

Check with delivery

Jonas Gahr Støre, Minister of Foreign Affairs of
Norway
Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture
United Nations University, Tokyo, 25 October 2007

Nansen's compass

- a global view on human security challenges

Vice-Rector Yasui, Excellencies, ladies and
gentlemen,

Thank you for offering me this podium at this highly
respected institution to address you on some of the
most important challenges of our times. And as a
Norwegian Foreign Minister I feel honoured to so as I
deliver the Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture.

Few Norwegians are more widely known and respected
than Fridtjof Nansen. Nansen was a scholar and a
scientist, an adventurer and an explorer, a diplomat
and a humanitarian. He had several careers and was
distinguished in each. He was as great an

international statesman as he was a great polar explorer.

The notion of human security offers an appropriate angle to comment on Fridtjof Nansen's remarkable life. Let me at the outset add on other timely dimension. Nansen gained prominence in my country and in the world by his polar expeditions. We used to place his experiences into the chapters of history manuals. Today we discover quite another and intriguing relevance of this expedition.

As a young boy my father took me - as I take my children - to the Nansen museum in Oslo to study the extraordinary adventures he made into the Arctic. To me, the expedition in which Nansen lets his specially constructed ship Fram freeze into the polar ice in order to let it drift from north east of the Russian coast across the Arctic towards the North Pole in the early 1890'ies - stands out as one of the most spectacular expeditions ever undertaken.

Nansen and his companion Hjalmar Johansen even left the vessel and ventured towards the North Pole on skis, assisted by dogs and sledges. They came close but had to turn around to undertake perhaps an even more daring expedition - the one that were to bring them safely back across the ice and the oceans to Norway.

Why do I start with this reference? Because as we speak, the geographical area that Nansen undertook to cross through the ice is on its way to become ice free. The vast Arctic around the North Pole is not land area. It is an ocean. Until recent years a frozen ocean, defying what humans can bare. A frozen ocean from coast to coast, blocking any passage during most of the year.

When the International Panel on Climate Change issued it's draft report a few years ago the world's scientists indicated that the Arctic ocean could become ice free during summer towards the end of this century. When the report was published earlier this year the scenario was adjusted to around 2040. Only in the last few months cautious scientists suggest that it may happen even earlier. In fact it is happening as we speak. Never has there been so little ice. Never has the ice been less solid. Nansen and Johansen would not have believed their eyes.

There are extremely serious messages in these findings that need to add to our political resolve to curb climate gas emissions, adapt better to the changes that for certain will come and engage in a broad effort to include remaining countries - rich and poor - into binding cooperation to safeguard the planet.

My point here at the outset is to put Fridtjof Nansen's extraordinary voyage into a contemporary perspective. And to suggest that with this unfolding change Norway and Japan will come closer together. In a generation the North East passage will be more of a reality than a vision. That will - in the midst of the serious challenges confronting us - offer new opportunities that our two countries should seize together.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former Norwegian Prime Minister and Director-General of the World Health Organization, who I had the privilege to serve in both of these capacities, gave the Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture from this podium 8 years ago.

In her address, she emphasised that when Nansen pioneered humanitarian relief work in the 1920'ies, the whole international order was in the process of being reshaped. The concept of global public goods started to take hold; efforts to manage interdependence and the striking signs of globalisation were emerging.

Much has changed and much has been achieved since the 1920s. But the world remains unpredictable. We are

constantly driven to observe that the world order is being reshaped. Governments struggle to find the balance between a foreign policy that emphasises traditional notions of national self-interest and one that includes effective concern for fellow human beings and shared responsibility for dealing with global challenges.

Managing globalisation to ensure human security is a daunting task. We need to set the right course. We do not speak of a one off issue, giving priority to human security needs to be a permanent priority of policymakers. Japan has taken a lead in this field and deserves appreciation. Our two countries have worked closely together on this and it is our intention to do even more so in the years to come.

Nansen knew how to use navigational instruments. Can Nansen still guide us in this day and age, when we are facing new and unfamiliar challenges with no maps to consult? What is required in uncharted waters is a compass. What indications can we draw from Nansen's political compass?

One of the many remarkable aspects of Nansen, is how he wove his several careers and the various aspects of his character into a lifework that stands out as an integrated whole.

Nansen said: "The first great thing is to find yourself, and for that you need solitude and contemplation: at least sometimes. I tell you, deliverance will not come from the rushing, noisy centres of civilisation. It will come from the lonely places."

Nansen knew what he was talking about!

If we truly aspire to radical transformation - which Nansen did - context is everything.

He was a student of Charles Darwin. One of the main points of Darwin's theory was that all living organisms are related. Darwin believed that by studying the simple nervous system of the hagfish, he could shed light on principles underlying the working of the human central nervous system.

In the same way, Nansen studied ocean currents in the Arctic to learn about the physical configuration of the globe. But he went further. He went beyond physical configurations to the life conditions of human beings.

He travelled to famine-stricken Russia and Ukraine to study the old diplomacy and power politics. He came back with a new determination, evident in his

statement when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922:

"When one has beheld the great beseeching eyes in the starved faces of children staring hopelessly into the fading daylight, the eyes of agonised mothers while they press their dying children to their empty breasts in silent despair, and the ghostlike men lying exhausted on mats on cabin floors, with only the merciful release of death to wait for, then surely one must understand where all this is leading, understand a little of the true nature of the question. This is not the struggle for power, but a single and terrible accusation against those who still do not want to see, a single great prayer for a drop of mercy to give men a chance to live."

Most people of Nansen's generation did not consider hunger and poverty to be matters for international politics. Nansen did. He helped to develop the world's awareness of fundamental values of human dignity, into what later was matured into a universal acceptance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It was one of his greatest accomplishments.

However, I cannot help noticing that Nansen's description of the scene inside the little cabin in Ukraine sounds awfully familiar.

It could have been a family in Africa - where the father and mother are dying of Aids.

It could have been a family in any poor village or modern-day shanty town, suffering from infectious diseases due to unclean water and poor sanitation. In our modern world, one billion people lack even minimal access to running water.

Just as in the 1920s, most diplomats today prefer to focus on issues of "hard power" - war and peace, economics and trade, rather than "soft issues" - the environment, health and hunger. Yet we know that the very notion of "soft" is misleading. Because these issues have hard ramifications on national economies and international stability.

Nansen was a practical idealist and a believer in international cooperation. He would be heartened to see the universality that humanitarian law and the international refugee instruments have gained. He would be impressed with the effectiveness of the United Nations in delivering humanitarian relief and assisting refugees. He would have been a staunch supporter of the Geneva Conventions as they took shape during the last century.

I think he would have appreciated much of what is done in his name. In 2006 the winner of the Nansen

Refugee Award was Dr Akio Kanai, a Japanese optometrist who has improved the quality of life of more than 100 000 uprooted people around the world by testing their eyes and providing them with spectacles. It is a practical approach. It gives refugees a better chance to improve their own lives.

Yet, Nansen would be appalled to see how little the nature of the humanitarian problems has changed, how the challenges to the environment have grown, how we still struggle to prevent armed conflicts.

Earlier this year, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists'* Doomsday Clock was moved two minutes forward. It stands at five minutes to midnight, as we are at the brink of a second nuclear age, and climate change presents another dire challenge to humanity.

Let me then consider some of the key challenges ahead of us.

First - the old but never more relevant issue of non-proliferation and disarmament

No country has suffered more directly from the consequences of the nuclear age than Japan. No country feels stronger the urgency of this challenge.

For decades Norway has been one of Japan's close partners in non-proliferation and disarmament

efforts. We have warmly supported Japan's consistent efforts to secure a global commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons. Last year's UN General Assembly resolution on the matter brought forward by Japan won a record number of 167 votes.

Japan has also been at the forefront of international efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty into force. In typical Japanese fashion - and may I add in the spirit of Nansen - these political efforts have been systematically underpinned by practical initiatives. Monitoring facilities have been established and technical assistance given to other countries that are considering ratifying the treaty.

In all of these endeavours, Japan can point to its own example, its prosperity, experience and expertise.

Japan has chosen to abstain from nuclear weapons, voluntarily and verifiably. In this way, Japan effectively debunks the myth that nuclear weapons are necessary to be a first rate political and economic power.

The force of the Japanese example is important. In a long-term perspective nuclear non-proliferation is essential for maintaining international peace and

stability and diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies is therefore vital.

Unfortunately, progress in the whole disarmament area is too slow. We may even be facing a new arms race. When nuclear weapons states modernise their arsenals the signals are unfortunate. And we need to encourage global public opinion to wake up again.

Today, resolving the issues of Iran and North Korea is critical. The continued international concern over the nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and North Korea illustrates the need for compliance with the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), the demands of the UN Security Council and of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

With regard to North Korea, the development has not been entirely negative. Some encouraging signs have occurred as the states involved have reverted to the comprehensive toolbox of political engagement.

But experience tells us to be prepared for new setbacks. Supporting the diplomatic process is key. We must be ready to consider positive incentives if North Korea delivers what it promises.

We have also seen some signs of positive development from Iran. The IAEA has made great efforts to resolve

outstanding issues related to Iran's past nuclear activities. But there are still too many uncertainties surrounding the present activities that have to be sorted out. Only Iran can deliver on that account. Iran must allow full and unconditional inspections by the IAEA. And it must comply with the demands of the international community to suspend all nuclear activities. By doing so, Iran would contribute to a negotiated political outcome to the benefit of all the parties concerned.

Both North Korea and Iran must be brought to realise that they have everything to gain by discontinuing their nuclear programmes.

However, the challenges before us goes beyond Iran and North Korea.

There are still some 27 000 nuclear warheads in existence. This does not make sense nearly 20 years after the end of the Cold War. The disarmament process must be brought back on track. We cannot afford to lose what was achieved during the 1990s.

Non-proliferation is a precondition for achieving our ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. The IAEA must be at the heart of our efforts to achieve this goal.

But we must also dare to think new. As Nansen we must be creative, practical and comprehensive in our approach. Key states must be brought to realize that non-proliferation and disarmament are the flip sides of the same coin.

The seven-country initiative, led by Norway, is a response to this challenge. The uniqueness of this initiative is that it includes both a nuclear power (the UK) and leading countries in the Non-Aligned Movement such as South African and Indonesia. We have given ourselves the task of identifying measures that ultimately could bolster broader international consensus. This is a form of cooperation that I am convinced can achieve results.

The initiative aims at addressing *both* non-proliferation and disarmament. The initiative includes support of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and promotion of the concept of regional nuclear weapons free zones.

The seven-country initiative has mobilised support from about 100 countries, including strong and highly appreciated support from Japan.

I am not under the illusion that it will be easy to gain new momentum in the disarmament policy area. There are many sensitive questions to be resolved.

But there are successful processes to gain inspiration from, and let me mention a few.

And it may come as no surprise that I start with the Mine Ban Treaty. Ten years ago, the text of the Mine Ban Treaty was negotiated at a conference in Oslo, marking a breakthrough in efforts to achieve important humanitarian goals.

The Mine Ban Treaty was drawn up in close cooperation between civil society and countries from different regions, including several mine-affected countries. It is unique in many ways. It encompasses the whole breadth of humanitarian problems that mines cause. And it resulted from a process where governments and civil society found a way of coming together - combining different experiences and joining forces.

Today, 155 countries have acceded to the Treaty. It is true that some of the most important countries in this connection are not among the signatories, but they are under considerable pressure to join from those that are. Many of the UN organisations have contributed to the fulfilment of commitments made under the Treaty. And some of the results are important - such as:

- 40 million anti-personnel mines have been destroyed in the last 10 years.
- Trade in mines has in practice stopped.
- Many thousands of victims are being helped every year, and the number of new victims is falling.
- And even countries that have not signed the Treaty have chosen to respect it.

The Mine Ban Treaty is an example to be followed. We can work together to meet other humanitarian challenges. It is about utilising the engagement, experience and knowledge by new actors and stake holders to create human security.

One such challenge is cluster munitions. The humanitarian suffering caused by the use of cluster munitions are well known and well documented. Despite efforts made to address this issue, it has yet not been possible to agree on a process within the framework of disarmament.

We know the consequences - in fact we see them every day in one corner of the world after another. Children, men and women who pick up a piece that explodes, the farmers who plough into detonations. The associations to the anti personal landmines are all too striking.

But cluster munitions are a pressing humanitarian and developmental problem just as much as a matter of disarmament. Our approach should be based on a human security perspective. The Norwegian Government has now initiated an international process to reach consensus on a prohibition of cluster munitions - on the basis of their unacceptable humanitarian and developmental consequences.

We work together with likeminded states, with the UN, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and civil society. The process is steadily building momentum. Useful experience has been gained from the efforts to ban landmines. A first reunion of concerned states took place in Oslo in February. More than 80 came together in Lima before the summer.

Again this is a question of method. Drawing on the field experience of humanitarian organisations that have been working on clearance and victim assistance for decades, we hope to achieve agreement on a strong convention on cluster munitions. And we will give particular focus to establishing an effective framework for implementation.

The Oslo Declaration has - as I said - so far won the support of 80 states. And let me say here in Japan - it is open for new supporters! Some argue that addressing this issue should take place in other

institutional settings. I have no fixed opinion on that institutional approach or the other. But I believe that when organizations that can only move forward based on consensus end up by being stalled, then concerned states need to test other avenues. That would have been Nansen's approach!

Let us then move on. Various threats and opportunities called for new, different arenas for foreign policy in Nansen's time, and they continue to do so today.

Global interdependence means new vulnerabilities as well as new opportunities. In trade, energy, climate change and health.

I have initiated a project that will study policy options for Norway and the promotion of Norwegian interests in a changing, globalised, world. Today, nations, cultures and religions are being brought closer together, and our societies are becoming increasingly complex. Foreign policy is about defending and promoting national interests. But we constantly need to evaluate our method and our reach.

The world is becoming smaller, or more "flat" as the American writer Tom Friedman has put it, as a result of technological developments and new infrastructure.

But at the same time the distance between rich and poor is growing. And the wealth gap is becoming ever more visible - between states and within states.

The definitions of foreign policy and international relations are also changing rapidly. New agents and relationships are increasingly gaining a foothold in the global interaction between states and societies. Trans-national challenges related to the environment and resources, the spread of weapons and technology of mass-destruction, terrorism, migration - these are all factors that affect states' foreign policy.

Which areas are particularly important? Where should we concentrate our resources and how should we set our priorities? Where are we most likely to make a difference in a global context?

Let me here say a few words about climate change before I turn to the field of global health, where our interdependence is emerging as one of the new foreign policy arenas.

There is no longer any doubt that we are substantially altering the Earth's atmosphere.

Norway has observed early impacts of climate change in the Arctic region for some time already - as I said - the contrast to Nansen's findings is striking.

Scientific forecasts of future impacts are nothing less than dramatic.

Climate change is rapidly becoming a social, economic and geopolitical issue. It is a threat to health and food supply - and ultimately a threat to security and peace.

The High-Level Event on Climate Change at the United Nations in New York sent a powerful political signal that there is the will and determination to break with the past and act decisively.

The recent awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Mr. Albert Gore is a confirmation of the close connection between the fight against global climate change and the preservation of global peace and stability.

Norway believes that the average global temperature increase should be limited to no more than two degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level, a target we share with the EU. The risks involved in failing to achieve this goal are simply not acceptable. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has made it clear that achieving this goal requires that global emissions peak by 2015 and are further reduced by at least 50% by 2050.

The countries that so far have taken on emissions commitments under the Kyoto Protocol - and I would like to acknowledge the significant commitment of Japan - only account for about 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions. And this percentage is declining and countries outside the protocol are increasing their emissions. Consequently, even drastic reductions made by the current Kyoto Protocol countries alone will not solve the problem.

Norway is prepared to take its share of the effort to bring global emissions down to a sustainable level. During the first Kyoto period from 2008 to 2012, Norway will voluntarily take on an additional commitment by 10 percentage points. By 2020, we intend to reduce global emissions of greenhouse gases by the equivalent of 30% of our emissions level in 1990. And finally, we intend to cut global emissions by the equivalent of 100% of our own emissions by 2050. This will make Norway a carbon-neutral country.

However, climate change is global by nature and can only be solved through a concerted *global* effort. A truly global agreement must include all major developed countries, including the US and Australia, as well as developing countries with large and rapidly growing emissions.

The latter presents us with a double challenge: to ensure the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals by development and growth in developing countries - while at the same time ensuring that a much less carbon-intensive growth path than that taken by the developed countries is followed.

International efforts to help the most vulnerable developing countries to adapt to the now inevitable impacts of climate change must be greatly intensified.

For its part, Norway will increase its climate-change-related development assistance substantially in the years to come.

The Stern Review last year is crystal clear in its conclusion that the benefits of strong, early action on climate change by far outweigh the costs. Early action in at least two areas will be essential for climate change.

Firstly, a carbon price must be established through taxation, trading or regulation. Putting a price on carbon will lead businesses and individuals to switch away from high-carbon goods and services, and to invest in low-carbon alternatives. We already see signs of such mechanisms emerging. Such signs need to be strongly stimulated.

Secondly, the Stern Review calls for rapid development of a range of low-carbon and high-efficiency technologies. Here, I would like to refer to my own Government's major initiative to develop carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. To offer a short explanation: Co₂ is extracted and reinjected under the seabed or deep into the ground structures. This happens in the North Sea off the Norwegian west coast, it happens in the Barents sea off the north of Norway, and two days ago I was briefed in Algiers by the Norwegian energy company StatoilHydro about the same methodology being applied at major gas fields in the Algerian desert.

The main aim is gas power plants, but the technology should also be applicable to coal power plants. We expect - as does the IPCC - that this technology will contribute significantly to emission reductions in many parts of the world in only a few years' time.

Much more effort should also be put into the development and deployment of renewable energy technologies. Improving energy efficiency is another unexploited area. We have much to learn from Japan here and I look forward to learning more about your extensive co-cooperation with China, India and a number of other countries in this field.

We are impressed by the way Japan has put this issue right at the top of its foreign policy agenda with the Cool Earth 50 initiative. Next year, Japan will host both the G8 Summit in Hokkaido, gathering the most powerful economies in the world, and the fourth TICAD Summit, gathering African countries with truly existential interests at stake as the climate crisis intensifies. Japan's leadership is as appreciated as it is crucial for our success in addressing this problem.

I very much look forward to discussing climate issues this evening with my host, Foreign Minister Koumura, including how we can stimulate both mutual and international cooperation in this area.

Let me then touch upon an area where our two countries have a vast potential for closer cooperation - that of global health.

Until very recently, global health seemed far removed from the policy challenges facing Europe. It was a matter for development aid. The outbreaks of SARS and avian influenza forced us to realise our new vulnerability.

Global health is not only about disease, it is also about taking responsibility for the determinants of

health. The use of tobacco, unsafe food, threats to health arising from our way of life - these are problems that are exported across the globe. There is a growing understanding that health forms part of other policy areas that deal with globalisation: trade, security and foreign affairs. There are trade regulations that are detrimental to health - and health problems that are detrimental to trade.

I believe it is arguable that health is one of the most important, yet currently broadly neglected, long-term foreign policy issues of our time.

Japan has made tremendous efforts to strengthen international health systems, I learned about this first hand during my years at the World Health Organization. A very practical example is Japan's steadfast contributions to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria - its engagement in regional efforts to prevent and prepare for a global influenza pandemic are also very important.

Japan has exceptional civilian emergency skills, but its monitoring efforts, stockpiling of drugs and offers of technical assistance to vulnerable parts of Asia do not hit the headlines. However, it is efforts such as these that could prevent today's health challenges from becoming global disasters tomorrow, with untold economic and political consequences.

Tackling global health challenges requires political leadership and international cooperation. Health targets represent the largest component of the Millennium Development Goals and is the most important lever for achieving growth and prosperity.

How can we turn these theoretical insights into practical action?

Together with my French colleague I have decided to explore further the linkages between health and foreign policy. Last autumn we invited the foreign ministers of Brazil, Indonesia, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand to form the Initiative on Foreign Policy and Global Health. Its aim is to raise the profile of global health issues on the international foreign policy agenda. In March this year, the seven foreign ministers launched a common Declaration and Agenda for Action - outlining ten areas where foreign policy can and does make a difference to the global outlook for health.

A Group of Experts mandated by the ministers has brought forward material that illustrates the need to include health issues in strategic and diplomatic agendas. Their report includes concrete, practical recommendations on how foreign policy can contribute

to meeting global health challenges and how health issues can be used as instruments of diplomacy.

One month ago, the seven ministers presented their ideas during the opening of the UN General Assembly. The UN Secretary-General and the Director-General of the WHO were among the many who declared their interest and I am pleased that the Japanese Government also chose to speak on this issue, along with a large number of delegations and several more foreign ministers.

I believe Fridtjof Nansen would have been intensely interested in the practical ideas that have been put forward, such as using basic health data as a proxy indicator to measure success in post-conflict or post-crisis reconstruction and reconciliation.

I believe he would have been keen to develop a roadmap for health recovery that could be used by peace builders.

And I also believe he would have employed today's technological opportunities to measure the impact of health interventions on conflict in order to improve our understanding and practice in handling crises around the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

Ever since 1945, the UN has been vital to Norway's foreign policy. We favour a stronger UN. Our objective is to reaffirm the world organisation as the coordinator of collective action, the principal lawmaker and an effective vehicle for attaining common ends.

But here, too, the world is changing. The UN has to evolve and adapt to a new set of actors, new methods of communication and new ways of interacting in the international community.

To take one concrete example, the role of the UN and its specialised agencies is paramount in the fight against avian influenza. That role is absolutely key. But the UN cannot confront this challenge alone. It needs to interact with a variety of actors in a complex global setting, including regional organisations such as the ASEAN and the East Asian Community, financial institutions, the pharmaceutical industry and, of course, the government and civil society of each country concerned.

Another example is the challenge of ensuring that poor communities have access to good quality drugs at affordable prices.

The most important stakeholders are not present in the conference rooms. They are the world's nearly three billion people living in poverty - children, women and men who yearn for and deserve health and a decent livelihood.

Our response to our new interdependence must be based on solidarity and a notion of global citizenship. If we can address the problems of climate change, fight disease and improve living standards, we will inspire confidence in people and in the future.

Nansen would have pointed out - and forcefully - how far we still have to go to build a common system to manage our global interdependence, and to ensure human security. But Nansen, who also knew how important it is to value and draw every advantage of progress, would have searched for progress and opportunity.

In our efforts to solve these issues we should take inspiration from Nansen's compass: we should strive towards a holistic understanding, be prepared and willing to seek change - and focus on the practical, concrete measures that eventually will give us the changes required to ensure human security for all.

Nansen referred to diplomats as "a sterile race which has brought mankind more harm than good over the

years". There, I believe, he went too far, at least in the way he generalized diplomacy. I hope that we may prove him wrong, and that our modern-day diplomats will seek to include the global agenda and human security in national foreign policy objectives.

We must be bold. We must be creative.

We all have so much to gain and so little to lose.

Thank you.