The RITRE Corporation (RITRE) is pleased to provide this white paper offering research concepts, and new ideas that we have been working with which may be of broader use with regards to advancing knowledge in the area of measuring current and evolving events and phenomena relevant to national security. Our input is specifically based on a process that we have been engaged in globally in collaborations with researchers around the world for over 20 years with first-hand experience in the Rochester, NY community and as related to the challenges facing the inner city community.

RITRE is a privately held company engaged in engineering services using remote sensing analytics enabled by the use of geographical information systems technologies with keen interest in the application of these technologies to the development of social entrepreneurship and the synergy between traditional national technical means technologies and the application of new methods based on fostering the to the evolving threat environment.

This paper outlines at the macro and micro level, in sectors of the City of Rochester, NY the trends and information that we analyze to develop markers for critical events and phenomena to anticipate change and modeled behaviors of relevance to the well-being and security of the residents of the City. These methods and results are a microcosm of the issues on a macro scale which will have direct relevance to the issue of national and global security.

This paper identifies advances and accomplishments and addresses standing questions while presenting new lines of investigation and the range of disciplines that need to be involved to make substantial progress. We call out central questions that are ripe for answering and areas where there is untapped discovery potential as well as potential benefits for advancing fundamental knowledge in building analytic capacity to address national security challenges.

When viewing National or Global security, our principles begin with the view that the overarching objective of our efforts is to contribute to the construction of a more peaceful and just global order and that the foundation for such an order is the principle of the oneness of humankind—a principle expressed in the interdependence of the members of the humanity.

> *"The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established." ("Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh", p. 286)*

This interdependence is now struggling to find expression in all arenas of human endeavor—social, intellectual, artistic, and moral, to name but a few. At this time, the essential work involved in bringing this vision forward revolves around themes that can both be fostered as well as measured in a cycle of continuous improvement which constitute the focus of our work at this time. We see each of them as intimately connected to one another—progress in one supports progress in the others. And together, they advance the overarching goal of peace.

The means of contributing to the building of a more just society as the underpinning of National and Global Security must be consistent with the ends and efforts to bring about unity of vision and to foster greater collaboration must be accomplished through means that are, in themselves, collaborative and unifying. In global cultures too often marked by divisiveness and partisanship, we seek to stimulate genuine conversation and collective reflection on some of the most challenging issues facing humanity. We feel that this mode of collaboration and mutual learning generates knowledge and engenders solidarity and understanding.

We have sought to contribute the perspectives and experiences of a community under study as to the discourse on the first theme of gender equality and measure efforts to support protecting the rights and promoting the well-being of women and girls working closely with civil society to create more effective and coherent gender equality mechanisms.

> *"The equality of women and men is not a condition whose effects will be limited to half of the world's population. Its operationalization will revolutionize all facets of human society[1]."*

[1]*Toward a New Discourse on Religion and Gender Equality Statement of the Bahá'í International Community*

The second theme focuses on human rights which achieve their highest expression when understood in the context of human relationships—within the family, the community, the nations and among the

community of nations. Viewed through this lens, human rights are a vehicle for all to realize their inherent potential and to ensure the same for others. The promotion and protection of human rights focuses on the promotion on the rights of minorities, on the eradication of racism and incitement to hatred, on the rights of girls and women, and on the right of freedom of religion or belief. Among the questions we examine how the fulfilment of minority rights benefit all of humanity and how the right to freely explore the beliefs of others is best manifested in religious communities.

Within the third theme our group studies what actually characterizes a flourishing community as well as how the capacity for social development can be released in growing numbers of participants so that the efforts of individuals, communities, and institutions can be best integrated to achieve tangible progress and security. We have seen that some 70 years after development became a global project, formidable challenges—material, moral, and social—face the international community. One such challenge is the failure to enlist the constructive potential of billions of individuals who have traditionally been excluded from the global development agenda and become significant agitators and risk factors to global and national security. In order to advance the common good, individuals must possess both the capacity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of existing social structures and the freedom to choose between participating in those structures, working to reform them, or endeavoring to build new ones. Working at the community level, we strive to build capacity on larger and larger scales, enabling people everywhere to become protagonists of development. Central to these efforts is the principle that humanity is but one people where within such a context, development ceases to be something one group of people does for the benefit of another and instead, all individuals, whether materially rich or poor, young or old, man or woman, engage in a common enterprise of development. All work shoulder to shoulder to contribute to the well-being of the whole.

Our fourth theme is around how young people everywhere are known for their idealism, energy, and purity of heart while at the same time, youth must contend with the forces of materialism that are so prevalent in society today. Youth are the future but they are also very much present now, as significant actors in our communities, workplaces, and global spaces today and we can measure the way they understand themselves, their capacities, and their role in society and therefore the significant social consequences. The involvement of youth is a component critical to the well-being of all of humankind, young and old alike and the qualities of youth can be enlisted in the processes of community building and social transformation by encouraging them along a path of selfless service to others equipped with training in the moral and intellectual capacities that can best guide them. Our team has been exploring these questions in villages and neighborhoods around the world as well as in our community and a promising area has been the development of upcoming generations, where teenagers are learning how to help those younger than themselves develop the personal capacities and attitudes needed to contribute to social progress and foster the participation of youth in international spaces.

The fifth theme is around how most people around the world today would readily agree that life includes both elements of the material and dimensions of the human spirit. The idea that important realities lie outside of only the physical world is central to numerous traditions and unless the development of society finds a purpose beyond the mere amelioration of material conditions, it will fail of attaining its desired goals. The idea that human reality has both a spirit and a material dimension inform efforts to promote the common good and helps to guide how resources can be brought to bear on the human aspects of challenges ranging from apathy and prejudice to hunger and material poverty. These are questions that we are actively exploring, eager to learn with others how the principles found in all the world's traditions and religions can be applied to the modern world. We seek to understand how something that many see as a fundamental truth–that the reality of the reality of the human spirit is central to human existence–can help everyone participate in building a better world. In this endeavor, we work with a wide variety of interfaith collaborators and also convene small group discussions and other events for this purpose.

The sixth theme is around how our group works for the betterment of society where we particularly focus on monitoring conditions of religious freedom so that residents can strive to contribute where possible to the peaceful development of their country free from government influences that can block progress at every turn because of religious beliefs.

As we work to bring these themes to fruition as active and measurable processes we engage with current educational theories and models and finding what is valid and what is inconsistent with the collective reading of reality. For instance, various theories look for the **source of human behavior** and learning in

the cognitive functioning of the brain; others maintain that knowledge is constructed from our social and cultural context. Both approaches have insights that can harmonize with "the fact that reality has both a material and spiritual dimension," but each proposition is being tested in the light of experience.

A conception of understanding helps people see beyond artificial divisions and while encompassing such things as information, reasoning, physical action or mental computation, understanding is not synonymous with any of them. As we advance in understanding there are significant moments of insight that grasp of specific facts and meanings, rather than a measurable series of achievements. The process is more like moving forward along a path that may have milestones but has no predetermined end. The challenge that we face is to learn to engage simultaneously in fostering spiritual qualities and nurturing the understanding of concepts not only belonging to the spiritual realm, but also to the realm of the physical and social sciences, to literature and the arts, to history and political thought. Such an approach dissolves the wall between spiritual and material education and embraces an "expanded rationality" that reads reality and avoids relativism.

Some evidence for the effectiveness of that type of approach is within grasp, especially in the results of the junior youth spirit empowerment program which has been undertaken in Rochester, NY as well as in Colombia South America with thousands of people ages 12–15 in a process of action, reflection, study and consultation, a new picture of "the reality of a human being" at that age range emerged. Many young people have been aided to be agents in their own transformation. Ideals for education foster not only academic learning, but also "***the expansion of consciousness***" with a "deficit thinking" model in U.S. school systems that tend to marginalize poor and minority students, create a "pipeline to prison" and make scapegoats of their parents. Some scholars have advanced an "asset-based" approach that can be seen as asking "How do we mine these gems of inestimable value?" Over the years, efforts to empower youth have resulted in endeavors such as multicultural education, global citizenship education, and most recently humane education, aimed at equipping students to view root causes of social problems and to create solutions. But the need for transformation of individuals and, in turn, of a bankrupt society without looking at transforming hearts as well as minds we may work within existing systems and not pay enough attention to creating new ones perpetuating a trap of hopelessness.