

[Common Security, Nuclear Risks and the OSCE in the Wake of the Ukraine Conflict](#)

Webinar: June 27, 2022

*Opening remarks by Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director, [Western States Legal Foundation](#),
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I'd like to talk a little bit about the concept of "human security" and the role of civil society. In a post-Cold War presentation to NGOs, Dr. Mahbub Ul Haq, head of the United Nations Development Program, spoke eloquently of the need for a fundamental transformation in the concept of security, which he described as "the security of people, not just of territory; the security of individuals, not just of nations; security through development, not through arms; security of all the people everywhere—in their homes, in their jobs, in their streets, in their communities and in their environment." This new interpretation, he explained, requires us to regard human security as "universal, global and indivisible."¹ In other words, it applies equally to all people everywhere, and supersedes the notion of "national security" enforced by military power – in some cases, overwhelming military power.

It seems to me that the OSCE, in its foundational document, the 1975 [Helsinki Final Act](#), and reaffirmed in the 1990 [Charter of Paris for a New Europe](#), bridges the concepts of "common security" and "human security." As stated on the OSCE website today: "[The OSCE's comprehensive concept of security covers the politico-military; the economic and environmental; and the human security dimensions.](#)"

At the subnational level, mayors are calling on their national governments to pursue common security, while emphasizing the need for universal human security. [Mayors for Peace](#), founded in 1982 and headed by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is working for a world without nuclear weapons, safe and resilient cities, and a culture of peace, as essential measures for the realization of durable world peace. As of June 1, 2022, Mayors for Peace has grown to 8,174 cities in 166 countries and regions— representing over one billion people.

For seventeen consecutive years, the [United States Conference of Mayors](#), the official nonpartisan association of U.S. cities with populations over 30,000, has adopted strong resolutions submitted by U.S. members of Mayors for Peace.

On June 6, 2022, the U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted a sweeping new resolution, titled "[Forging a Path to Peace and Common Security](#)." The resolution opens with this blunt assessment:

"Whereas, a new report, [Common Security 2022; For Our Shared Future](#), sponsored by the Olof Palme Memorial Fund, finds that: 'In 2022, humanity faces the existential threats of nuclear war, climate change and pandemics. This is compounded by a toxic mix of inequality, extremism, nationalism, gender violence, and shrinking democratic space. How humanity responds to these threats will decide our very survival'."

Addressing the need for common security, the resolution "calls on the President and Congress to

exercise restraint in U.S. military engagement in Ukraine, while maximizing diplomatic efforts to end the war as soon as possible by working with Ukraine and Russia for an immediate ceasefire and negotiations with mutual concessions, in conformity with the United Nations Charter, knowing that the risks of wider war grow the longer the war continues.”

In alignment with [PNND’s recommendation](#) to the upcoming 29th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the resolution “calls on the U.S. and the other nuclear-armed states parties to the NPT, at the August 2022 10th Review Conference of the Treaty, to implement their disarmament obligations by committing to a process leading to the adoption no later than 2030 of a timebound plan for the global elimination of nuclear weapons by 2045....”²

Addressing the need for human security, the resolution “calls on the Administration and Congress to rein in military and nuclear weapons spending, and to redirect funds to support safe and resilient cities and meet human needs, including by providing accessible and affordable health care for all, housing and food security, green sustainable energy, and environmental protection and mitigation; and to increase investment in international diplomacy, humanitarian assistance and development, and international cooperation to address the climate crisis.”

I don’t have to time to go into it, but I’m also working with other U.S. NGO formations advocating this dual “common security/human security” approach, including [United for Peace and Justice](#) and the [Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival](#).

¹ Personal recollection of Jacqueline Cabasso. These concepts are discussed in a paper, Mahbub ul-Haq, “Human Rights, Security and Governance,” *Peace & Policy Journal of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research*, Fall/Winter 1998.

² See also, [WPAbolition2000WG.pdf](#)