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**Assignment Title:** ASSIGNMENT  
**Course Title:** Conflicts and Human Displacement  
**Course Code:** PCS 402

**Question**

Using an Internally Displaced persons Camp as a scenario, discuss Human Security.

ANSWER

Human security is concerned with safeguarding and expanding people's vital freedoms. It requires both protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and empowering people to take charge of their own lives. Protection refers to the norms, policies and institutions essential to shield people and implies a 'top-down approach', such as the rule of law and democratic governance. Empowerment underscores the role of people as actors and participants and implies a bottom-up approach.

Human security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities whose proponents challenge the traditional notion of national security through military security by arguing that the proper referent for security should be at the human rather than national level.

Human security does not seek to supplant state security, but rather to complement it. States have the fundamental responsibility of providing security. Yet they often fail to fulfil their obligations - many times they are even the source of the threat to people. As the multitude of violent conflicts and extreme poverty demonstrates, states cannot be secure if people's security is at stake. But neither can people be secure in the absence of strong, democratic and responsible states, as the multitude of collapsed states in the world illustrates. These are the challenges in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine today.

Human security also underscores the close linkages between gross human rights violations and national and international insecurities. The Rwandan genocide represents one of the worst human security failures, and the consequences still reverberate through the Great Lakes region of Africa nearly ten years later. Therefore, realizing human rights lies at the core of protecting and empowering people.

If security is to be protected, conflict prevented, human rights respected and poverty eradicated, we require urgently a new consensus on security. This is a shared responsibility. Human security provides an impetus for all countries, whether developed or developing, to review existing security, economic, development and social policies. Creating genuine opportunities for people's safety, livelihood and dignity should be the overall objective of these policies.

The emergence of the human security discourse was the product of a convergence of factors at the end of the Cold War. These challenged the dominance of the neorealist paradigm's focus on states, “mutually assured destruction” and military security and briefly enabled a broader concept of security to emerge. The increasingly rapid pace of globalization; the failure of liberal state building through the instruments of the Washington Consensus; the reduced threat of nuclear war between the superpowers, the exponential rise in the spread and consolidation of democratization and international human rights norms opened a space in which both ‘development’ and concepts of ‘security’ could be reconsidered.

Freedom from Fear – This school seeks to limit the practice of Human Security to protecting individuals from violent conflicts while recognizing that these violent threats are strongly associated with poverty, lack of state capacity and other forms of inequities. This approach argues that limiting the focus to violence is a realistic and manageable approach towards Human Security. Emergency assistance, conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building are the main concerns of this approach. Canada, for example, was a critical player in the efforts to ban landmines and has incorporated the "Freedom from Fear" agenda as a primary component in its own foreign policy. However, whether such “narrow” approach can truly serve its purpose in guaranteeing more fruitful results remains to be an issue. For instance, the conflicts in Darfur are often used in questioning the effectiveness of the "Responsibility to Protect”, a key component of the Freedom from Fear agenda.

Freedom from Want – The school advocates a holistic approach in achieving human security and argues that the threat agenda should be broadened to include hunger, disease and natural disasters because they are inseparable concepts in addressing the root of human insecurity and they kill far more people than war, genocide and terrorism combined. Different from "Freedom from Fear", it expands the focus beyond violence with emphasis on development and security goals.

Therefore, Using an Internally Displaced persons Camp as a scenario, the concept of Human Security provides a compelling conceptual framework for confronting the global challenge of internal displacement with which the mandate of the U.N. Secretary-General’s Representative on Internally Displaced Persons has been concerned since its inception in 1992. It is a factor in understanding the causes and consequences of internal displacement. It also provides policy guidance in conceptualizing and formulating measures for preventing displacement, providing protection and assistance during displacement, and searching for durable solutions. Furthermore, it offers a means of creating opportunities in crises by exploring remedies to the deep-seated structural problems of political, economic, social and cultural disparities that generate tensions and violent conflicts.

One of the main responsibilities of the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons has been to develop appropriate legal and organizational frameworks for their protection and assistance. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were developed by an international team of legal experts, building on the existing principles of human rights law, humanitarian law and analogous refugee law, and submitted to the Commission on Human Rights in 1998. The Guiding Principles provide the normative basis for a comprehensive approach to the crisis of internal displacement, involving preventive respect for all human rights—civil, political, economic, social and cultural; protection and assistance during displacement; the search for durable solutions; and the longer-term objective of addressing the underlying causes, which goes back to ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental liberties.

Ultimately, only by ensuring Human Security in the comprehensive sense of providing physical and material well-being of human beings can the displacement crisis be addressed effectively in all its phases, from prevention to the search for durable solutions.

For example, In Kosovo, the concept of human security is invoked in a three-fold manner. First of all, the international community has applied human security for the purpose of maintaining a fragile peace and stability in Kosovo. For the international community, maintaining the fragile peace meant tolerating the establishment and operationalization of Serbian parallel institutions. This leads to the second application of human security: the parallel institutions claim that their existence is necessary to provide human security for the Serbian community in Kosovo. Consequently, this undermines the capacity of Kosovo’s public institutions to exercise legal authority in the north of Kosovo and in other territorial enclaves. Parallel to this, Kosovo’s institutions have viewed the human security approach as a means to prove the institutional capacity of independent self-government to provide inclusive security, welfare, and integration policies for all people in Kosovo, with a special emphasis on ethnic minorities. Accordingly, human security is used by different actors in Kosovo to pursue different political agendas, which have not resulted in achieving the primary goal of furthering human welfare and fulfilment beyond mere physical security. To the contrary, the abuse of human security has created the conditions for fragile governance, protracted ethnic destabilization, and stagnating economic and human development.

In conclusion, Kosovo illustrates how the political dimensions of human security can be undermined, misused and misapplied in post-conflict situations and also in IDPs, due to the interests of different authorities. These authorities (whether international, national or illegal) can invoke human security for different purposes, including maintaining stability, managing ethnic relations, and building statehood institutions and practices. This analysis of Kosovo illustrates how human security can be used as ethnic security. The international community applied political strategies informed by human security for the purpose of maintaining fragile peace and stability in Kosovo. Consequently, this approach tolerated the establishment and operationalization of Serbian parallel institutions, which continue to undermine the capacity of Kosovo’s public institutions to exercise legal authority in northern Kosovo. Moreover, the Kosovar institutions have viewed the human security approach as a means to prove the institutional capacity of independent self-government to provide inclusive security, welfare, and integration policies for all people in Kosovo, with a special emphasis on ethnic minorities. However, as long as there are two parallel political and social systems, Kosovo cannot establish an integrated, cohesive and multiethnic society.