



**THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY IN SAUDI ARABIA: A HOLISTIC ISLAMIC
PERSPECTIVE**

¹ **Dr. Sarah Salahaldeen Balto**

¹ **Assistant Professor of Human Rights, Public Law Department, Faculty
of Law, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Abstract:

This paper explores the concept of human security through a comprehensive framework that integrates Islamic values, international human rights standards, and Saudi Arabia's national development priorities, particularly within the framework of Vision 2030. Human security transcends the mere absence of threats, it is presented as a foundational pillar for dignity, peace, and sustainable development.

To articulate this notion, the paper identifies seven core dimensions—personal, health, food, environmental, political, economic, and community security—each of which plays an essential role in promoting societal stability and individual well-being. The analysis emphasizes that Islamic principles emphasis on “Amn” (security) as a prerequisite for growth, stability, and social cohesion. Islamic sources: the Qur'an and the Hadith, underscore the right of all individuals to live free from fear and deprivation, irrespective of their background. In this context, the Charter of Medina is highlighted as an early legal model that institutionalized human security and peaceful coexistence.

Building on this religious and theological foundation, the paper examines Saudi Arabia's tangible efforts to advance human security at both the national and international levels. It reviews a range of state-led initiatives in areas such as healthcare access, food provision, environmental stewardship—including the Saudi and Middle East Green Initiatives—political engagement, and the protection of social inclusion and cultural identity. Moreover, the Kingdom's active collaboration with the United Nations through the UNSDCF, and its global humanitarian leadership via KSrelief, reflect a broader commitment to human security beyond its borders.

Finally, the paper demonstrates the interdependence between human security, human rights, and human development, arguing that progress in one reinforces the others. The steady rise in Saudi Arabia's Human Development Index (HDI) further illustrates this synergy. Accordingly, the paper concludes by positioning Saudi Arabia as a compelling model for aligning national action plans with modern governance to ensure comprehensive and inclusive human security.

1: Email:

sbalto@kau.edu.sa

2: Email:

DOI

[https://doi.org/10.37651/aujpls.
2025.166378.1647](https://doi.org/10.37651/aujpls.2025.166378.1647)

Submitted: 2/10/2025

Accepted: 26/10/2025

Published: 1/12/2025

Keywords:

Islam

Saudi Arabia

Human rights

Human Security

Development.

©Authors, 2024, College of Law University of Anbar. This is an open-access article under the CC BY 4.0 license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



حق الأمن الإنساني في المملكة العربية السعودية: منظور إسلامي شامل د. سارة صلاح الدين بالطو

^١ أستاذ حقوق الإنسان المساعد، قسم القانون العام، كلية الحقوق، جامعة الملك عبد العزيز، جدة، المملكة العربية السعودية

الملخص:

تبحث هذه الورقة مفهوم الأمن الإنساني من خلال إطار شامل يدمج القيم الإسلامية والمعايير الدولية لحقوق الإنسان وأولويات التنمية الوطنية للمملكة العربية السعودية، وخاصة في إطار رؤية ٢٠٣٠. وبدلاً من أن يقتصر الأمن الإنساني على غياب التهديدات، يُقدّم على أن يكون ركيزة أساسية للكرامة والسلام والتنمية المستدامة.

لتوضيح هذا المفهوم، تُحدد الدراسة سبعة أبعاد أساسية - الأمن الشخصي، والصحي، والغذائي، والبيئي، والسياسي، والاقتصادي، والمجتمعي - ولكل منها دور حيوي في تعزيز الاستقرار المجتمعي ورفاه الأفراد. ويؤكد التحليل على أن المبادئ الإسلامية تُولي أهمية بالغة للأمن كشرط أساسي للنمو والاستقرار والتماسك الاجتماعي. وتؤكد المصادر الإسلامية، بما فيها القرآن الكريم والحديث الشريف، على حق جميع الأفراد في العيش متحررين من الخوف والحرمان، بغض النظر عن خلفياتهم. وفي هذا السياق، يُسلّط الضوء على دستور المدينة المنورة كنموذج قانوني مُبكر أرسى دعائم الأمن الإنساني والتعايش السلمي.

بناءً على هذا الأساس الديني والفلسفي، تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية جهود المملكة العربية السعودية الملموسة لتعزيز الأمن الإنساني على الصعيدين الوطني والدولي. وتعرض مجموعة من المبادرات الحكومية في مجالات مثل توفير الرعاية الصحية، وتوفير الغذاء، والمحافظة على البيئة - بما في ذلك المبادرات الخضراء السعودية والشرق أوسطية - والمشاركة السياسية، وحماية الإدماج الاجتماعي والهوية الثقافية. علاوة على ذلك، تعكس تعاون المملكة النشط مع الأمم المتحدة من خلال صندوق الأمم المتحدة للتنمية المستدامة، وريادتها الإنسانية العالمية من خلال مركز الملك سلمان للإغاثة والأعمال الإنسانية، التزاماً أوسع نطاقاً بالأمن الإنساني خارج حدودها.

وأخيراً، تُبيّن الورقة الترابط بين الأمن الإنساني وحقوق الإنسان والتنمية البشرية، محاجةً بأن التقدم في أي واحدة منها يُعزز البقية. إن الارتفاع المُترد

في مؤشر التنمية البشرية في المملكة العربية السعودية يوضح هذا التآزر بشكل أكبر. وبناءً على ذلك، تُختتم الدراسة بوضع المملكة العربية السعودية كنموذج مُقنع لمواءمة خطط العمل الوطنية مع الحوكمة الحديثة لضمان أمنٍ إنساني كاملٍ وشامل.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الإسلام، المملكة العربية السعودية، حقوق الإنسان، الأمن الإنساني، التطور.
المقدمة

INTRODUCTION

Human security is essential if the world is to avoid conflicts both among and within the different nations and societies of the world. These conflicts may arise due to a variety of reasons and may result in complex and unforeseeable effects such as posing a danger to people's income, their shelter or their source of food among many others. Human security is also at risk from factors such as high population growth linked with the depletion and degradation of national resources. Without human security, the sustainable, peaceful development of human societies is at considerable risk.

Human Security can be broken down into seven different areas or dimensions: personal, community, health, food, environmental, political and economic.⁽¹⁾ Any threat that could affect any one or more of these dimensions must be addressed collectively to ensure people's rights are fully respected to enable them to live free from fear, want and indignity. This is the core idea which is the foundation for the understanding of what human security involves.

In addition, human security plays a key role in ensuring the welfare, social progress and level of development of societies at both state and societal levels. It serves as a yardstick to measure the welfare, the social progress and the level of development of any given group, nation

(1) Ishtiaq Ishtiaq and Isiaka Adams, "Human Security in a Globalised World: Concepts and Issues for the Muslim World" In *Human Security and Philanthropy: Islamic Perspectives and Muslim Majority Country Practices*, (Springer 2015) 31-332.

or collective and indeed may take precedence over dignity since dignity cannot be secured without achieving security first. It requires a fine balance to be struck between the enforcement of laws and the rights of the individual while still allowing positive and equitable developments to take place as the different circumstances and contexts evolve and change over time.

When we turn to the context of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it is worth noting to refer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's vision in implementing human security. The Saudi vision goes beyond conventional notions of safety to embrace social cohesion, sustainable development and economic growth. Indeed, through Vision 2030, the Saudi government combines the right to human security into its national laws and policies.⁽¹⁾ Moreover, it is essential to note the importance of the Islamic religion in our examination of human security, especially given that Islam is the state's official religion in Saudi Arabia. In fact, the idea of human security is a vital component of justice in Muslim countries and is heavily underpinned by Islamic principles.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

It is worth noting that there is wide range of previous studies have addressed the subject of human rights from legal and normative perspectives.

Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, (Cornell University Press 2013): explores the idea and importance of human rights from general perspective, which consists with the study in hand. Yet, the current study distinguishes that it addresses the concept of the right to human security thoroughly.

Charles R. Beitz, *The Idea of Human Rights*, (Oxford University Press 2009): defines human rights as an international political norm, that forms the universal political legitimacy, which consists with the

(1) Mohammad Bashayreh, *Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, Shariah, and Contemporary Legal Trends: The Transformative Power of Law in Guiding Reforms*, (Revival Press 2024) 7-9.

current study in discussing the role of international law and instruments in preserving human rights. However, the current study focuses on the Saudi government mechanisms and efforts at both national and international levels in preserving the right to human security.

Shadi Mokhtari, *Islam and the Challenge of Human Rights*, (Oxford University Press 2009): focuses on human rights and tackles human security by connecting Islamic ethics with the need for justice and dignity, which consists with the present study in demonstrating the Islamic perspective of human rights. Nevertheless, the current study defines the Islamic perspective on the right to human security, and focuses on the application of this right in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the cradle of Islam.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ANALYSIS

Overall, this paper has great value, as it contributes to the individual's understanding of the right to human security and the relationship between this right and the comprehensive development of human rights.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilised the deductive approach as a form of the descriptive method, in order to arrive at established scientific facts. It also incorporated elements of induction and analytical techniques, and concluding the nature between human rights and human security, through the Saudi government's efforts at both the national and international levels.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper will try to answer these questions:

- What is the nature of the relationship between human security and human rights?
- What is the Islamic perspective on human security?
- To what extent does the Saudi government protect and promote the right to human security? and what do the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's national ideals and Vision 2030 say about its dedication to the idea of human security?

RESEARCH STRUCTURE

This study consists of two main sections, as following:

1. THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY

1.1 HUMAN SECURITY: AN OVERVIEW

1.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THEIR INTERDEPENDENCE

2. SAUDI ARABIA AND THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY

2.1 HUMAN SECURITY IN ISLAM

2.2 THE APPLICATION OF THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY IN SAUDI ARABIA

I. SECTION ONE: THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY

This section demonstrates a comprehensive overview of the right to human security. It discusses the main dimension of human security that affects individuals' rights. Furthermore, the section views the effects of the absence of human security on human communities, by demonstrating the relationship between the right to human security and human rights, and its influence on human development.

I.A. HUMAN SECURITY: AN OVERVIEW

Despite the fact that the idea of human security has been included in various humanitarian and diplomatic discussions, it still has no unanimously agreed on definition, due to the fact that the threats which may impact different groups of humans at different times and in different contexts are almost limitless and what is considered a threat to human security relies on which definition is being used to describe the situation. Nevertheless, it is necessary to address the legal nature of this concept. The right to human security is a lawful entitlement derived from humanitarian law and international commitments, rather than a mere traditional acquired right under national legislations.⁽¹⁾ In fact, this right is rooted in binding instruments, such as the International

(1) Frans Viljoen, *International Human Rights Law in Africa*, (Oxford University Press 2012) 18-24.

Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR),⁽¹⁾ the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR),⁽²⁾ as well as the customary international law, which collectively obligate states to protect, respect and fulfill the right to human security for individuals.⁽³⁾

However, while there is still no unanimously agreed definition for human security, what all definitions appear to have in common is an emphasis on the wellbeing and protection of an individual. In other words, human security is a human-centered concept that aims to improve and protect multiple aspects of an individual's life.

The reason for this emphasis on the individual rather than the state is that threats to the state would typically occur in the military sphere whereas any individual also faces severe threats originating from issues related to health, poverty, environment and in some cases from the state itself. In addition, and most importantly, it is the state's territory, power or survival which is at risk in the first case, whereas in the second it is the individual's wellbeing, dignity and freedom which is threatened.

Given this ambiguity regarding what human security means and the high number of possibilities of what may or may not pose a threat to it, the Human Development Report which was adopted by the United Nations Development Program⁽⁴⁾ in 1994 and which is considered the most in-depth and comprehensive study of this area, proposes seven primary dimension of human security that are considerable links and overlaps, focusing on the effects on individuals regarding their life and freedom, in which respond to the individual's needs in dealing with sources of threats, and guarantee their well-being along with other related areas or dimensions, including:

(1) This was adopted by the United Nations in 1966. It guarantees social, cultural and economic rights, such as the right to education and work.

(2) This was adopted by the United Nations in 1966. It guarantees essential political and civil rights, such as the right to life and equal protection under laws.

(3) UNDP, *Human Development Report: New Dimensions of Human Security*, (New York: United Nations Development Programme 2022) 10-13.

(4) This is a United Nations agency responsible to help countries achieving human development, sustainable economic growth and eliminating poverty.

- Health security: such as the need for protection from diseases by ensuring an effective health care system.
- Food security: which involves protecting individuals from hunger and malnutrition by meeting basic food needs and by facilitating access to food sources.
- Personal security: which involves protection from physical or moral violence, crime and abuse.
- Community security: this means the preservation of identity and culture, which covers protection from actions that threaten the cultural security of society such as ethnic or social conflicts, as well as safety from discrimination and exclusion.
- Political security: which ensures individuals are protected from repression by emphasising the need for governments to safeguard the political system and thus provide political stability.
- Environmental security: which covers the securing against risks to the environment such as pollution, climate change or resource depletion.
- Economic security: which ensures that individuals are protected from poverty by providing job opportunities for individuals that will enable them to earn a basic income.⁽¹⁾

According to the report:

Human security is a universal concern. It is relevant to people everywhere, in rich nations and poor. There are many threats that are common to all people-such as unemployment, drugs, crime, pollution and human rights violations. Their intensity may differ from one part of the world to another, but all these threats to human security are real and growing.⁽²⁾

Human Security has a profound influence over many aspects of human life. Firstly, we will look at its role when it comes to human communities. The absence or significant lack of security has notable consequences for both governments and the people who form part of a given social group.

(1) Hind Fouad, "Human Security: Concept, Relations and Dimensions" (2020) *National Criminal Journal* 13, 14-17.

(2) UNDP, *Human Development Report*, (New York: Oxford University Press 1994) 8.

On the one hand, security is the basic component of peace, welfare and self-respect. The absence of security leads to irreparable harm on many different levels. A lack of human security can lead to economic hardship and even a collapse of the economy. It can also bring about a lack of social cohesion and even a breakdown of social norms and the functioning of a society's legal and governmental systems. It also stifles opportunities for societies to make meaningful progress in areas ranging from culture to health and technology.

Accordingly, human security is essential if human rights are to be respected and for there to be growth and progress allowing communities to live together peacefully without fear. Without security societies risk falling into a state of chaos and lawlessness where the government is mistrusted and feared. Therefore, to function effectively and to maintain its own international standing and relationships governments need to prioritise the security of their citizens since a state's position in the international community is profoundly influenced by the security of its society. It appears clear that a high level of human security where an individual's rights and dignity are safeguarded is an essential pre-requisite for progress and development to take place.

I.B. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THEIR INTERDEPENDENCE

The right to human security intersects with and overlaps the broader framework of defending and developing basic human rights. This gives rise to the question: To what extent does human security differ from human rights, and what is the nature of the relationship between them? Scholarly discussion of these questions, particularly among jurists, can be divided into two major schools of thought: one group conceives human security as a part of human rights, while on the contrary, the other views human rights as a component of human security.

Various ratified international conventions and declarations have explicitly stated the obligation of member states to maintain the security of individuals at different levels, a statement which raises the question of whether human security should be considered merely one element within the broader category of human rights. For instance, the

1986 United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development⁽¹⁾ connects development directly to the idea of human security. The resolution clearly indicates that development is a human-centered process works toward the improvement of livelihood, well-being and security of societies. Moreover, articles 3 and 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)⁽²⁾ defend the individual's rights to life, peace, personal security, and dignity. According to Article (3) of the declaration:

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person”, According to article (22): “Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality”

In this respect, the UN General Assembly Resolution 66/290 determines human security as individuals right to live in dignity, free from want and fear. The resolution confirms that human security is an approach that assists Member States to address threats to the dignity, livelihood and survival of their populations.

Yet, human security is not limited to the issue of human rights. Human rights are essentially concerned with identifying and respecting an individual's basic rights, whereas human security is also crucial in defining the main dimensions of security which governments need to identify, promote and protect. Proponents of this view argue that human rights reflect basic interests protected by laws and regulations, while human security extends beyond legal measures, such as legislation and laws, and demands a wider application and focus.

Nevertheless, it is plausible to argue that human rights and the right to human security are integrated and mutually reinforcing. Human rights can be seen as forming the normative framework which defines

(1) This is an international document was adopted by the United Nations in 1986. It emphasises individuals' rights to participate in and benefit from development, and states obligations to preserve human security.

(2) This is an international document was developed in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly. It considered the most significant document regarding human rights.

different aspects of human security. Given that numerous international conventions cover different elements of human security, adherence to these conventions contributes directly to strengthening and promoting it. Conversely, violations of human rights constitute a threat to human security. Thus, human security could be conceived to reinforce the human rights system. Finally, there is doubtless a strong connection between human rights and the right to human security. Human security is key element if human rights are to be enjoyed. Therefore, the protection and development of the different aspects of human security must be seen as a core objective of human rights efforts. At the same time, we must acknowledge that human security is more comprehensive idea. When fully achieved, it not only supports the fulfilment of human rights but also facilitates human development, sustainability, and progress.

In fact, human security and human development are two interdependent concepts. Fundamentally, both share the goal of enhancing an individual's quality of life. Human development cannot flourish unless human security is safeguarded. This is because since human security is concerned with using political, economic and social measures to protect an individual's dignity, capabilities, and opportunities. It follows that the official protection of individual rights is essential if this is to be achieved. This means that human security depends on the implementation of measures and initiatives that foster a stable connection between a government and its society. Human development is therefore closely intertwined with individual's dignity and basic rights. The expansion and protection of such rights form the foundation of human development, and together with human security, are mutually dependent and necessary for real progress to occur. In fact, the entire vision of human development could be framed as an effort to remove all obstacles that undermine human welfare, or which affect the prosperity of societies.⁽¹⁾ The implication of all of this is that any plan to promote human development must also establish an effective framework of measures, such as laws and initiatives, which

(1) Yousif Azroual, "Human Security: A Theoretical Study" (2020) *Cultural Dialogue Journal* 199, 192-195.

safeguard human security. One without the other is unlikely to be successful.

Therefore, we must conclude that human security and human development are, as demonstrated, two overlapping and interdependent frameworks. As such, if we are to effectively confront the risks and challenges facing humanity, both human security and human development must be prioritized, and this must be occur at all levels, from inter-state cooperation to the protection of individual rights and opportunities, while also preserving public trust and social cohesion

II. SECTION TWO: SAUDI ARABIA AND THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY

This section views the Islamic perspective to human security. Moreover, it highlights the application of the right to human security in Saudi Arabia and the efforts made by the Saudi government to promote this right within the framework of Vision 2030. Finally, it will shed the light on the United Nations perspective to this right.

II.A. HUMAN SECURITY IN ISLAM

In Islam, security is called “*Amn*”. It is linked to tranquility “*tuma'ninah*”, which in turn is the opposite of fear “*khawf*”. The notion of security in Islam refers to the elimination of fear and the tranquility of an individual’s soul.

The question of human security is clearly addressed in Quranic verses and the various sayings and deeds of Prophet *Mohammed*. Different verses and *Hadiths* refer to human security both when it comes to an individual’s own rights on the one hand and to how these rights impact others within society on the other.

Considering that security is such a vital and pressing issue even from the earliest instances of humans living in communities and is one of the fundamental needs of a functioning society, it is unsurprising that it is tackled in the earliest and primary sources of *Sharia*; the Holy Quran and Sunna. The Holy Quran indeed places great emphasis on need for human security when it comes to the individual and presents the right to human security as a fundamental driving force for political independence and as an essential part of spiritual evolution.

The *Quranic* verse 95:3: ﴿وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ﴾⁽¹⁾ indicates clearly that security is essential for people to live together, grow and progress. Furthermore, Prophet Ibrahim's⁽²⁾ demand from God was twofold, according to the *Quranic* verse 1:126: ﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا ۖ وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ﴾⁽³⁾ This shows that the first demand was security, while the other one was food, a clear indication that any city could not be habitable and enjoy a healthy economy unless it is secure.

In addition, one of the most well-known Hadiths that addresses human security is the saying of *Ubaydullāh Al-Ansāri al-Khatmi* reported that the Prophet *Mohammed* said:

“Whoever among you wakes up in the morning secure in his dwelling, healthy in his body, and he has his food for the day, then it is as if the whole world has been given to him”.⁽⁴⁾

Therefore, the message of Islam that development and progress can not occur, and civilisation could not flourish in the absence of human security.

However, it is important to note that the right to human security in Islam is not limited to Muslim people solely, rather it extends to include all people with no discrimination (Muslims and non-Muslims). Prophet *Muhammed* and the *Caliphs* (leaders of Muslim communities) after him pursued a policy of harmonious relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, by giving rights to non-Muslims, also called “*ahlu al-dhimmah*”. Such rights include for example but not limited to the right to protection. This right includes security against any type of injustice, assault or violations in the same way that Muslim people are protected.⁽⁵⁾

(1) {And [by] this secure city [Makkah]}, Qur'an 3:95, Sahih International.

(2) He was a prophet and messenger of God, and an ancestor to the Ishmaelite Arabs and Israelites.

(3) {And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits - whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day }, Qur'an 1:126, Sahih International.

(4) Mohamed Al-Bukhaari, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, (Maktabat al-Khanji 1968) 35.

(5) Ayi Ishak Muchtar, “The Rights of Non-Muslims in an Islamic State: A Literature Review” (2022) *TAJDID* 110, 110-111.

One noteworthy example of Islam providing legislation to promote human security is the Charter of Medina.⁽¹⁾ This is a remarkable document which marks the creation of the first civil constitution in the history of an Islamic state and has been considered by historians and orientalist throughout Islamic history as a landmark in the history of Islamic civilization. This constitution was the first civic document that laid out as its central tenet the right of all people whatever their affiliation, especially when it came to religion, to human security and which guaranteed this right unequivocally.⁽²⁾

II.B.THE APPLICATION OF THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY IN SAUDI ARABIA

Considering that the United Nations has reported that cultural factors are responsible for three-quarters of international conflicts and a significant factor in the loss of human security.⁽³⁾ It is noteworthy to point that within the Saudi society, in 2020, degree of tolerance in various dominations such as social, cultural, economic, political, and religious tolerance has raised by 0.41% compared to 2019 reaching out 82%. A clear indication that Saudi society is open to cultural diversity, which considers a driving force of development and the achievement of sustainable development that result in conducting respect and mutual understanding among cultures and civilisations.⁽⁴⁾ In addition, gauging the level of human development in the Kingdom can be facilitated by examining the Human Development Index (HDI), which is used by the UN to measure the progress of a country. Based on this index, Saudi Arabia's human development score has increased from 0.76 in 2003 to 0.88 in 2022, with an average annual growth rate of 0.78. This places Saudi Arabia 37th out of the 61 countries, demonstrating a notable

(1) This Charter was written immediately after the migration of the Prophet Muhammed to *Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah*, a city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

(2) Abdalrahman Migdad, "Human Security: An Islamic Worldview" (2020) *Journal of Human Security Studies* 18, 21.

(3) *World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development*. (2022, May 21). Retrieved from United Nations: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/cultural-diversity-day>

(4) Hussein Maashi, *82% Tolerance Rate Among Saudis*. (2022, November 20) Retrieved from Al-Watan: <https://www.alwatan.com.sa/article/1116386>

growth in human development over this time.⁽¹⁾ This progress also highlights the Saudi Government's focus on human security, as the corresponding beneficial effects on human development have become increasingly evident.

However, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was one of the few Arab countries that was relatively unaffected by the Arab Spring. In fact, Saudi Arabia did not experience any disruption or protests which might have called its legitimacy or stability into question. Thus, Saudi Arabia maintained its power to influence the Islamic World, and the Saudi Kingdom maintained its major role at both national and international levels. The Kingdom's influence over the Islamic World is largely due to its status as the cradle of Islam—a religion with approximately 1.9 billion adherents—and which is also the official religion of the state. According to article 1 of the Saudi Basic Law of Governance, issued by Royal decree No. A/90 of 1st March 1992:

“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab Islamic State. Its religion is Islam. Its constitution is Almighty God's Book, The Holy Qur'an, and the Sunna (Traditions) of the Prophet (PBUH). Arabic is the language of the Kingdom. The City of Riyadh is the capital”

According to the latest statistics conducted by the International Monetary Fund,⁽²⁾ Saudi Arabia represents over 20% of the combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Middle East-North Africa region and an estimated quarter of the Arab World's GDP.⁽³⁾ Logically, this makes Saudi Arabia a very influential member of the G20, which was highlighted for example at the G20 Summit in Riyadh 2020.⁽⁴⁾

At the G20 Summit, one of the main topics was human security and this was unsurprising given the role played by Saudi Arabia and the

(1) Paulo Conceição, *Human Development Report 2023/2024*, (United Nations Development Programme 2024) 14-19.

(2) This is an international organisation responsible to enhancing prosperity and sustainable economic growth.

(3) *The Future of the Global Muslim Population*, (Pew Research Centre 2011), <<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2011/01/27/the-future-of-the-global-muslim-population/>>

(4) This is an intergovernmental forum consisting of nineteen sovereign states, the African Union and the European Union.

fact that Islam advocates for the preservation and implementation of security within societies. At this virtual summit, the G20 leaders expressed their serious and strong intention to promote global solidarity and foster multilateral cooperation to restore economic growth and strengthen the economy by creating employment opportunities following the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and construct a more resilient future—all of which is underpinned by the need for human security.

As a result of this, the Saudi government adopted strategies based on the two main pillars of national security and international security which sought to promote human security. Firstly, with regards to national security, this included a focus on laws, especially their just application in the furtherance of social justice and an emphasis on promoting social coherence. Islamic principles clearly play a developmental and central role in achieving this.

In order to achieve security within a society, it is essential to have just laws which all, regardless of status or power or wealth, are obliged to follow without exceptions, while also respecting the rights of the individual and achieving social justice by facilitating access to healthcare, housing, and employment.⁽¹⁾ Indeed, this is corroborated by public confidence in the government, which contributes to social cohesiveness. According to statistics, Saudi Arabia has topped the "Trust Report 2024" index, which measures levels of trust and credibility between the government and citizens, achieving 86%, a 5% increase over 2023 — an indicator that confirm with the Saudi Vision 2030 led by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.⁽²⁾

Thus, if the same human rights are granted to all individuals without exception and laws are applied justly and fully, then this promotes peace, stability and societal wellbeing. For human security to be successfully maintained, the role of authority and sovereignty is crucial. Indeed, sovereignty provides states with the power to exercise

(1) Ebrahim Falleh and Zakaria Rostami, "Security in Quran and Narratives" (2020) *Advances in Natural and Applied Science* 568, 568-569

(2) Ayman Hasan, *About Saudi Arabia's Ranking in the Global Public Confidence Index*. (2024, August 6) Retrieved from Al-Watan: <
<https://sabq.org/saudia/q2ez2pckzy> >

legitimate control over all the policies, rules and laws. States are obliged to protect and respect the human rights of all individuals under their jurisdiction, and thus such power must be exercised to protect human security and to defend against any threat posed to it. In the context of Saudi Arabia, the relation between international accountability and state sovereignty for maintaining human security reflects both limits and progress. While Saudi Arabia keeps powerful control over its national political and legal order, invoking sovereignty as a substance norm, its obligations under Vision 2030 and ratified conventions refer to its openness to universal standards on human rights and security. Yet, accountability techniques remain constrained by state prioritisation of sovereignty and non-interference, which could create a gap between the national application of human security and international expectations.⁽¹⁾

However, the Saudi Government has made significant efforts to improve human security in all its different dimensions. For example, if we look at food security the Saudi government has adopted a two-fold approach: on the one hand, it has encouraged and promoted local food production; on the other, it has invested heavily in international supply chains to guarantee that the population has widespread access to key commodities not produced at the local level.

The Saudi Agricultural Development Fund, established in 1963 by a royal decree, has played a crucial role in ensuring food security by supporting agricultural activities in Saudi Arabia and by providing local farmers with loans.⁽²⁾ Of particular note are the provisions made by the Saudi Minister of Health to ensure that patients with wheat allergies (Celiac) are provided with gluten-free food free of charge.⁽³⁾ This is significant given the high price and scarcity of gluten-free flour and demonstrates the Saudi government's concern for the wellbeing of its society.

(1) Ian Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law*, (Oxford University Press 2012) 44-47.

(2) Khaled Al-Oud, *Investing in Our Future: Saudi Arabia's Move Towards Health Security*. (2024, February 12) Retrieved from Riyadh Daily: <<https://alriyadhdaily.com/article/b0178a602a17484691ad4843d5568fb5>>

(3) Issued by Royal Decree No. 35395 in 2016.

This same concern is also clear when it comes to health security. The Saudi Government is committed to providing accessible health services to individuals without discrimination and has introduced health laws and regulations to ensure this. It adopts various social programs that underscore the Kingdom's focus on health security and fairness in delivering services to all citizens.

For instance, according to the Council of Ministers Resolution No. (167), Date: 12/07/1421 H, the government has approved a regularity document that regulate the expenses of Saudi patients, and their companions referred for treatment outside their areas of residence. This means the Saudi government covers an allowance for patients and their companions, providing a round-trip ticket for both, and issues medical decisions for treatment abroad. The Ministry of Health also handles all prescribed expenses, identifies appropriate treatment facilities, and disburses funds to both the patient and the companion for services rendered outside Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, Saudi efforts in this area are remarkable especially in the wake of the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is worth mentioning here to the Kingdom's decision to make the vaccine available free of charge to all residents of the Kingdom, including citizens, foreigners, and even those violating residency laws, regardless of color, race, nationality, or any other human difference. This initiative reflects the humanitarian commitment of the Kingdom to ensuring health security.⁽¹⁾

In this respect, the Saudi government has adopted a holistic infection prevention strategy to save people's lives by fostering health research and by training healthcare professionals. Moreover, the government is taking decisive measures to increase Saudi Arabia's capacity to deal with future national crises and mitigate the potential damage of future health emergencies, and thus safeguard the health of its society. This focus on improving the health security of the KSA aligns perfectly with the goals of the Saudi Vision 2030.

Turning to environmental security, Saudi Arabia is regarded internationally as one of the leading countries in the global green

(1) *Minister of Health: King Orders Free Treatment for Coronavirus*, (Saudi Press Agency 2020) < <https://www.spa.gov.sa/2052997> >

movement, thanks to two initiatives in particular: The Saudi Green Initiative, that aims to rehabilitate degraded lands and plant 10 billion trees, and the Middle East Green Initiative -a regional effort led by Saudi Arabia- that aims to improve the quality of life by addressing regional environmental challenges.⁽¹⁾

In addition, Saudi Arabia has issued an Environment Law in 2020⁽²⁾ which aims to protect and develop the environment, prevent pollution, and regulate the environmental sector and its related services and activities. According to Article 38 of this law, punishments for violators of this law can range from fines not exceeding 20,000,000 riyals, to suspension of licenses/permits for time not exceeding six months, and even the cancellation of licenses/permits.

In the area of political security, clear progress has been made. This includes the election of representative officials and the establishment of the *Bay'ah* Council, an Islamic term which refers to the oath of allegiance to a leader. This follows the tradition of the prophet *Mohammed* who introduced this process to guarantee a smooth succession. In addition, the discussion of various social, cultural and educational issues has been encouraged and promoted, with the media playing a crucial role in bringing key issues to public attention. The media also encourages participation from a broad range of contributors expressing different viewpoints. The King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue, founded in Saudi Arabia in 2003, has played a major role in this regard. The center aims to contribute to the Saudi Vision 2030 by promoting a culture of dialogue and tolerance among all segments of society, in a way that fulfills public interests while preserving national unity.

Additionally, Saudi Arabia has made sustained progress in personal security. According to the International Security Indicators, a non-governmental organisation responsible for conducting research on global security issues, Saudi Arabia ranked first among the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council,⁽³⁾ in terms

(1) *Environmental Protection in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. (2024). Retrieved from aboutksa: < www.my.gov.sa >

(2) Issued by Royal Decree No. M/165.

(3) This is one of the main organs of the United Nations and is responsible of ensuring international security and peace.

of how safe citizens feel while walking alone at night. In fact, the Kingdom is also ranked first among the G20 countries.⁽¹⁾ This could be attributed to the robust laws which are implemented in Saudi society. Moreover, in terms of addressing data protection challenges and in compliance with international data protection standards, the Personal Data Protection Law 2023 (PDPL) was implemented in Saudi Arabia.

With regard to economic security, while working towards the goals of Saudi Vision 2030, the Saudi government has implemented several projects to enhance the quality of life and offer economic opportunities for its citizens. This has been achieved by diversifying the economy, positioning Saudi Arabia as a centre of technological innovation and entertainment, and encouraging tourism through the creation of world-class destinations. Furthermore, the Saudi government has launched the *Hafiz* -Searching for Employment Programme- that provides employment support services and financial assistance to facilitate the job search process.

Turing to Community security, which refers to the individual's sense of belonging to a group or a society with no conflicts and discrimination, the Saudi government is keen to eliminate all forms of racism by promoting justice and equality in accordance with the Islamic principles. According to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud:

“The state's systems are integrated in preserving rights, achieving justice, guaranteeing freedom of expression, confronting the causes and reasons for division, and preventing discrimination. There is no difference between one citizen and another, or between one region and another. The citizens of the nation are equal in rights and duties. The Basic Law of Governance stipulates that the state shall protect human rights in accordance with Islamic law”.⁽²⁾

Also, according to article 8 of the Saudi Basic Law of Governance: “Governance in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on justice, shura (consultation) and equality according to Islamic *Sharia*”

(1) *Saudi Arabia is the "Safest" Among the G20 Countries*. (2025, February 11). Retrieved from Asharq Al-Awsat Newspaper: < <https://aawsat.com/>>

(2) *King Salman: There is No Difference Between One Citizen and Another, Nor Between One Region and Another*. (2015, May 20). Retrieved from Asharq Al-Awsat: < <https://aawsat.com/home/article/364921/>>

As well as addressing different concerns that could threaten human security on the national level, Saudi Arabia is also committed to safeguarding its international security. The Saudi government continuously works to strengthen relationships and alliances in the region and beyond, while assisting other countries in maintaining stability.⁽¹⁾ Saudi Arabia has ratified various international conventions to protect human rights and preserve human security. Examples include the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Since its establishment in 2015, The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) has provided humanitarian assistance to more than one hundred countries worldwide. Indeed, the Saudi government believes that consolidating peace and resolving all longstanding conflicts through peaceful means is the key to maintaining human security. This peace could only be achieved through mutual cooperation between countries, built on dialogue and trust.

It is worth noting in this domain that the United Nations emphasises the need for human security to create a world free from want, indignity and fear. The UN recognises that this requires the harnessing of both resources and expertise from different stakeholders including civil society, governments, local communities and private sectors. The application of human security demands comprehensive and integrated responses to address deficits in development and peace.

From the UN perspective, prevention is the essential objective of human security. The root causes of vulnerabilities and potential threats to human security must be proactively addressed, and prompt action must be taken to prevent harmful situations from developing. At the same time, this must be done through measures that enhance social cohesion and respect and protect human rights.⁽²⁾

This is why the United Nations is working closely with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), which aligns with

(1) AlFaisal, HRH Prince Turki, A Saudi National Security Doctrine for the Next Decaded.

(2) *United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security*. (n.d.). (What is Human Security?) < <https://www.un.org/humansecurity/what-is-human-security/> >

Saudi Vision 2030, to enhance human security by addressing development challenges and expanding inclusive opportunities.

While this collaboration reflects a broader global effort to promote sustainable peace and dignity, Saudi Arabia, at both national and local levels, has demonstrated a firm commitment to advancing human security. This is evident through the integration of human rights principles into public policy, the provision of universal access to basic services, the promotion of gender equality, and the implementation of comprehensive social protection systems. Moreover, the Kingdom's engagement with international mechanisms and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals underscore its strategic orientation towards building a society where dignity, well-being, and peace are protected for all.

Thus, Saudi Arabia presents a model of how national development priorities can be harmonized with global human security objectives⁽¹⁾. It is therefore clear that Saudi Arabia is deeply committed to protecting human security both at a national and international levels.

CONCLUSION

Human security is about securing the interests of individuals in a way that guarantees their protection from potential threats. In addition, it means securing their basic rights and needs free from fear, want and indignity.

Human security faces many risks and challenges in today's world, such as a wide range of threats and the need to prioritise strategic development objectives. These threats range from internal conflicts and crises, such as dealing with widespread illegal immigration to threats to the safety of a country's citizens, such as armed conflicts and acts of violence, for example, discrimination based on race, colour or religion. All these threats pose a clear danger to peace, the preservation of human rights, and security at both international and national levels.

Fundamentally, a government's ability to maintain human security inevitably affects the level of human development that can occur, and

(1) *How the UN is supporting The Sustainable Development Goals in Saudi Arabia*, (United Nations 2025) < <https://saudiarabia.un.org/en/sdgs> >

ultimately, the wellbeing, stability, and happiness of any given society or group. As discussed, there is an overlapping relationship between human rights and human security, where the existence of one requires the existence of the other. To achieve human security and stability, it is necessary to establish a culture of peace, tolerance, and respect for human rights.

The paper also explored the connection between human security, human rights, and the United Nations, as well as to the dimensions of human security. As a case study, the Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 is seen as one of the biggest successes of the century and meets many of the standards for human security and human rights. The government's focus on addressing all the dimensions of human security has led to a corresponding improvement in human development, as evidenced by the Human Development Index referenced earlier. The measures and policies adopted by the Saudi government in these areas have proven successful according to internationally accepted metrics, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia appears well-positioned continue making great steps towards building a better future for its society as Vision 2030 evolves and beyond.

FINDINGS

The main findings of the study are:

- a. Human development has become a key factor in ensuring overall security and the effective functioning of society. Equally, as demonstrated, substantial human development cannot be achieved without sufficient human security. They are, as noted previously, inter-dependent. It appears to be a universal human truth that there is a fundamental human need for security, where basic physical needs, such as food, water, and freedom from harm must be met.
- 2- There is a desire to live in a society where the various dimensions of human security are appropriately addressed, and where people can safely exercise their basic rights.

- 3- It is normal for governments to take all necessary measures to achieve human security for their societies. This may be different depending on factors such as the stability of the state and the level of its political, social, and economic progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROMOTING THE RIGHT TO HUMAN SECURITY

- 1- It is essential to share Saudi Arabia's experience in promoting, particularly through the achievements of Saudi Vision 2030, which includes many valuable lessons that other countries can benefit from. This broader perspective also highlights the progress that has been made in many areas of human rights in general.
- 2- The necessity of dealing with human security as a basic and primary requirement for building the foundations of development in the society.
- 3- The necessity of understanding the multiple aspects and dimensions of human security and transforming them into initiatives and actions.
- 4- The importance of adopting different policies by governments to maintain human security within society. This may be achieved by establishing priorities and mechanisms to address the structural challenges and obstacles facing the country. However, all components associated with the concept of human security must be taken into consideration.
- 5- The necessity of enhancing human security by focusing on the risks that threaten this right and limit the opportunities of human development and progress.
- 6- The necessity of building strategies and programs that focus on enhancing and empowering people's capabilities to confront the various threats and challenges they face, and to take the initiative in developing and nurturing the components and foundations of development.

BIBLIOGRAPHY**Primary Sources****Islamic Legal Texts**

Holy Qur'an

Books

- 1- Al-Bukhaari , M. (1968). *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*.
- 2- Brownlie, I. (2012). *Principles of Public International Law*. Oxford University Press.
- 3- Bashayreh, M. (2024). *Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, Shariah, and Contemporary Legal Trends: The Transformative Power of Law in Guiding Reforms*. Revival Press.
- 4- Ishtiaq, I and Adams I, "Human Security in a Globalised World: Concepts and Issues for the Muslim World" In *Human Security and Philanthropy: Islamic Perspectives and Muslim Majority Country Practices*, (Springer 2015)
- 5- Viljoen, F. (2012). *International human rights law in Africa*. Oxford University Press.

Journal Articles

- 1- Azroual, Y. (2016). Human Security: A Theoretical Study. *Cultural Dialogue Journal*, 199.
- 2- Falleh , E., & Rostami, Z. (2020). Security in Quran and Narratives. *Advances in Natural and Applied Science*, 568-569.
- 3- Fouad, H. (2020). Human Security: Concept, Relations and Dimensions. *National Criminal Journal*, 13.
- 4- Migdad, A. (2020). Human Security: An Islamic Worldview . *Journal of Human Security Studies*, 21.
- 5- Muchtar, A. I. (2022). The Rights of Non-Muslims in an Islamic State: A Literature Review. *TAJDID*, 110-111.

Online Sources

- 1- *The Future of the Global Muslim Population*. (2011, January 27). Retrieved from Pew Research Centre:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2011/01/27/the-future-of-the-global-muslim-population/>

- 2- *Environmental Protection in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. (2024). Retrieved from aboutksa: www.my.gov.sa
- 3- *How the UN is supporting The Sustainable Development Goals in Saudi Arabia*. (2025). Retrieved from United Nations: <https://saudiarabia.un.org/en/sdgs>
- 4- *Minister of Health: King Orders Free Treatment for Coronavirus*. (2020, March 30). Retrieved from Saudi Press Agency: <https://www.spa.gov.sa/2052997>
- 5- *United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security*. (n.d.). Retrieved from What is Human Security?: <https://www.un.org/humansecurity/what-is-human-security/>

International Treaties and Resolutions

- 1- The 1966 United Nations, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- 2- The 1966 United Nations, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- 3- The 1986 United Nations, Declaration on the Right to Development
- 4- The 1948 United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- 5- The 2012 United Nations, General Assembly Resolution 66/290

Secondary Sources

International Reports

- 1- Conceição, P. (2024). *Human Development Report 2023/2024*. United Nations Development Programme.
- 2- UNDP. (1994). *Human Development Report*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 3- UNDP. (2022). *Human Development Report: New Dimensions of Human Security*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.
- 4- *World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development*. (2022, May 21). Retrieved from United Nations: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/cultural-diversity-day>

Journalistic Reports and Opinion Articles

- 1- AlFaisal, H. P. (2011). A Saudi National Security Doctrine for the Next Decaded.
- 2- Al-Oud, K. (2024, February 12). *Investing in Our Future: Saudi Arabia's Move Towards Health Security*. Retrieved from Riyadh Daily:
<https://alriyadhdaily.com/article/b0178a602a17484691ad4843d5568fb5>
- 3- Hasan, A. (2024, August 06). *About Saudi Arabia's Ranking in the Global Public Confidence Index*. Retrieved from Sabaq:
<https://sabq.org/saudia/q2ez2pckzy>
- 4- *King Salman: There is No Difference Between One Citizen and Another, Nor Between One Region and Another*. (2015, May 20). Retrieved from Asharq Al-Awsat:
<https://aawsat.com/home/article/364921/>
- 5- Maashi, H. (2022, November 20). *82% Tolerance Rate Among Saudis*. Retrieved from Al-Watan:
<https://www.alwatan.com.sa/article/1116386>
- 6- *Saudi Arabia is the "Safest" Among the G20 Countries*. (2025, February 11). Retrieved from Asharq Al-Awsat Newspaper:
<https://aawsat.com/>
- 7- *What is the penalty for racism in Saudi Arabia?* (2024). Retrieved from Rami: <https://ramilawyer.sa/>