

# Welcome to the Forum

Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun

Excellence M. le secrétaire d'Etat et cher ami, Excellences, chers amis, je voudrais tout d'abord vous souhaiter le bienvenu Caux et à notre rencontre annuel de l'Initiatives et Changement et en même temps à la quatrième édition du Forum de Caux pour la sécurité humaine. Nous vous recueillons cette fois en l'absence d'un ami qui nous est très cher et qui nous a quitté frappé par le destin—Jean Fayet est cependant avec nous en pensée et de la ou il est il nous encourage à continuer. Nos profondes condoléances à la famille qui a su merveilleusement nous garder en leur compagnie au moment de son départ .

Qu'il me soit permis enfin de saluer, ce jour, la naissance d'un nouvel état Africain, le Sud Soudan. J'ai été un des négociateurs de l'accord compréhensif de paix au Soudan et je formule l'espoir de voir les deux états vivre en paix total et avec une riche coopération.

Chers amis,

Au lendemain de la catastrophe qui a frappé le pays qui était jusqu'à récemment la deuxième puissance économique dans le monde, c'est à dire le Japon, et qui a cause la disparition de milliers d'êtres humains, on réalise que nous vivons toujours dans une grande insécurité. Notre humanité vit en effet des périodes de profonde incertitude et de grave inquiétude, et nous en sommes en partie responsables.

Déjà en 2008 quand nous avons initié le premier Forum de Caux sur la sécurité humaine, nous avons vu émerger une crise importance dans le domaine de la finance et de l'économie. Nous n'en sommes pas encore sortis, comme l'indiquent les préoccupations des populations de Grèce, du Portugal, de l'Espagne, et d'autres...

Enfin, nous vivons maintenant un autre développement qui suscite autant d'espoir que de préoccupation et qui affecte ma propre région d'origine. C'est ce qu'on appelle le Printemps Arabe.

Dear friends,

What was hailed as the "Arab Spring" should instead be called the "Arab Youth Spring." It is indeed the youth, practically everywhere in the Middle East and North Africa, that initiated this great move and helped rally all social classes. The youth were not pursuing a specific ideology. It was a large and comprehensive outcry claiming freedom and dignity for all, strongly condemning corruption and authoritarian rule, and, expressing a formidable adherence to a true democratic aspiration. This was a strident appeal for human security! We heard the youth saying, "Enough is enough" and calling on the rulers to "leave"—in Arabic "Arhol" and in French "dégage."

The repressive powers in place were totally surprised and disoriented both by the dimensions of these demonstrations and by the new instruments used. The dimensions were large and inclusive. Indeed they included, on a large scale, students, workers, artists, teachers, young businessmen and women, and government employees. The instruments were very modern—mobile phones, Internet, blogs, and other efficient communication mechanisms not seen before in such political and social upheavals.

These demonstrations were organised by a spontaneous, new, original networking, without the traditional political leaders. These youth engines were motivated by the search for human security... These youth engines were indeed saying, "Enough is enough. We are not going to submit to authoritarian rule anymore. Whatever the political ideology the authoritarian rulers are advocating, religious or otherwise, we are not going to be fooled by these treacherous arguments anymore.

And two authoritarian rulers finally gave up in two countries, Tunisia and Egypt.

In other countries, such as Yemen, Syria and Libya, the ruling powers openly exploit tribal and clan differences to postpone their defeat. But the youth was not easy prey of this strategy and continued to resist. These rulers might be able to delay the end of their rule but they will clearly remain. from now on in confrontation with the youth engines of social revolution.

We must underline here however that the international community and, particularly, international and regional organisations concerned, did not involve themselves enough to help the people sort out the necessary steps towards democratic rule and human security.

This led many of us to ask about the international implementation of the principle of the Responsibility to Protect, and this is the reason why we put it on our agenda in this fourth year of the Forum on Human Security.

It will be indeed a terrible tragedy if nothing is done to protect what has been achieved by this modern historic revolution in the developing world. We can imagine the frustration of these young people and the masses who have become fed up by the corruption and the repression they witnessed throughout their lives.

They found the will and the courage to attempt to put an end to this; yet they run the risk of becoming victims of repression and massacres. Ultimately, and very sadly they might see the results of their historic manifestation becoming hostage of diplomatic manoeuvring with the complicity of big power interests. This is indeed a dangerous prospective.

So what do we do? This time around, the international community, including the civil society, must indeed make its contribution. And we are gathered here in Caux to do our share.

As events during the 1990s too often demonstrated, even decisions by the Security Council to authorise international action in humanitarian cases have been no guarantee that any action would be taken effectively and adequately. In Somalia in 1993, Rwanda in 1994 and Bosnia in 1995, the UN action taken, if taken at all, was widely perceived as too little, too late, misconceived, poorly resourced, poorly executed, or all of the above.

As we stated, Gareth Evans and I, as co-chairs of the Commission which articulated the concept of the Responsibility to Protection:

"The debate about intervention for human protection purposes has not gone away. And it will not go away so long as human nature remains as fallible as it is and internal conflict and state failures stay as prevalent as they are." This is, I believe, our appeal to deal better with human security in the future!

It is therefore vital to work out the potential appropriate strategy in dealing with this kind of situation. It is vital to look extensively at various studies of past experiences on the sensitive and crucial step of preventive intervention and come up with recommendations and criteria, which provide for a responsible decision-making process. We have with us in this fourth Caux Forum some outstanding experts in the field of human security who will help us work out some useful recommendations. We count on you all and thank you for your attention and your support.