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An Uncertain Trinity:
Ethics, Interests, and Human Security

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ABSTRACT

In framing an assessment of the ethics of human security, it is paramount to emphasize that policy makers often are forced to make ethically ambiguous decisions under the constraints and imperatives of real-time situations that impose real-world consequences. Increasingly, policy decisions and future choices today seem driven by a blurring of concerns that involve state-centric security and human security. Yet in framing this change in focus, not only for the United States but for the Western Hemisphere and perhaps even the entire globe, analysts and policymakers must realize that excessive focus on one aspect of security at the expense or detriment of the other may well cause us to be “boomeranged” by a poor balancing of ends and means in a changing security environment. There remains a pressing need to recognize both the continuing security dilemma of states and the emerging survival dilemmas of regions.