

Prioritizing Human Security for the Global Justice: Case of Syrian Refugees in Germany

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Abstract. As much as we believe that national and human security should be treated fairly and equally, there will be a time when one urgently should be the priority for the greater good. For instance is on the case of Syrian refugees in Germany as discussed in this paper. As we know refugee is a case of human insecurity yet their process of seeking the asylum can be a national threat that threatens one country's (Germany in this case) national security. This essay aims to see the relation between national and human security and which one should be prioritized. To understand the issue, this article will explore Syrian refugee case in Germany after the Arab spring. It uses qualitative method-study of literature to do so. The structure will be divided into three segments: the introduction; the discussion and results; and last is the conclusion. In the discussion, it will generate the differences and similarities between national and human security based on (1) security from what, (2) security for and by whom, (3) and how security will be provided. It will also reflect from the case of Syrian Refugees in Germany to see which security should be prioritized. I believe there are fundamental distinctions between national and human security. However, there is also a shift that creates some similarities or overlapping point between the two concepts. It agrees that both securities are equally important thus both need a balance and fair treatment. However, due to the context of Syrian refugees in Germany, this essay argues that human security should be the priority

Keywords: human security, national security, global justice

1 Introduction

International Relation has recognized the concept of national security for years as it is introduced by the legendary classical realist. Later after the Cold War, the United Nations (UN) through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) published the UNDP Report 1994 which for the first time mentioned the term of 'human security' and dichotomizes it to the 'national security' concept [1]. National security is the concept recognized by the Classical Realist. Basically, it means that orientation of state is on the interest of nation: state before anything else. State is the key actor. On the other hand, IR also recognizes the concept of human security in the early 90s. Unlike in the academic sphere; human security is not a popular term within the society. It also got translated differently in various countries. Some think that it is similar to the human rights, some emphasizes on the human development, and some do not realize that Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that they put the target on is actually the attempt to protect this 'human security'.

2 Security from what?

A classical realist believes that state is the key actor in international politics [2]. Thus, state sovereignty (population or nation, the government, and the territory) has to be protected [3]. In doing so, national (state) security has to be the state's priority. It has to be secured from the threat. For Classical realist, state is the key actor and state is rational [2]. Rational means that state will always calculate the cost and benefits from each decision. Hence, threat is considered as something that is materialistic and tangible which can be measured by the states; state always calculates [3]. The threat to national security is also considered as a menace that comes from another state as state is the main actors [3]. For example, China claims South China Sea (SCS) as their territory and threatens the nearby countries like Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia with the presence of their strong navy in SCS [4]. It shows how threat in national security minded is measured by tangible things which are here are the territory of SCS and the navy to conquer it.

However, there is also a case of national insecurity that comes not from another actors but considered as a threat to national security, for example, terrorism such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, etc. In this case, the threat does not come from another state but it still considered as a threat to national security because it destabilizes the state security and sovereignty.

Unlike national security, human security is perceived to be secured from vulnerability [5]. Vulnerability means "often not clearly identifiable, linked to a complex interdependence among related issue, and does not always require immediate response" [5]. If referring to the UNDP 7 inclusions, which are economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, communal security, and political security, it is plausible to argue that human security deals more with vulnerability than a (tangible) threat. For example, climate change, hunger and poverty, the non-accessible health care, migration or transnational issue (trafficking, refugees, stateless person), etc. These examples are interdependence and they may not happen in a tangible movement like China's navy in SCS, but it happens in a continuous process that needs a gradual effort of prevention rather than an immediate response like war. Despite such differences, this essay finds a shift that leads to a similarity or intersection of them. As globalization comes, the globe and the IR study see state as not the only main actor. Therefore, the threat of national security can be an action from non- state actor. This essay also finds that human insecurity can cause the state insecurity itself and vice versa. The war between states clearly can cause the declining of the economy, unemployment, or poverty as the economic spending is high and focus on the military or simply cause a massive collateral damage to the state. SARS that is considered as a human security issue in health spectrum is now a threat to national security as it can widespread and affect millions of people in another state [6]. Both national and human security shares the same cause of threat as they share relatively same actor. Therefore, both securities are equally important as they influence each other.

3. Security for and by whom?

National security is state-centric. Its referent object is the sovereignty of the state. However, state is not only the referent object but also the provider of security protection itself. Though national security sees 'people' (population) of the state as an element of sovereignty that should be protected, to some extent, it sees (external)'people' as a threat. For example, refugees from other states. For some European countries like Hungary, refugees are

considered as a threat to its national security [7]. Though they do not come with tanks, but their massive number overwhelms the infrastructure and social capacity of some European countries. For instance, the welcoming state should provide numerous hospitalities for them. And when it comes to hospitality, it is not only a place to live or a simple shelter, but also the medication for those who need it, foods, clothes, and in the long terms such as education and jobs. Especially for jobs, most of the time will link up to unemployment and criminal rate. Thus, it creates a security dilemma.

Meanwhile, human security is people centric. It sees people as the referent object that should be protected. Here, state is one of several key important actors that should provide the security even though human security can also be provided by the other non-state actors. For example, NGOs, international organization like UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, etc, or even individuals like in German who voluntarily host refugees in their families.

To some extent, human security also sees state as the cause of insecurity. For example, war can cause collateral damage and insecurity for the population. In the Syrian refugees' case, human security-minded people see Syria as a failed state that causes their insecurity. It sees the rejecting refugees countries in Europe like Hungary, as also the threat or the worsen cause for the human (refugees) insecurity. Their referent objects are fundamentally different, yet they are not mutually exclusive. They see state as the main provider of security and the source of threat to a minor extent. Thus, this essay realizes that both human and national security should be considered equivalently in decision making processes to provide a balanced security for the state and global security

4. How will security be provided?

National security is provided by mainly providing material things. For example, advancing the military and its technology. It can be seen during the Cold War between USSR and the USA or nowadays China, North Korea, USA by advancing their nuclear weaponry [8]. To some extent, this essay also believes that national security can be provided by strong economy especially its macro economy. Meanwhile, human security provides security by securing the 'needs' of the individual humans either domestically or globally. The 'needs' are organized in the UNDP 7 inclusions: economy emphasizes on micro economy, foods, health, environmental, personal, communal, and political security [1].

Clearly, human and national security is different. However, fulfilling the human needs to prevent insecurity is also stabilizing the national security itself. If we look back to the definition of sovereignty which population is included, then providing their (human/population) security will support the sovereignty of a state itself or the national security specifically. It does not mean that national security is less important. Nonetheless, security should be protected from two ways, the state or national security and also the human. In addition, globalization has led us to the interdependence era which one state is interrelated to each other. What happens in Syria for instance will affect the rest of the world, e.g the price of oil, its refugees, etc. As I have stated, state is a rational actor so state will think twice before they go to war as it will not only affect the conflicted countries but the rest of the world. Even, not only the conflicted states that will think twice, but the rest states through International Organizations like United Nations or ASEAN will try to prevent the war

5. How About Syrian Refugees in Germany?

Many countries face dilemma that of which kind of security should be privileged over another. This is what took place in Germany. As publicly known that Syria conflict has contributed a massive amount of refugee came to Europe, UNHCR notes that at least 4 million Syrian have fled to other countries seeking asylum [9]. Around 98.700 of them are in Germany [10]. On the other hand, many countries consistently reject the idea of accepting refugees such as Hungary [11]. The decision is influenced by its concern for the national security issue.

Since Syrian conflict became a regional or even an international issue, debates occur on whether European Countries should open their door for the Syrians refugee. For those who prioritized national security will say that opening the door for refugee is a dangerous policy for the country. There is no guarantee that the refugee comes with peace. Radical groups could infiltrate into Europe as refugee. Moreover, the refugee could become a burden for European countries (which are in recovery from economic crisis 2008). However, this article argues, those considerations should not prevent European countries to help Syrian refugees.

This article support what has been done by German which has prioritized the idea of human security over the national security. There are few reasons of why German decision is correct. First is moral consideration. Refugees are not part of conflicted actors in Syrians conflict. The conflict is between Syrian government and the opposition including ISIS. On the opposite, refugee are the victim of the conflict. If someone says that accepting refugee will put the state in danger, that is an invalid reason. Refugees will not come with guns and tanks. They come with and hope for a hope. Besides, refugee are not free from supervision; the supervision will be organized by international organization such as UNHCR, and also by the host country. They will not cause trouble since they are not coming with guns, but they are coming with fear and hope. Therefore, it is quite unreasonable to say that accepting refugee will harm a state's security and survival. In addition to the moral reason, a state is formed as a social contract between people to ensure their safety [3]. State's responsibility is to protect people, a state will lose its sovereignty if it fail or reluctant to do such duty. Therefore, theoretically, the idea of state is resulted from the idea of human security. Therefore, the state has a moral obligation to save lives. In this case, German has put a good example to the world by accepting the refugee.

The second reason is wrong perception of refugee as burden. If a country sees refugee as burden, the country will tend to reject the idea of welcoming refugee to its territory. However, refugee should be understood as a collective responsibility. As many thinkers say, we are citizen of the world, our moral obligation should expand from close circle of family, community, state and the world. Protecting refugee – therefore- is not the sole responsibility of host country, but also regional organization (i.e., EU), UN bodies (UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO), aid bodies and the international community. Therefore, those actors, including international organization and aid bodies will provide financial support for the host country [12]. In case of Syria, there has been total funding at US\$ 4,7 billion from donor commitment, neighboring countries, and contributions that are reported to UNHCR and Financial Tracking Service [14]. In Germany, even the smallest institution like a family also willing to help either to host, becoming a volunteer, or donate funds as well as basic needs [15].

The last reason of why human security should be privileged is legal judgment. Many countries have signed Refugee Convention which command them to protect refugees coming on their territory...".[16] This convention/protocol came into force on 22 April 1954 and has

141 member countries (as of September 2001). German has ratified the convention [17]. Hence, protecting the refugee is indeed a legal obligation for German and other Convention member countries. Many countries in Europe and Asia are also signatory of the convention, therefore there is no excuse to repel refugee if they have come to a state's territory.

6. Conclusion

In light of this, this article agree that both national and human security are important and there are always debate of which kind of security should be prioritized. A state should protect both human and itself. However, human security should be a head of state's security when it comes to cases like protecting lives, such as what happened in Syria. German's decision to welcome Syrian refugee has put a good example of how a human security should be prioritized. The German's action is right for two reasons; morally and legally. Morally, refugees are not a threat, they are victims of a conflict and there is no indication that refugee will always be infiltrated by radical groups. Legally, a number of 141 countries have become signatory state for the 1951 refugee convention which bind them to perform the obligation in good faith. [16]

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