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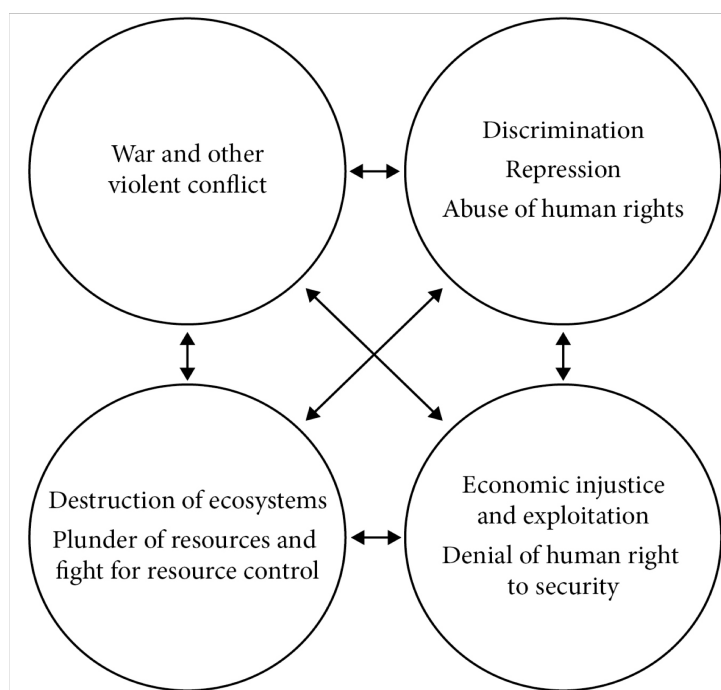
**Toda Peace Institute Colloquium, March 28, 2017**

### **Text for website**

We have been discussing global unpredictability at what seems a very precarious time, but it's good to remember that human life will always be unpredictable. Nor can we ever be fully secure, since we are mortal and therefore vulnerable. That is all the more reason to work together to do the best we can.

The way people think and behave in relation to security makes a huge difference and can be changed. I want to present to you two different images in relation to this. Here is the first:

## **Domination: eat-or-be-eaten**



**Insecurity and violence**

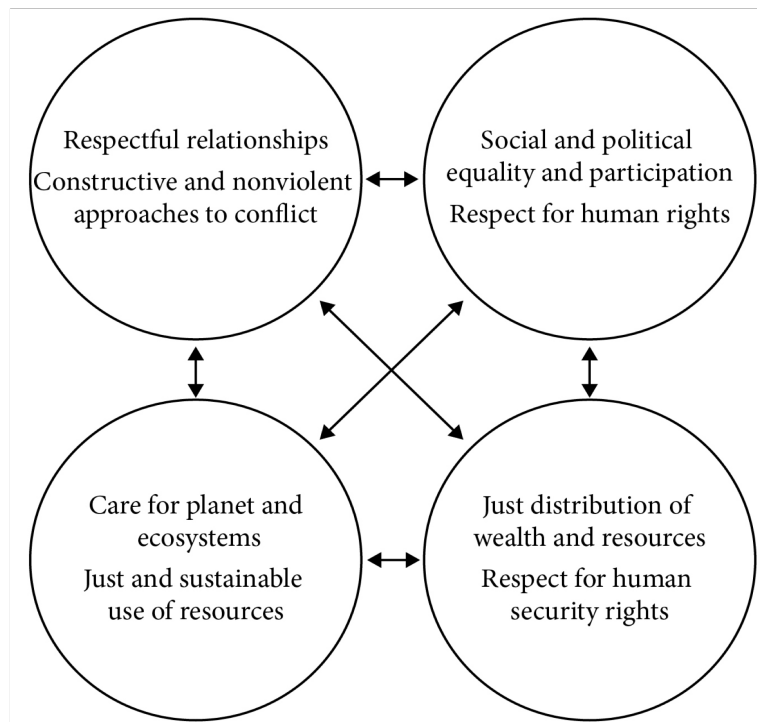
The domonatory, eat-or-be-eaten approach to relationships generates insecurity and violence of all kinds. I have grouped different aspects of violence and injustice in these four circles, which interact with each other, each helping to drive the others.

For instance, war destroys environments and food sources. It can be occasioned by resource shortages; it violates, on a grand scale, the human right to life and livelihood. Economic injustice and discrimination create resentment and these can give rise to violent attacks by the excluded and dispossessed. Large scale migration resulting from war or persecution can give rise to unrest and fear among local populations and this too may lead to violence. I could go on.

Fortunately, this is not the only available pattern of human relationships. There are more positive norms that many people try to live by, values and principles on which institutions like the UN have been established.

So here is an alternative image, representing an approach based on the recognition of human and ecological interdependence and the principle of cooperation:

## Interdependence: cooperation



## Security and peace

The dynamics of mutual influence between the different circles remain, but this time they are positive and lead to security and peace. I need not explain further here.

I have used these two diagrams to explain, in my own way, the analysis of the Rethinking Security<sup>1</sup> initiative of the Ammerdown Group, which I represent here.

The thinking of its members – peacebuilding organisations, practioners and academics – is based on what we have learned in our work, applying that to international relationships and conflicts. Our aim is to elaborate and promote the idea of human security as being built not my military means but by cooperation and solidarity.

Our strategy is to use what connections we have to engage with civil servants and politicians, feeding in our ideas in order and building support at those levels in order to influence policy-making; to build broad based support among organisations working on any of the areas depicted in the four circles above,

who may also have some political influence; and to generate conversations and lobbies among the membership of such organisations and among the public more generally at the local level.

We are encouraged to know that our thinking has stimulated similar initiatives elsewhere and we hope to build international alliances with likeminded others around the globe. Global crises need to be defused and transformed through the will and power of people everywhere, working in solidarity with one another to change the norms, the politics and the systems that are driving insecurity and violence.

To be creative and to transform rather than to provoke violence and deepen divisions, nonviolent people power must not only resist violence but build bridges within and between our different societies, creating a new vision for coexistence and shared wellbeing.

Brexit and Trump notwithstanding, these things are possible. It is within our human capacity to do better. Kindness<sup>2</sup> has been identified by scientists as a core characteristic and geneticist Edward Wilson, in his latest book<sup>3</sup>, expresses his faith in human power for successful coexistence:

‘Earth, by the twenty-second century, can be turned, if we so wish, into a permanent paradise for human beings, or at least the strong beginnings of one ... [O]ut of an ethic of simple decency to one another, the unrelenting application of reason, and acceptance of what we truly are, our dreams will finally come home to stay.’

<sup>1</sup>[www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk](http://www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup>Phillips, Adam and Taylor, Barbara. *Kindness*. 2009

<sup>3</sup>Edward O. Wilson’s *The Social Conquest of Earth*, 2012, final paragraph