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I wish to thank his Excellency, my esteemed dear friend, Dr. Amre Moussa, the Secretary General of the League of the Arab States, for devoting so much of his valuable time to us, so that we could convene this meeting, and for attending it in person.

We extend our thanks also to the ladies and gentlemen present, looking forward to having a productive dialogue with them on the many important issues and the major human security concerns faced by numerous societies, especially in our Arab region, as well as on the African continent. There, our peoples, or large portions of them, still suffer from fear, hunger, disease, illiteracy, humiliation, enslavement and exploitation.

My distinguished friend Dr. Amre Moussa has just returned from the last meeting held in New York by a High-Level Group due to submit their report within a few days to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan. That Group has worked for a whole year or more to find concrete ideas that would enable the international community as a whole, and the United Nations Organization in particular, to deal effectively with the threats and challenges pertaining to the Twenty-Fist Century.

Our topic today, however, relates to the work of another committee formed by the Government of Japan, and charged with preparing a report on "Human Security". The Arabic edition of that report is now before you, and constitutes the theme of the dialogue we look forward to having today.

Allow me to present an outline of this report, its background and its content.

### **First- The Commission that prepared the Report**

Following the Millennium Summit held at the United Nations in 2000 and the call by Secretary-General Kofi Annan for action to attain a world free from fear and free from want, the Government of Japan initiated a proposal to form an independent Commission charged with preparing a study on Human Security or Securite humaine. The Japanese initiative, in turn, was in response to a call by a former Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Keizo Obuchi, who was, I think, the first to use that phrase. That was in the mid 90's, I believe.

The Commission worked for almost two years, under the joint chairmanship of Ms. Sadako Ogata, who was for ten years the High Commissioner for Refugees and now oversees the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Dr. Amartya Sen, well known Indian university professor and Nobel Prize winner in economics, who served as the Dean of the School

of Economics at Cambridge, Britain, and has moved to Harvard University in the U.S., a short while ago.

The Commission recruited a number of researchers in the areas of economics, sociology, public health, issues related to severe crises, crisis management and other human security concerns.

The Commission produced its report in the summer of 2003 in English. Translations of it were later published in Spanish, French, Japanese, Russian and, recently, Arabic.

A special fund has been established, under the UN auspices, by a Japanese Government contribution in excess of \$250 million. An Advisory Board on Human Security has also been formed to oversee the affairs of the fund, as well as a small administrative unit, working within the UN Secretariat Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to operate the fund and its expenditures.

## **Second- Content of the Report**

The concept of "human security" confers a very broad meaning on security. It is a novel concept that reflects the many successive gains realized or sought for the benefit of both the individual and society.

The purpose of human security is to acquire and maintain basic human freedoms. This includes protecting people from various threats and preventing crises and situations that threaten the individual or society, whether due to wars, tensions, acts of aggression, natural disasters, or, resulting from poverty, disease, illiteracy and so on. In our world today, there are 800,000 human beings who get killed every year as a result of various types of violence. Our share of such misfortunes, here in the Arab and African region, is not inconsiderable.

In today's world, there are more than two billion and eight hundred million men, women and children who suffer from poverty, disease and illiteracy in varying degrees. Here, too, large proportions of the populations of the African continent and the Arab world are included in those categories.

The report being introduced today calls for a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated way of addressing such dangers.

The report also calls for the empowerment of people, as individuals and groups, to participate in a major and effective way in ensuring security for themselves and for their societies. Thus, individual's dignity would be protected and individuals would be able to develop their abilities and talents.

From this comprehensive standpoint, human security links various rights and freedoms, chiefly liberating man from fear, freeing him from poverty and deprivation, and enabling him, right now, to work with his own hands to improve his condition and contribute to public life in all its forms.

**Third- Included in the means for making progress towards the achievement of human security are:**

*A – Protecting People from Wars and Violent Conflicts*

Innocent civilians are in most cases the victims of wars and bloody crises in our time.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, or Zaire as it used to be known, no less than two million victims have lost their lives, and some people say three millions, of whom 99 % were unarmed civilians.

In Palestine, it may be said that all the Palestinian victims have been civilians, many of them young children. Furthermore, the victims of the Palestinian guerilla fighters are Israeli civilians, many of them also children.

In Rwanda, the victims of the 1994 genocide were all civilians.

In Cote d'Ivoire, I believe that all the victims were civilians, with the exception of those eight French soldiers who were killed recently in an air raid carried out by President Gbagbo's Air Force against one of their centers.

In Afghanistan, I used to say that 20 or 25 million Afghani citizens were held hostage by less than a hundred thousand militants belonging to the various warring factions.

Last, but not least, everyone must have seen the report prepared by a group of professors at Johns Hopkins in the US, in collaboration with the University of Mustansiriyya in Baghdad, which concluded that at least a hundred thousand civilians have been killed in Iraq since the start of the American occupation. Most of those victims, the report says, are women and children, and most were hit as a result of the air bombardment.

In this age, when some progress has been made on basic issues such as human rights, women's rights, and children's rights, and an enormous amount of positive headway has been attained in the attention paid to nature and the environment, we notice in many places that the international community, or some of its principal actors approach such issues with diverging norms that vary from place to place... I do not think I need to elaborate before this distinguished gathering on the suffering of the Palestinians under the extremely cruel practices of the Israeli occupation. However, I cannot help mentioning that over one million and a hundred thousand olive, orange and other fruit trees have been uprooted, and that Palestinians in various parts of their country are now unable to gather this year's olives crop. I may add that, according to certain reports, ancient olive trees that are hundreds of years old are being very carefully removed and transported to Israel, where they are sold for 20 thousand dollars per tree.

*B – Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons*

People move and leave their normal places of residence for numerous reasons: some move under normal, comfortable circumstances, and their movement leads to improving their living

conditions; others move in self-protection from some threat, which could be war, oppression or a natural disaster. Some move within the same country, and some move across borders from one country to another. Here, too, in Africa and the Arab world, we have our own large, unenviable share of refugees, immigrants and displaced persons, whose number at present exceeds twenty-five million human beings. This figure does not include the millions of Asians, Latin Americans, Africans and Arabs who have migrated to Western Europe and North America, living there under extremely hard conditions, nor does it include the millions of country dwellers who move to the cities, especially the larger ones, such as Rio de Janeiro, Johannesburg, Cairo, Tehran, Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi and others.

There are no international or regional laws to regulate conditions of migration and protect people from its consequences, except for refugees.

The report calls for engaging in a comprehensive international dialogue to consider the possibility of introducing a general legal framework for international migration. We should not forget to mention at this point the problems faced by societies which host large numbers of refugees. We all remember what happened to Tanzania when hundreds of thousands of refugees from Burundi and Zaire suddenly crossed its borders, or what happened to some forests in certain parts of eastern Congo when hundreds of thousands of refugees from Rwanda, as well as internally-displaced Congolese, sought refuge there.

### *C – Post-Conflict Rebuilding*

To silence guns through an agreement concluded by fighting groups, and to achieve cease-fire formulas and acceptance by the parties to disarm, are all important matters that are welcomed by the international community.

However, such silencing of guns and concluding of agreements do not necessarily mean restoration of security to the country concerned or to its population. In most cases, people continue to suffer in different ways owing to the absence of State authority and rule of law and the persistence of suppression, plunder, rape, robbery and unlawful seizure of land and other property. Untiring and patient work and huge funds are needed to rebuild the nation and its infrastructure and to reinvigorate the economic cycle once more.

Such work must necessarily go hand in hand with great efforts to realize a strong national reconciliation.

Those are all complex tasks that are hard to implement and require unrelenting work in which the citizens of the country concerned primarily participate, in cooperation with international and regional organizations, and the international community as a whole.

The Report also touches on the subjects of human insecurity in the economic and health fields, and the urgent need for education of all levels, including the accumulation and development of knowledge. Girl education is also included in this framework.

## **Summary**

Individuals' need of security in this broad sense may be summed up in ten main requirements, namely:

1. Protecting individuals and society during wars and armed conflicts;
2. Protecting individuals and society from the proliferation of weapons, especially light weapons;
3. Protecting migrant populations, such as refugees, displaced persons and others in comparable situations;
4. Helping people and societies rebuild during the post-war transitional period;
5. Providing aid to groups suffering from extreme poverty;
6. Striving to attain reasonable living standards in all societies;
7. Working to ensure basic health services for all;
8. Securing universal basic education;
9. Developing a just system worldwide for the protection of scientific and technological property rights;
10. Striving to crystallize a global human identity, while respecting the right of the individual and the group to privacy and multi-cultural affiliations.

The Commission calls for an international coalition, sponsored by the United Nations and international financial institutions, bringing together a number of interested and able countries, international organizations and the international community. It would have for its goal to raise financial resources to build a global network to serve human security objectives, through a world human alliance that gradually grows and gains strength.