Human Security For All*

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Abstract

The recent Consumer Electronics Show (CES) held in Las Vegas in January 2023 was a remarkable event and projected a powerful message to the leading companies in the industry and the rest of the 115,000 business and global press representatives who participated. For the first time, CES 2023 adopted a theme for the conference and projected it to participants through exhibits, innovation awards, Great Minds seminars, video and massive campaign signage. That theme announced the launching of a global campaign on human security— Human Security for All (HS4A)—which is being conducted by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security and the World Academy of Art and Science. CES 2023 showcased the critical role of technology as a catalyst and powerful driver in support of the United Nations' efforts to advance human security around the world. One of the highlights of CES 2023 was the introduction of a new category of Innovation Awards showcasing technologies that advance human security. The show explored the theme of how technologies like energy conservation, sustainability and resource management, wellness and healthy environments, clean air and water are themselves agents of change in the global struggle for human security. This article shares some thoughts from the show and detailed information about this critical campaign.

1. Human Security is a broad Conceptual Approach applicable to all areas of Development Policy

Humanity is faced with myriad global challenges, from war to climate change, to personal safety and freedom. These challenges can no longer be addressed at the state or national level — they are global in nature and require global reach. Human Security speaks to people about their own personal issues.

This concept of Human Security confronts us all—peace, personal safety, basic human rights, healthcare, food availability, educational opportunities, jobs, energy, climate change and access to the very fundamentals that life depends on: clean air and water. The UN has identified 17 sustainable development goals that everyone can identify with and is rallying

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widespread support for commitments in all sectors to make the world a safer, better place for all of mankind. These goals were unanimously approved by 193 member states of the United Nations in 2015 and are now shaping the regulatory landscape around the globe. Human security is a comprehensive, integrated approach that encompasses all 17 SDGs.

> *"The next big thing is not a new technology, it is a new idea. Human Security is that idea."*

A comprehensive approach to human security seeks to unify environmental security with societal security. All dimensions from the local to the global, from personal safety and welfare to global environmental sustainability. If we break this down further, we can integrate resource utilization to meet the needs of all humans today and down the road, as well as food security, economic safeguards, and personal security.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development states that a major goal of comprehensive human security is to "transmit practical recommendations to policymakers on how to strengthen human security through better environmental management and more effective natural resource governance."

2. The Human Security Campaign

The Human Security for All campaign's basic objective is to familiarize the general public with the Human Security concept and encourage companies to apply this approach to develop and apply innovative technologies to meet real human needs.

Human security is based on the individual's experience of life. Human security at the level of individuals and communities has not received the level of attention and investment required to effectively address humanity's problems. The concept builds on sustainable development goals developed by the United Nations.

CES 2023 highlighted emerging technologies in the fields of food production, health, education, financial inclusion, and many other areas that demonstrate the potential to use technology as a driver and lever for promoting human security for all.

All of us can contribute to making it happen. Consider the tech revolution that has swept over our industry. Right now, we are not facing so much a tech revolution, but a societal revolution that has been driven by the pandemic, war, financial crisis, and climate change. These are threats that transcend national boundaries and can't be solved by any one nation. They all impact people on an individual basis. These issues are now major forces driving both the market and regulatory environments. We just needed an overarching concept to pull it all together. Human Security is the "big idea" that encompasses these forces.

Living standards are rising around the world, but surveys indicate that individuals are feeling less secure. This is true in both developed and developing countries. CTA partnered with HS4A to show the world how technology can help solve some of the world's most pressing issues. Governments have limited scope and capabilities to address these issues.

Without the involvement of industry, particularly the tech community, we will fall short of achieving the kind of world that we all aspire to.

Human Security is something that every business executive can apply in their own company. Employees these days are demanding a more secure workplace on a lot of different levels. They want more economic security and want to be treated as people. Our attention to human security cannot only help them solve their problems, it can prevent them. Consumers are increasingly directing discretionary spending to companies that align themselves with Human Security pillars.

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3. Embracing Societal Changes

If we ignore big technological or societal changes, we do so at our peril. When it comes to business, companies that grow are the ones that adapt to the changing needs of the society around them. Meeting needs that people can relate to.

Many think it is so much easier to avoid change than to embrace change. But that has profound business implications—change occurs gradually and then suddenly. It's easy to look in the rear-view mirror and see how we got here. It is another thing to look out the front window and perceive the future that is coming. That future is already here in many respects. The implications are profound. Making a move too early costs a lot; too late and the innovation becomes irrelevant. So, we need to strategize and make conscious decisions.

Human Security is not a technology, but it's helpful to think of it that way. It's likely to have a powerful influence on our industry segment for the next ten years. Some of our business decisions need to be aligned with Human Security, right down to the system design level. That's already happening at major corporations around the globe. The keynote by John Deere at the CES event highlighting the impact of technology on the herbicide, fertilizer and the carbon footprint of their new machines is a perfect example. This CES showed us that the next big thing isn't a new technology, it's a new idea. Human Security is that idea.

The Human Security concept also includes access to healthcare, economic security, environmental protection including resiliency and sustainability, personal safety and mobility, community security, access to education, broadband access and political freedom. As our populations age and extended family structures break down due to urbanization, questions

like "living in place" are problems that can be addressed by technology. The larger question is, how can we embrace change and do good at the same time?

The world has never changed so rapidly. To bring in young leaders and new strategies is the only way to stay abreast of technological evolutions. One of the keys to success in an innovative industry is not to be afraid of change, but to embrace it. Change is difficult, it requires new ways of thinking.

The human security paradigm is driving strategic thinking right now because there are two forces at work—regulatory which is pushing companies to address these issues through technology and changing societal aspirations that are bubbling up through the marketplace. These two drivers are coming together right now.

The war in Ukraine, the pandemic, and the climate crisis illustrate that these problems transcend borders and are beyond individual governments to address. But they can be addressed by individual companies. That's what the campaign is all about—it is also about business security. Companies that don't adapt won't make it. Clear evidence was presented by HS4A campaign partner, Force for Good, in a landmark study of 100 top global tech companies released at a CES 2023 press conference.[*]

4. Characteristics of the Human Security Approach

The seven dimensions of human security—environment, economy, health, food, personal, community, and political—are pillars that can guide our efforts. Environmental security is huge. Personal security is a driver. Business opportunities will continue to expand.

The concept is context-specific. We work on and in our local communities, but the rest of the world is different. Different problems in different communities. The issues we face today must be dealt with on a global basis and not just in a local market area. The integrator model is certainly expanding globally.

This is also very people-centered. Architects, builders, designers and integrators can drive the message in a practical way. The concept of human security is people-centered, so we need to look at how people want to live. We should key the collective in on these concepts, because they probably aren't aware of what's happening.

Comprehensiveness is another key characteristic—working across trade skills and different aspects of the job—the builder, architect, etc., and integrating design and technology. We can be a leader here. There are tremendous global forces at work here and the moment has come to understand that they are cross-sectoral.

This big picture view presents a lot of potential problems—how individuals and firms adapt to it—but it also represents an explosion of opportunity. The Human Security concept will be an incredible driver across all aspects of society for the next 10 years.

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[*] The report can be accessed online at https://www.forcegood.org/report-2023.

5. Concluding Remarks

The last half century has seen tremendous advancement. But the planet is experiencing multi-dimensional threats including war, pandemics, food supply, economic security and personal security. These threats demand a response from every segment of society. The latest technologies cain aid this process—from resilient homes to sustainable materials to healthier environments to a low carbon footprint. But to do this effectively, we need to change our viewpoint.

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