Human Security - development of the policy   #2

What made the world like this? What are the most important issues in the world of the 21st century? I would like to answer these questions from two perspectives. Firstly, politically speaking, there was, the "collapse" of the Cold War. In fact, it might be better to say the "end" of the Cold War. This started to clearly appear from the1990s. Until that time, it was apparent that one's nation belonged to a certain ideological or political group, and it was reasonably understandable to determine which actions were the best to take. When the Cold War ended, everyone thought that a very peaceful time would come, but, on the contrary, it turned out to be a very unstable time for the world. Right after the Cold War ended, I became a member of The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and I was wondering about what sort of job would be mine. I was thinking that in such an era the world order would be reestablished, and all refugees, created as a result of the Cold War, would return to their respective homes. However, what happened at that time instead were domestic conflicts in various places triggered by the explosion of many complaints, injustices, and inequalities, which, in the recent past, had been suppressed by the balance of power between the East and the West. It was an era of frequent conflicts and one in which nations did not protect civilians; rather nations actually took part in conflicts. When people awoke in the morning, they did not know to which group they belonged. Neither did they know how they would be protected by nations-- under what ideals and what sentiments. This indeed was an era in which they knew nothing for sure. Big empires collapsed. The collapse of the USSR, the collapse of Yugoslavia, and the end of colonial domination by colonizing nations, all of these caused drastic instability in the world.

In addition, globalization brought many unstable situations and completely different dangers from the previous era, while at the same time bringing various benefits. First of all, a new era of rapid cross-border movement arrived. It influenced correspondence, distribution, finance, and technology. These influences were excessively large. So, new things crossed national borders; information that was useful and had never been thought about before flowed in. Then, feelings of having to take action or do something arose in various quarters. So people took action. Many refugees fled. At the same time, many people left their countries. There was the increased flow of refugees and emigration and this created a new concern. It was people's fear of crossing borders and corresponding to various changes. While globalization created new possibilities, it created instabilities at the same time. The new questions coming up under such circumstances were: what roles could a nation play and what roles could an international organization play?

I would have to say the biggest impact of this was felt on September 11th, 2001, when a major

terrorist incident took place. Hijackers flew two airplanes into the World Trade Center in New York, the very heart of the world's foremost military and economic power. I happened to be in New York at that time working on my book. The attack was so terrifying and surprising when I watched the WTC building in flames from the window of 40th floor of my apartment building. The American people, with no experience of an attack on their own country, had to also witness the crash of two other airplanes, one of them into the Pentagon. Witnessing all these incidents, I wondered what was going on. It was a new type of terrorism. The assailants are no longer nation-states. They are groups which do not belong to any nation-state. They are, so to speak, "non-state-actors."

The advent of the dangers created by them caused enormous shocks. How can anyone react to them effectively, and how much can a nation-state protect its civilians? Such circumstances demand new and original roles of a nation, and a new vision of what the nation-state is to become. At the same time, it gradually becomes clear that due to the nature of the conflict against terrorism, sophisticated military means alone would not supply an effective answer, although the American president was standing up to fight back against terrorism with such military power. Then, a new question arises: what sorts of connections and reactions, which transcend both the limitations of national protection by military power and the unit of the national-state defined by national boundaries, would be necessary to secure both peace and development? Consequently, a kind of paradigm shift would surely have to occur.

For this reason, I decided to talk about human security today. The security of the nation-state has been regarded as absolutely stable for a long time. Such a concept of national security has been relied upon by nation-states for a long time since the time of the Treaty of Westphalia. However, it is changing. One reason is political and the other is technical, and some nation-states have difficulties in protecting the realm properly. When we enter such an epoch, a new question appears: how should we consider national security? In around 2001, the UN secretary general at the time said we want to secure two big freedoms at all costs. One is the freedom from "want" and the other is the freedom from "terror." He stated that it was necessary to create a world of security and prosperity by overcoming these adversities. Then, what roles can nation-states play? From here, many discussions started: how can we respond to these problems and how can insufficient protection and instability be complemented by other principles?

In 2001, Japan took the initiative, putting the concept of human security in front and defining its human security, and groped for the correct reactions to the world that had become newly

unstable. I was appointed as the president of a newly-created committee, because Japan took this initiative together with the UN, and started to work on a definition of human security with a Nobel Prize winner in economics, Professor Amartya Sen from India. From the beginning, we examined questions that had been subjects of our interest: what are better ways of planning human security and how to define it and its roles, while admitting the effectiveness of the nation-state. We had two perspectives at that time. One of them is to establish security by putting humanity as its center. For example, a group of researchers at the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) was publishing an annual report. I think some of you have already read such a report, and it deals with research on a different theme every year. The book is thick and it takes time for you to read it, but its features are worth reading. In 1994, the report stated that when we think about economic development, the focus has always been on its economic effects, but we should also consider human elements. This was written by a Pakistani scholar and others, and it proposed development theory with added human elements as opposed to merely economic-centered development theory. From that time, the connections between issues of humans, economic society, and security started to be discussed and researched. Right after that, in 1997, the Asian Financial Crisis happened. In Asia, economic growth was characterized by very favorable increases. It was called the Asian Miracle or Asian Model; however, when financial crisis occurred, it was clearly shown that human life was surprisingly disrupted and economics alone could not render a stable life for the majority of humans. Taking that opportunity of financial crisis, Japan, led by Prime Minister Shinzo Obuchi, started to use the term and the concept of "human security" internationally. By this was meant a social system supported by not only economic development but also by various social securities. It took into account human life, social problems, medical problems and others to ensure a life tomorrow for people everywhere.

Moreover, as I have said, I was looking for the answer to the question about--and I was pretty much involved in it--what principles can protect people when the nation-state cannot protect them sufficiently in domestic conflicts. As a result of domestic conflicts or civil wars, people are forced to move from their lands. They become refugees. There are also people who become refugees even in their own countries. Such people are called "domestic evacuees" or "domestic refugees." By definition refugees are people who leave their nations and ask for protection in other nations; there are also people who move domestically and thus become refugees without going to other nations. In addition to this, many civilians needed protection. There used to be laws of war. According to those laws, military and civilians were distinctively separated. Civilians must be protected. One of the characteristics of civil war was that those civilians actually became the main sacrifice. In 1994, the Rwandan genocide happened. You may know

about this because a film titled Hotel Rwanda has been released recently. In fact, even before the genocide happened, a state of constant warfare had been continuing for 25 years. Whenever refugees fled to neighboring nations and returned to their home, different tribes and the government forced them to go out again. When the Tutsi tribe came back, the Hutu tribe had to flee to a neighboring nation.

I was deeply involved in it at that time. In several weeks after the genocide ended, I went to that place to do the difficult task of helping the refugees who fled from the land and also finding living space for former refugees who came back. My greatest concern at that time was how to protect civilians. Despite the vulnerability of the nation-state, when we see the problem from the inside of the nation-state, we realize that it must provide order and protection to everyone through effective government. What happens when it cannot do this? Another huge example, which was as serious as this Rwanda problem, was the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. About four million people were in need of protection there. Refugees from the former Yugoslavia fled to various European nations. In the case of collapsing nations, boundaries within nations that existed before, for example boundaries between prefectures, become international boundaries, should each prefecture try to become independent. Under such circumstances, about two million people fled. But for various reasons, many people could not leave because of warfare; in the capital of Sarajevo, they lived underground and could not go about freely. We had to help four million people in total. During those times, I felt strongly that we must think about security issues as human issues, since nations could not help people under those situations. In addition, some nations such as Norway, having observed the situations of land mines and child soldiers and the neglect of the law for human rights, tried to search for ways of developing concepts and various criteria for human security.