Medal of Honor with Purple Ribbon.



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The views expressed in this dialogue are those of the speakers and do not necessarily represent the official positions of either JICA or the JICA Ogata Research Institute.

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———**Mely Caballero-Anthony**

## Security from What?

**Mine:** The first topic of today's conversation is global threats to human security. The aim is to answer the question, "security from what?" Let us discuss various aspects of the complex, compounded, and cascading threats the world faces today. My question goes to our guest, Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony. Could you share with us some of your observations on the recent crises triggered by COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine?

**Caballero-Anthony:** I would like to thank JICA for inviting me to this conversation with President Tanaka. It is truly an honor and a pleasure. We have a term that nicely captures the kinds of threats that we have faced in the last couple of years. This is "polycrisis," which was popularized by Professor Adam Tooze at the World Economic Forum. This term refers to a combination of crises triggered by economic factors, geopolitics, and the natural environment. Such a polycrisis was clearly illustrated by COVID-19, a once-in-a-generation type of pandemic, and its aftermath.

My focus is on Asia, where COVID-19 originated. Within a year, we could really see that the pandemic seriously affected people's lives by causing massive economic suffering. The economies of major countries shrank by more or less eight percent in 2020. Global poverty has increased significantly, and around 150 million people joined the ranks of the absolute poor. The world is still grappling with the impact of the pandemic, not just the loss of jobs but the loss of millions of lives. I think the number of victims has reached almost seven million globally. Then, we witnessed the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. We see massive destruction of lives and property in various parts of the world, and all these have cascading impacts on the human security of people.

The impact of COVID-19 on food security is compounded



by the war in Ukraine, a major global food supplier. The concept of a polycrisis, or "permacrisis" if we emphasize its persistent nature, should be an appropriate way to describe what is unfolding. When something happens, some elements of human security are affected—resulting in cross-cutting impacts. The pandemic struck a severe blow not only to health security but also to economic security, food security, and personal security.

**Mine:** The lives of ordinary people have been devastated by combinations of threats. We face what is called a "perfect storm," where grave disasters coincide. Now, let me turn to President Tanaka. Could you share your observations with us?

**Tanaka:** I completely agree with Professor Caballero-Anthony. In the past two to three years, we have seen significant threats to human security emerging in many parts of the world, affecting all dimensions of human life. We have been suffering the damages caused by climate change in the form of floods, typhoons, and cyclones. And then, we encountered the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, we saw Russia's military aggression toward Ukraine. There are also human-made problems such as civil wars, coups, and

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instability in many polities, and these crises are compounded to make very complex chains of crises.

We cannot consider each crisis separately. Natural disasters tend to have heavy tolls on politically unstable regions. COVID-19 has affected all people across the world. The war in Ukraine began basically as a national security crisis, but it has created food crises in many developing countries and could lead to hunger in vulnerable areas. Energy prices went up, and food prices went up, intensifying the pressure on inflation and causing interest rate rises. This affects currency rates and may worsen the conditions of debt in developing countries. All these factors may lead to political crises. Human security is threatened in multiple dimensions due to such crises in many parts of the world.

The international community is trying its best to cope with compounded crises. However, now that a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council has engaged in large-scale military aggression, the UN system is unable to cope with these crises satisfactorily. The crises we face require real international cooperation, but the challenges are enormous.

**Mine:** We can see major fault lines running in the UN decision-making bodies. Professor Caballero-Anthony is also working for the UN, so let us return to this topic later. I now would like to direct another question to President Tanaka. We face compounded crises, which we want to understand systemically. President Tanaka wrote an eye-opening article, “Toward a Theory of Human Security,”<sup>1</sup> in which the interactions between the physical system, the living system, and the social system are lucidly explained. How can we revisit this framework in the present context?

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<sup>1</sup> The complete paper, “Toward a Theory of Human Security” (JICA Research Institute Working Paper No. 91) is available from [https://www.jica.go.jp/english/jica\\_ri/publication/workingpaper/toward\\_a\\_theory\\_of\\_human\\_security.html](https://www.jica.go.jp/english/jica_ri/publication/workingpaper/toward_a_theory_of_human_security.html)

### **Understanding Compounded Crises: Three Systemic Layers**

**Tanaka:** In that article, I did not present something new but just wanted to emphasize that all threats to human security should be understood through people-centered approaches. Traditionally, when we talk about national security, we think of threats coming from other members of the interstate system. National security itself is just a matter of the social system. Obviously, the failure of the social system will result in danger to the life of each individual human. When a war or a civil war breaks out, our lives will be endangered. When we face discrimination in society, we are exposed to fear and the deprivation of dignity. When we face serious poverty and inequalities, these will threaten human security.

Recent experiences indicated that the pandemics and their consequences are serious concerns for human security and sources of fear for many people. The spread of diseases is related to the social system, but fundamentally, it is caused by the interaction between the living system and the human bodies. Human life depends on the conditions of the living system, but it is also affected by the dynamics of the geological, physical system. From time immemorial, humans had to cope with the consequences of earthquakes and tsunamis. Now, we face natural disasters triggered by climate change. Giant earthquakes and huge typhoons that occur primarily in the physical system are serious sources of fear and deprivation.

We need to expand the scope of threats to human security by paying more attention to the conditions of the living and physical systems. I believe that the concept of the Anthropocene has come to be widely accepted due to the intensified interaction between these systems. The Earth system, or the atmospheric system, is greatly affected by human activities, which accelerate climate change. I think

our challenge is that the threats from these three different systems create fear, want, and danger to us in very complex manners. Phenomena that happen in the physical system may bring about increasing damage because of the conditions of the social system. I believe our experiences in the past two to three years point to the necessity of analyzing the complex interaction between the three systems.

**Mine:** President Tanaka's theoretical clarification resonates with the polycrises and permacrises described by Professor Caballero-Anthony, doesn't it?

**Caballero-Anthony:** I think President Tanaka's explanation provides a very useful analytical framework for understanding the multidimensional impacts of complex crises on human well-being and security. We are always talking about the impact of multiple threats on individuals, groups, and communities. Those who specialize in environmental security, for instance, ask us to broaden our conceptualization of security. What is at stake is not only the origins and effects of threats but also the other referent objects of security. This is because, in the discourse on climate change and the Anthropocene, we are not just talking about the security of human beings but also about the security of the environmental system. If the referent object of security is not just humans or groups of humans, we have to think of ways in which human action impacts the security of the environment.

Therefore, we should look at different systems and how they interact. I think this is where the theoretical insights of President Tanaka should be appreciated. We should delve deeper into the various sources of threats, their impact on different security referents and the dynamic way these processes interact. Research on these interactions will help not just policymakers, scholars, and analysts but also our own communities so that we better understand how we

should respond to global challenges. Let me take an example of the increasing demand for renewable energy. This demand may cause an unprecedented demand for minerals and metals, affecting the environment and causing unintended consequences. In this way, we talk about the interaction between the social system and the geographic system. By analyzing different sectionality into consideration, I think we can craft more comprehensive policy measures.

**Mine:** The physical system of the globe was formed 4.6 billion years ago. The living system emerged four billion years ago, and the first human being was born only about three hundred thousand years ago. Despite this ultralong history of the Earth, our human race is impacting on the environment in a very short span of time in a permanent way. Obviously, human survival is at stake. Professor Caballero-Anthony talked about the referent object of security, and I think this question, "the security of what?" lies at the heart of the theory of human security. President Tanaka, could you give us your take on this question from a perspective of political science, in relation to the works by Thomas Hobbes, perhaps?



***We realized that the role of states alone would be insufficient to protect human security.***

——— **Akihiko Tanaka**

***“The security of what?” lies at the heart of the theory of human security.***

—— Yoichi Mine

## Exploring the Core of Human Security Theory

**Tanaka:** I think humankind is an anthropocentric creature. Humans are always thinking about humans, and it is not easy for humans to consider the dangers that the Earth system and the atmospheric system face. However, from my understanding, even if we stick to an anthropocentric view of security, we cannot maintain human security unless we examine the conditions of the physical system, the living system, and the interaction between all three systems. To keep our security, we need to pay closer attention to the environmental system. In order to consider the fate of humans, we have to consider the fate of the environment and the geological system.

Let me talk a little more about the relationships between the human security concept and political theory. I think this is a rather unusual attempt to reinterpret the development of political thought from the viewpoint of human security. As we know, the term human security was coined by Mahbub ul Haq in the *Human Development Report 1994*. Human security is a combination of freedom from fear, freedom from want, and the preservation of human dignity, which is the foundation of human rights and good human society. We can reinterpret the history of modern political thought from this perspective. What Thomas Hobbes worried about most is the state of war of everyone against everyone, which is brought by the state of nature. In the state of war, humans cannot live without fear, cannot escape from the condition of poverty, and there is no place for human dignity.

Hobbes' prescription was to create Leviathan, the sovereign state. However, subsequent development of political thoughts shows that the simple establishment of the Leviathan would not be sufficient to protect what we now call human security. This is because the Leviathan, the state itself, could become a tyrant, failing to protect human security and harming its own people who are otherwise



supposed to be protected by the state. Given this dilemma, the concept of the inalienable rights of human beings emerged. If our ruler becomes a tyrant, we can assert our human rights and change the government. This is the basis of liberal democracy and human rights. The development of political thoughts from the time of Hobbes up to the 21st century was concurrent with the development of attempts to mitigate the danger of the emergence of tyranny while empowering the state to provide security for people.

And in the late 20th century, we realized that the role of states alone would be insufficient to protect human security. Firstly, a state may not be capable of protecting the human security of people, even if its government is not controlled by a tyrant. This is related to the impact of the physical and living systems. When we face a huge earthquake, tsunami, or pandemic, a single government may not be able to cope with it effectively. Originally, the human security concept was concerned with the social system and the role of states. In addition to the state role, we need to think of the roles of other stakeholders and the necessity of more extensive cooperation with them because many contemporary threats are so massive and complex that they cannot be handled only by each state and each human being. I think the concept of human security has developed out of such necessity.

**Mine:** Thank you very much, President Tanaka, for your

insights into the emergence and the limitations of the nation-state system. I think we should discuss the implications of stakeholders' multipleness. Let me now turn to Professor Caballero-Anthony. You are from Singapore, an island city-state. The Leviathan is sometimes misunderstood as a land monster, but according to the Old Testament, its original character is a sea beast. I think you also have something to say about the Leviathan, as a scholar of non-traditional security.

**Caballero-Anthony:** I also wanted to weigh into the fascinating philosophical discussion that President Tanaka has invited us to think about. I could just simplify this from the perspective of who provides security for whom. In our understanding of political systems based on the social contract theory, it is the responsibility of the state to provide security for its citizens, its people. Therefore, there is an obligation for the state to provide security for its people in exchange for people's obedience to the Leviathan.

If we fast forward to what has happened in recent human history, we see that the responsibility of the state to protect citizens has not really been realized. We witnessed how states failed to respond to the wars in Europe (Bosnia-Herzegovina) and in Africa (Rwanda) after the end of the Cold War. Following that tragedy, the task of the international community is to hold the state accountable for its actions when it is unwilling to provide security. This is how the idea of Responsibility to Protect came about: it contends that a state will lose its sovereignty if it fails or is unwilling to protect its population from atrocity crimes. Along with Hobbes' responsibility of the state, we can bring in Kant, who discussed the requirements of peace. In this respect, I think the Hobbesian Leviathan can be challenged. As President Tanaka pointed out, if a state is not able to provide security for people, there is no peace. This is where cosmopolitan rights become important.

In this connection, I agree with President Tanaka that we

should look at various non-state actors and how they interact with each other. Given the interaction involving the three different systems, we have seen how the capacity of states has been seriously challenged. In case of catastrophic disasters caused by climate change, the kind of support individual states can provide to its people is extremely limited. Hence, security providers other than states should come in. Then, who are they? We talked about international organizations, the private sector, and civil society groups. Speaking about the Kantian theory of peace, it is essential for states to enter into collaborative arrangements with other states in order to achieve perpetual peace. My point is that international collaboration is critically important to provide all people with security.

**Mine:** President Tanaka, could you respond to Professor Caballero-Anthony's argument? I think the Kantian theory of peace may have several aspects.

**Tanaka:** I appreciate this further elaboration of modern political thought. Certainly, in addition to Hobbes, we should take into account the theories of John Locke and then Immanuel Kant. Kant laid the foundation for peace through international collaboration, and interstate collaboration is really needed as we face the reality of current compounded crises. Kant emphasized the significance of interstate cooperation, but at the same time, we should not forget that Kant also stressed the superiority of liberal democracy in national governance. In order to realize perpetual peace, argued Kant, it is important to remember that countries practicing liberal democracy are less likely to provoke war than autocratic states.

In this connection, we should pay more attention to the conditions of society. A single government cannot deal with many issues impacting human existence. When we think of

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the level of interaction among each individual citizen, people and the state, civil society organizations, and people's sense of solidarity, I think Professor Robert Putnam's concept of social capital is quite important for preserving human security. When faced with a natural disaster, which the government may not be able to handle immediately, communities are expected to play an essential role. In addition to the role of the government, we need to pay attention to the role of the market and the role of society.

**Mine:** Professor Caballero-Anthony said that holding government institutions accountable is essential. Then, President Tanaka indicated the significance of social capital and solidarity. I think it is time to discuss the implementation of human security. My question goes to Professor Caballero-Anthony. A state has a responsibility to protect people. And, when people protect themselves, we may call such practice empowerment. We are going to publish a book on empowerment in Asia as an outcome of the research project at the JICA Ogata Research Institute, and you are the lead editor of the book.<sup>2</sup> Could you talk about ways to enhance empowerment?

### Practices of Empowerment

**Caballero-Anthony:** Sure. Many thanks to JICA, indeed, for bringing Asian scholars together for the research project on COVID-19 and the nexus of protection and empowerment, which Professor Mine mentioned. While protection from chronic threats in our daily lives is usually provided top-down,



we empower ourselves bottom-up, and thus re-examine the nature of given protection. Through this process, people—as the referent object of human security—advance the ability to make better choices. According to Madam Sadako Ogata, the goal of empowerment is to help people make necessary choices to actively prevent and mitigate the impact of insecurity. When we move forward, the quality of choices also becomes important.

People actually empower themselves amid conditions of extreme suffering and vulnerability. For example, at the time of COVID-19, people did not just face health threats but also food insecurity in many places. The nature of the threats was compounded. One case study described the effect of cash transfers as an immediate protection measure for vulnerable people. With cash, they can purchase a specific kind of food they need anytime they need it. In the case of a natural disaster in Japan, old villagers were evacuated and provided with temporary shelters where they could engage with other residents so that their mental well-being was assured. They were not passive victims, but they empowered themselves to cope with the challenges of living in the shelters.

Another example is violent conflict. How can we empower communities to prevent and resolve violent conflicts? How can they protect themselves better? One way to facilitate

<sup>2</sup> *Human Security and Empowerment in Asia: Beyond the Pandemic* (co-edited by Mely Caballero-Anthony, Yoichi Mine, and Sachiko Ishikawa) was published in October 2023 (<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003430742>). This is an output of the JICA Ogata Research Institute research project, “Human Security and the Practices of Empowerment in East Asia.”

empowerment is to ensure that the protection is not provided only by the government. Communities are always interconnected. People are not living in isolation. When the government listens to the people's voices through engagement and interaction, it can provide the right support to people. Through such government-citizen interaction, people can also feel empowered by making decisions and choices despite the constraints they face. I think the case studies in our research project have illustrated the kind of choices and agency exercised by the communities and individuals when some protective measures are provided. The cases show that empowerment is not just about providing resources but also giving them the opportunity to make informed decisions.

**Mine:** President Tanaka, could you share your thoughts on the discussion of empowerment?

**Tanaka:** I think Professor Caballero-Anthony has touched on important aspects of empowerment. Expanding the range of people's choices and empowering communities should be a principal objective of development cooperation. On this occasion, as President of JICA, I would like to add that in order to empower people, we need to strengthen institutions and physical infrastructure.

When we talk about human security, we do not talk much about the role of physical infrastructure, but the value of this aspect of cooperation should not be underestimated. Given the nature of the threats, particularly those posed by climate change, the necessity of adaptation is looming large. This is where quality infrastructure helps society to become resilient to the potentially huge impacts of climate change or large-scale disruptions in the living system, such as pandemics or endemic diseases. We need to build robust physical infrastructure to prepare for such calamities.

In order to cope with tsunamis and floods, we need to

have better systems to give protection to residents. In order to resolve the health crises in many developing countries, having all-weather roads in rural areas is indispensable so that patients can go to hospitals to receive appropriate treatment as quickly as possible. Having a safe water supply system is essential not only in normal circumstances but also in emergency situations because access to safe water can save the lives of many people. As we expand the scope of threats from those in the social system to those in the living system and to those in the physical system, we need to strengthen our physical preparedness for emergencies emanating from the multi-layered systems. Those efforts should be included in our approach to cope with human security.

**Mine:** Quality infrastructure designed to protect vulnerable people is indispensable, indeed. The recent UNDP report on human security underscored the principle of agency and the significance of solidarity between diverse stakeholders in the age of the Anthropocene. As President Tanaka and Professor Caballero-Anthony concurred, the capacity of states is limited, and we should act in cooperation with other stakeholders in a spirit of solidarity. Let us move on to this topic.

## Solidarity and Multi-stakeholder Cooperation

**Tanaka:** Because of the limited capacity of governments or states, they cannot address all potential dangers. We need to develop collaboration with as many stakeholders as possible. In addition, I believe that the participation of non-state stakeholders has enormous added value in filling the gaps that a single state may not be able to fill.

Unfortunately, many established public organizations suffer from a "silo" structure. The different ministries and agencies have their fixed areas of jurisdiction and their own

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standard operating procedures. However, there is a tendency for those issues that may not be handled under standard operating procedures to be disregarded as non-existent. This can produce terrible deficiencies and even dangers for many people. The participation of various non-state actors may be able to fill the gaps that the state cannot deal with and may be able to point out the areas where the state is not doing well.

**Caballero-Anthony:** I could not agree more with the point raised by President Tanaka on getting other actors to come in. The capacity of states is limited, and this is illustrated by the cases of natural disasters caused by climate change. In Southeast Asia, some countries are extremely vulnerable to natural disasters, including gigantic typhoons. Since the resources of the governments and local communities are limited, rapid assistance is expected to come in from international organizations as well as other governments in times of humanitarian emergencies. Typhoon Haiyan, which hit the Philippines in 2013, was so devastating that the Philippine government could not respond immediately. The Philippines made arrangements with its neighbors in ASEAN and with outside partners about equipment provision, search and rescue activities, and other assistance. Without such collaboration, the situation could have been much worse.

There are some other elements that need to be highlighted. The first responders to natural disasters are not necessarily those dispatched by the national government but local communities. This happened in the case of the Aceh earthquake and tsunami in 2004. Local communities, civil society groups, and religious bodies were very active because they also had their own parallel structures to provide assistance spontaneously. When it comes to solving logistic issues, the private sector should also be involved intensively, because in providing and transporting supplies, we need their big trucks, their supply chain capability, and their logistical capacity to facilitate emergency relief.

In national systems, trying to move away from the silos



President Tanaka just mentioned is an important agenda. This relates to the notion of the whole-of-government approach. COVID-19 is a perfect example. It was not just the medical team but also the other actors and agencies of government that joined in the operations to end the pandemic. Even the military was involved because their help was needed for the distribution of vaccines to remote areas. Coordination is easier said than done. While international organizations play indispensable roles, there is a need for different UN agencies to work together. At any rate, the fact is that most of the challenges we face are interconnected. A more persuasive argument should be made about the whole-of-government approach, which should be adopted to address multifaceted human security challenges.

**Mine:** Like the UN, JICA itself is a colossal organization, so I think those who work for JICA should also try to get out of their silos and bridge the gaps by collaborating with stakeholders outside JICA.

**Tanaka:** Let me add one thing. It is desirable to have many stakeholders participate at the time of crisis—at the very time when we need quick reactions. But in addition to those immediate responses, in order to make those immediate reactions as effective as possible, we need to have the habit of collaboration beforehand. During the COVID-19 pandemic,

as Professor Caballero-Anthony said, we have realized that a whole-of-government approach is needed. Establishing a whole-of-government approach in ordinary times is crucial, as it is much more difficult to do during times of crisis. Unless we have instituted a long-term practice through capacity building among many agents, we cannot coordinate their activities at the time of crisis. I think responsible governments, responsible international agencies, responsible civil society organizations, and many communities should be ready to engage in practices for greater collaboration at this very moment. Japanese experiences indicate that those communities who have engaged in constant practices against natural disasters have fewer casualties when a big crisis occurs. Internationally, too, I would like to see all stakeholders get ready to engage in such practices.

**Mine:** I think this is very true. The habit of working together should be nurtured even in ordinary, peaceful times. This point is often neglected in the conventional discourses of the Responsibility to Protect. Our discussion now leads us to the final topic: the past and the future of Southeast Asia and Japan. The first question concerns the significance of enhancing trust and regionwide solidarity through development cooperation. President Tanaka, could you comment on the challenges pertaining to building trust?

## ASEAN and Japan: Cultivating Trust

**Tanaka:** Among the regions of the world, Southeast Asia has been particularly successful in nurturing trust among leaders and people. This region has also developed very good and stable relations with countries like Japan and other dialogue partners. As Professor Caballero-Anthony mentioned, Southeast Asia may be one of the areas most seriously hit by climate change, as evidenced by the frequency of natural disasters. More than ever, we need to step up our efforts toward collaboration in this field. To this end, we should make extra efforts to further increase trust.

Southeast Asia and Japan have been cultivating people-to-people interactions to a significant degree, but we may need to do more groundwork toward further collaboration. Stakeholders other than state actors can interact more

effectively if they have already developed a sense of mutual trust. This is also related to what I mentioned about the necessity of practice. The practice of working together will enhance trust among collaborative participants. Civil society organizations in Japan and their counterparts in Southeast Asia should be able to make the most of such opportunities for mutual engagement in ordinary times.

I believe that government agencies like JICA can contribute to creating such opportunities for mutual collaboration. Nowadays, Southeast Asian countries have their own agencies of international cooperation. Both governmental and non-governmental organizations will benefit from horizontal interactions. This will further enhance mutual trust.

**Mine:** We greatly appreciate the powerful message by President Tanaka calling for persistent practices. Let me turn to Professor Caballero-Anthony. How can we mainstream human security in the ASEAN framework based on mutual trust?

**Caballero-Anthony:** Let me take up the point President Tanaka raised about trust. Mutual trust between and among actors is even more important when we deal with transnational challenges beyond the framework of ASEAN. It is through trustful relationships that the habits of cooperation can be established. When ASEAN was formed in 1967, there was a lot of mistrust and animosity among the countries in Southeast Asia. However, over time, Southeast Asian countries learned to work together and dealt with many challenges collectively. ASEAN countries then began to reach out to non-member countries through a mechanism called dialogue-partner cooperation.

The ASEAN-Japan relationship is exemplary. In 2023, ASEAN and Japan celebrated fifty years of friendship and cooperation. The reason why such a substantial friendship has lasted so long and is becoming even deeper lies in the fact that we have nurtured trust. It is useful to note that the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore releases the annual Southeast Asian Survey, which includes opinion polls on the favorability of ASEAN's dialogue partners. The rating of Japan always comes out high. Japan has been a long-term partner of ASEAN since 1977, when the Fukuda

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Doctrine was introduced. Japan has been consequential in helping the economic development of the entire region. ASEAN countries benefited greatly from the foreign direct investments from Japan, which led to the creation of manufacturing industries in countries in the region and the building of human resources and capacity, particularly for less developed ASEAN states.

Now, we are pushing for joint action, greater solidarity, and increased cooperation to address the pandemic and post-pandemic challenges. Trust is extremely important in the current geopolitical environment, where we face much mistrust because of increased competition between major powers. I think Southeast Asia and Japan should try to deepen their mutual cooperation and address issues such as nuclear proliferation, cybersecurity, and other things so that we can protect human security.

If you would allow me to give an example to advocate for human security, the support that Japan has provided in establishing the ASEAN Center for Public Health, Emergencies and Emerging Diseases will continue to be relevant, because we all know that COVID-19 will not be the last pandemic. The need to improve the capacity of countries to prepare for pandemics requires interstate collaboration and leveling-up of medical capacity. We should eventually establish a regional center for disease surveillance and response, and I think it is great that Japan is providing support for the plan to establish such a center through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund. Going back to President Tanaka's point, this kind of collaboration would not have been possible without trust among countries in the region, and between Japan and the region.

**Mine:** Appreciated. I have one quick question. What is your take on the prospect of incorporating human security norms into the ASEAN framework, formally or functionally?

**Caballero-Anthony:** In fact, if we look at ASEAN's common

agenda, the ASEAN community is founded on three pillars: political security, economic security, and socio-cultural. Under this umbrella, all elements of human security are already present, from economic to health, the environment, food, etc. What could be done as a next step is perhaps to push for ASEAN states to take more responsibility for their own people. Yes, we can see many elements of human security embedded in the agenda of ASEAN, but some elements of human security, which push governments to be more accountable, need to be strengthened. I am talking specifically about the situation surrounding Myanmar. We want to see a political environment in which human security is secured for the people of Myanmar.

### **Toward Realizing Human Security**

**Mine:** Thank you. Now, it is time to conclude. Could President Tanaka and Professor Caballero-Anthony give your final remarks, respectively?

**Tanaka:** Southeast Asia is a very important region for Japan, so we should continue to nurture collaboration and mutual trust further. We hope that the concept of human security will be incorporated into the visions and future plans of every region in the world, especially Southeast Asia.

For Japan and JICA, human security has always been important. We find it quite fortunate and appropriate that the Development Cooperation Charter, which the Japanese government revised in June this year, highlighted the importance of human security in Japan's ODA and JICA's activities. Let me quote a sentence from the Charter. It says, "Japan will continue to position human security as a guiding principle that underlies all of its development cooperation." This revised Charter is an attempt to reiterate the importance of the concept and is more explicit than in the previous charters about the importance of human security. The frequency of references may not be directly related to the

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———**Akihiko Tanaka**

importance of concepts, but the new Charter—the English version—refers to human security nine times as opposed to three times in the previous one. Obviously, JICA should follow the directions set by the Charter, and so we need to incorporate the concept of human security and the good practices of human security into our activities.

**Caballero-Anthony:** This is really good, reassuring news. I think we are now rediscovering the importance of the concept of human security and paying attention to human security threats, because the world is changing very rapidly, as exemplified by the impact of climate change. Global threats are obvious not only in Asia but also present in the rest of the world. I know Japan has been one of the forefront advocates of human security, and forums such as the Friends of Human Security<sup>3</sup> should be reactivated at the UN. I think voices from the Global South should champion the cause of human security. So it is wonderful that, as a fresh starter, the Development Cooperation Charter of Japan has reiterated human security. I see some complementary arguments in Southeast Asia.

Finally, people have tended to talk only about cooperation for human security at the government-to-government level. However, President Tanaka discussed the necessity of enhancing and strengthening the people-to-people connections. This point should be a priority on the agenda because, ultimately, it is people themselves who carry through and advance the goals of human security further.

**Mine:** President and Professor, thank you so much for this fascinating dialogue. I feel extremely honored and privileged to have listened to your conversation directly as the moderator. I do not think I should summarize this conversation because all the points have been discussed very clearly and unambiguously. In this age of compounded crises and the Anthropocene, human security is all the more necessary for all of us as an approach to solving the common challenges we face. I have also found that our discussion on human security is intellectually joyful and academically stimulating. As human beings, we all share an instinct to understand the world better.

[END]

***It is people themselves who carry through and advance the goals of human security further.***

———**Mely Caballero-Anthony**

<sup>3</sup> Friends of Human Security (FHS) is an unofficial, open-ended forum based in N.Y. since 2006. The purpose of FHS is to provide an informal forum for United Nations Member States as well as relevant international organizations to discuss the concept of human security from different angles in order to seek a common understanding of human security and explore collaborative efforts for mainstreaming it in United Nations activities.