Global Democracy:

Civil Society Visions and Strategies (G05)

May 29-June 1, 2005
Montréal, Québec, Canada

Conference Report

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Introduction

Close to 400 participants from 45 countries gathered in Montréal, Québec, Canada from May 29 to June 1, 2005 for the *Global Democracy: Civil Society Visions and Strategies (G05) Conference.* Participants from civil society organizations—together with representatives of governments, private entities, and intergovernmental organizations—shared civil society perspectives on the key issues that determine the state of global democracy. They discussed how to democratize the international system of governance and developed proposals to tackle the democratic deficit plaguing global governance. They also devised visions and strategies to guide discussions and action leading up to the Millennium +5 Summit hosted by the United Nations in September and other relevant events.

Two background papers provided gist for the discussions. Dr. Rajesh Tandon, President of the FIM (Forum International de Montréal) Board and President of PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) prepared a framing document entitled "Democratization of Global Governance," in which he provided five principles on which civil society actions ought to be based:
- Global institutions and agenda should be subjected to democratic political accountability.
- Democratic policy at the global level requires legitimacy of popular control through representative and direct mechanisms.
- Citizen participation in decision making at global levels requires equality of opportunity to all citizens of the world.
- Multiple spheres of governance, from local to provincial to national to regional and global, should mutually support democratization of decision making at all levels.
- Global democracy must guarantee that global public goods are equitably accessible to all citizens of the world.

In the other background paper, "Promising Visions and Strategies to Advancing Global Democracy: Policy Brief," James V. Riker addressed emerging trends in global democratic governance. He proposed questions through which to assess the main possibilities for enhancing democratic participation, empowerment, and governance during the opening-day discussion panel.

Participants considered the viability of these and other possibilities throughout the conference in plenaries and breakout sessions that touched on the major crosscutting themes for advancing global democracy in G05's following six tracks:
- Track 1: Civil society engagement: Changing territorial priorities?
- Track 2: International treaties/International law: A hierarchy of values?
- Track 3: Global security: Undermining democracy?
- Track 4: Civil society participation; Opportunities and responsibilities
- Track 5: How to democratically regulate the global economy?
- Track 6: Maintaining cultural diversity in global solidarity?

In addition, papers were presented within the self-organized workshops.

This report is the result of a collective effort by conference reporters and volunteers. Their work has been combined to produce a report that highlights the varied discussions and themes of the conference, and reflects its participatory nature.

Listed below are the G05 Organizers:

1) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Cândido Grzybowski, Brazil
- Nigel Martin, Canada
- Katarina Sehm Patomäki, Finland
- Rajesh Tandon, India
- Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki , Kenya

2) PROGRAMME COMMITTEE:

Track Coordinators

- Ziad Abdel Samad, Lebanon (Track 1)
- Kristin Dawkins, USA (Track 5)
- Jagadananda, India/South Africa (Track 4)
- Gustavo Marin, France (Track 3)
- Seán Ó Siochrú, Ireland (Track 6)
- María Fernanda Tuozzo, Japan (Track 2)

Representatives from Key Constituencies

- Gemma Adaba, USA (Labour sector)
- Nebiyat Woldemichael, Eritrea, USA (Parliamentarian sector)
- Jacques Jobin, Canada (Local Government sector)
- George Khoury, Canada (Corporate sector)
- Victoria Tauli-Corpus, Philippines (Indigeneous peoples'sector)

Collaborative Partner

- James Riker, Project: "Democratic Approaches to Global Governance"; The Democracy Collaborative, University of Maryland, USA

3) G05 SECRETARIAT - MONTRÉAL INTERNATIONAL FORUM (FIM)

- Mario Lavoie, Director
- Aude Lecointe, G05 Coordinator
- Despina Sourias, Project Officer
- Catherine Geoffroy, Senior Advisor
- Christian Major, Senior Financial Officer

Part 1: Opening Plenary Sessions

Welcome

Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki

G05 Executive Committee Member and FIM Board Member; Executive Director, African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Kenya

Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki opened the plenary with a brief review of recent events that have had an impact on democracy. She described how the 1990s were the decade of multilateral agreements and post-GATT agreements. Since then, civil society's engagement has become stronger and international bodies have attempted to respond to its critiques.

While the Forum International de Montréal (FIM) was originally very sector-specific and interested primarily in participation mechanisms for civil society, over time it became more and more interested in the multilateral system as a whole. The events of 9/11 exposed weaknesses in the multilateral system, and pointed to the need to reform the United Nations.

In closing, Wanyeki suggested that the G05 Conference was meant to "provide an autonomous space to develop our vision and strategies to achieve true democracy across the board."

Nigel Martin

G05 Executive Committee Member and President-CEO of FIM, Canada

Nigel Martin told the group that the objective of the conference is not to end with a consensus but rather to end with a vision. He outlined how the conference would unfold, with panel sessions, mini-plenaries, and workshops to identify visions and strategies.

The G05 is not an isolated event, Martin pointed out. This year, 2005, is an important year for governance, with the Millennium+5 Summit in New York and the World Trade Organization meeting in Hong Kong.

Rajesh Tandon

Chair of the G05 Executive Committee and FIM's Board of Directors; Founding President of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), India ; Member of the Civil Society Advisory Committee, Commonwealth Foundation, UK

Rajesh Tandon told the group that the G05 Conference takes place at a "moment of history." The nuclear non-proliferation treaty deliberations had ended the day before in disarray and Europe as a governance institution and the European Constitution were the object of a referendum in France.

He explained that the social, human, and economic agenda decisions made in the 1990s have not been implemented because of ineffective enforcement mechanisms, particularly at the UN level. Most governments (particularly those in rich countries) of the world have reneged on their commitments, especially in environment and development. In addition, the proliferation of agreements and regimes has resulted in confusion and conflict between jurisdictions.

Many people around the world have been living in insecurity for a long time, but this was recognized only after 9/11. The recent discourse on human security has made the world even more insecure, which should not come as a surprise, "as unilateral efforts have never been successful in human history."

In Tandon's opinion, "We witness political leadership at the national level, contesting elections without necessarily having a commitment to democracy." Most citizens of the world have been treated as mere voters, and more efforts are being invested into fixing elections than in engaging citizens. National governments are often run by a few ministers and a "large coterie of unelected officials."

Tandon reiterated the five democratic principles of global governance that emerged from the G02 Conference in 2002:

- Global institutions and agendas should be subjected to democratic political accountability.
- Democratic policy at the global level requires legitimacy of popular control through representative and direct mechanisms.
- Citizen participation in decision making at the global level requires equality of opportunity for all citizens of the world.
- Multiple spheres of governance, from local to provincial to national to regional and global, should mutually support democratization of decision making at all levels.
- Global public goods (peace and security, basic education and health, clean water and air, food, and human rights) should be equitably accessible to all citizens of the world.

He reminded the group that, more than the absence of war, peace is a way of life that includes the respect of diversity. In conclusion, he reminded participants that, throughout history, human beings have risen to the challenge of showing solidarity for strangers and fellow human beings, as shown by the global response to the tsunami a few months earlier.

Opening Panel

Facilitator; Ezra Limiri Mbogori, Reflection and Development Centre for NGOs in Eastern and Southern Africa (MWENGO), Zimbabwe

Key Visions and Questions on How to Advance Global Democracy

Significant democratic deficits limit the participation of citizens and key stakeholders, and affect the capacities of global governance institutions to address critical global issues such as peace and security, human rights, gender justice, eco-development, and ecological sustainability, said **James Riker**, Associate Director, The Democracy Collaborative, University of Maryland, USA.

Based on a policy brief he prepared for G05 entitled "Promising Visions and Strategies to Advancing Global Democracy," Riker outlined some promising opportunities for reforming and transforming existing institutions and possibilities for creating alternative democratic global institutions. Approaches to advancing global democracy range from empowering a global democratic civil society to realizing the democratic potential of parliamentary initiatives and building democratic linkages among the local, national, regional, and global levels.

Riker described key deficits affecting the possibility for democratic participation by citizens and stakeholders at the global level. These include the following:

- **Low citizen awareness and low levels of participation in global governance processes and issues:** The goal should be to increase the quantity of democratic participation, through strategies such as public education and media engagement.

- **Ineffective institutions and processes of global governance:** The quality of participation would be improved by a strategy to deepen the knowledge, skills, and involvement of citizens and stakeholders and enhance the overall discourse and tenor of deliberations.

- **Significant inequalities and disparities in social structures:** It is vital to increase the quality of democratic participation, diversify stakeholders, and ensure access to those who have been marginalized, disenfranchised, and disempowered.

- **Lack of institutional capacity for sustained action on global governance issues:** The aim would be to increase the sustainability of democratic participation by creating an enabling environment that removes barriers and fosters sustained participation in democratic governance, the development of partnerships across sectors, and global citizenship and solidarity.

Key deficits can be found within global governance institutions, which are limited in transparency, participation, representation, and democratic decision-making processes. Many global governance institutions have few formal provisions for citizen consultation or parliamentary oversight. There is an urgent need for a democratic mechanism for accountability and alternative participatory processes at global level, Riker said.

Democratic deficits within global governance institutions include lack of responsiveness and effectiveness, government inaction on key issues, deficit of resources, and a vision deficit.

While there is no universally accepted definition of global democracy, Riker suggested that it describes economic, political, and cultural rights and influence for the majority of the world's people over the local and global issues that affect their lives. Strategies for civil society to enhance democracy include the following:

- **Democratic participation:** Citizens and key stakeholders actively engage individually and collectively in the economic, political, and cultural activities of a broad range of organizations, networks, social movements, and governance institutions. Inclusion, accessibility, broad representation, and fora for consultation are vital.

- **Democratic empowerment:** There is a need to improve equality and representation, diversity, and democratic knowledge and deliberation.

- **Democratic governance:** There is a need for open and transparent decision-making processes, equalization of power, and democratization of authority relations.

1) Empowering a Democratic Civil Society: The World Social Forum (WSF) and Other Major Civil Society Initiatives

Globalization has not come with global democracy, and in many cases has worked against democratic principles, said **Cândido Grzybowski**, Director, Instituto Brasileiro de Análises sociais e economicas (IBASE) and a member of the World Social Forum. The task for civil society is to rebuild globalization processes according to "democratic" principles. One of the positive outcomes of globalization has been that regions are more interdependent and, despite the tensions and differences, the enhanced collective energy can be harnessed to confront the negative aspects of globalization.

Grzybowski described a divide between economy and society, with politicians who impose technocratic modes of production that disregard inequities. However, the reality is that markets are more important than the needs of the people and any other rights in the world. The 2005 Global Democracy Conference fills an important gap by bringing together a diversity of people to network, develop strategies, and transform ideas into policies and practices, he said.

For civil society and the World Social Forum, the strategic point of reference in developing a new model of globalization is the democratic principles and values that allow diversity among regions and parts of the world. Globalization processes must expand beyond the focus on production to encompass social welfare and sustainable socio-economic processes. International institutions need to be reformed to respect local autonomies, and be more democratic and accountable to principles of democratic global governance. There must be space created for convergence and the development of

solutions to global problems and inequities. The challenge for civil society is to believe that it is possible to defeat the neo-liberal ideology, he concluded.

2) Democratizing the Global Economy and Global Governance: Rethinking the Roles of Multilateral Institutions, Rules, and Key Actors at the Global Level

As a starting point, it is important to define what is meant by democracy, said **Jan Aart Scholte** of the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick. Democracy can encompass rule by the people, and principles of liberty, collectivity, equality, autonomy, choice, transparency, responsibility, and accountability. Global democracy, on the other hand, could mean democracy that exists everywhere in the world, democracy operating in relation to a global *demos*, or democratic decision making in relation to global problems. It is important to define terms such as global citizenship, global community, and global democracy.

Global democracy should not be narrowly conceived in terms of global governance institutions and their democratization, because much of the regulation and governance of global affairs and problems that affect the global *demos* actually happens outside those global governance institutions, Scholte said. He pointed to a number of global governance and regulatory institutions operating on a global scale in the private sphere, such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, International Accounting Standards Board, and the International Securities Market Association. In this context, governance is not a public-sector jurisdiction, though it involves making rules that affect the public's lives.

Scholte described a number of democratic deficits that hamper the democratization of the governance of global affairs:

- **Citizen ignorance:** Citizen and public education are important; many civil society groups are effective in increasing public awareness but more work needs to be done at the grassroots level.

- **Institutional failures:** Decision-making processes need to be participatory, transparent, and accountable.

- **Structural inequalities:** Structural inequalities must be addressed. Global structures should give people equal opportunities to be engaged in the political process regardless of race, class, gender, faith and culture, place of residence, disability, etc.

There are different strategies for confronting these deficits, Scholte said. The conformist approach favours the status quo. The rejectionist approach is outright anti-globalization, with the desire to unravel global flows of communications, finance, etc. down to the local level. The reformist strives to work within the general social structures of Western capitalism. Finally, the transformist approach focuses on creating a new social order for global democracy.

3) Realizing the Democratic Potential of Parliamentary Initiatives: National, Regional, and Global Possibilities

The French referendum on the European Union (EU) Constitution demonstrates the difficult challenges related to transnational democracy, according to **Heidi Hautala**, Member of Parliament of Finland and former member of European Parliament. "The French are actually now realizing that their government and parliament have transferred a lot of competencies to supra-institutions such as the European Union, without actually explaining what those competencies are and how the EU is affecting their lives," she said. "Globalization has also meant that things have become more complex and there is confusion because it's hard to understand who is responsible, and who is guilty, for what."

Regional blocks will play an important role in democracy. While there are dreams for a global parliament, Hautala suggested that there may be other ways to reach the same objective, such as UN reform.

Hautala discussed the proliferation of parliamentary networks. Civil society's role is to show parliamentarians how to reclaim public policy into a democratic framework. International commissions have proposed establishing global public-policy making bodies to solve global problems that are not being addressed properly—civil society can play a role here.

Civil societies and parliaments share a common goal to monitor governments and international organizations. Introducing new rights-based approaches, especially for access to justice, would be valuable in global policy making, Hautala said. For example, the North–South divide in terms of labour rights and environmental standards must be bridged. Parliamentarians and civil society need to work together reclaim public policy making for democratic actors, she concluded.

4) Building Democratic Linkages at the Local, National, Regional, and Global Levels: Identifying Strategic Possibilities for Responsive Democratic Governance

Lalita Ramdas, a community educator involved with Greenpeace India and PRIA, described her personal journey to make linkages between working locally on the west coast of India (the source of her inspiration) and thinking globally. She explained that she had consulted with the women in her village about their message for G05 and their issues were clear: peace, education, shelter, employment, and health. The women pointed out that lack of peace comes from lack of water and other basic needs. "How do you build a truly peaceful democratic polity when that is the situation on the ground?" Ramdas asked.

At the same time, she said, "I do not believe we have any deficit of vision at the local level—maybe at the global or regional level, but certainly not at the local level." The

framework for developing democracy is very much in place, but civil society members need to work together to identify the obstacles on the ground and overcome them. In India, for example, a massive grassroots movement has mobilized to protest against a new forest bill being presented in Indian parliament. Indigenous people who have lived all their lives in the forest have come together and descended on Delhi "This is how you begin to influence public policy," she said.

Parallel Fora: Building Strategies to Achieve Key Civil Society Visions of Global Democracy

In one of four separate fora, participants discussed key questions designed to provoke thinking on strategies to achieve civil society visions of global democracy.

- What strategies offer the best possibilities for achieving global democracy?
- What criteria and signposts should guide civil society action in enhancing global democracy?
- What innovative strategies, processes, and practices will enable civil society to achieve the multifaceted goals that support and advance global democracy?

1) Empowering a Democratic Global Civil Society: The World Social Forum and Other Major Civil Society Initiatives

Facilitator **Thomas Ponniah,** Editor of "Another World is Possible," Harvard University/ The Carold Institute, USA/Canada, began by stressing that the objective was to have an interactive session and reflect on strategies for creating global democracy. He asked the audience to pair up, introduce themselves, and decide on a question or comment they could present to the group. **Cândido Grzybowski** was the resource person for this forum. The discussions included the following questions and comments:

An Exchange on the World Social Forum
How does the World Social Forum reach out to people on both the local and global levels? WSF member Grzybowski described a structure of "fora within fora" that allows for simultaneous debate. But, he added, there are still gaps.

Can the fora result in specific proposals? Which of the WSF's many recommendations have been passed on to the UN or UN agencies? If they haven't been, why not?

Can the forum become the nucleus of a constitutional assembly of the world, and can we make up a new constitution of the world based on ethics? Grzybowski said that fora provided a space for the debates that would address that issue, but it could not become an institution that would instigate it.

Is the forum based on an assumed existence of a global culture? But does such a culture exist, and should it? In countries like Canada, it would be impossible to group all cultures together. Instead, people should be proud of their differences. Grzybowski

explained that he did not want to create a global civil society: his goal was a world where diversity was cultivated.

While there is much talk about the nation-state, about thinking locally and nationally, the challenge is for individuals to reclaim their own sovereignty.

What is the relationship between the forum and the networks of members of parliament working in peace and democracy? There is a forum within the forum where parliamentarians meet. While government authorities often take a closed position, with parliamentarians, there is often a sense of complicity.

How can we promote a more balanced participation from developing countries? How can we promote more transversal communication between fora?

Within the WSF, how are we making bridges to the outside fora, such as the world economic fora? How is it having an impact on them?

How can we work together with the WSF to produce a global vote in one year?

What is the role of government in the WSF? How can it help or hinder progress? Does the WSF have any lessons on how to govern a global polity that could eventually influence governments? There are problematic issues with governments: if a government accepts the WSF, and provides funding, it is inevitable that it will get involved in the conference. But it is important to be open to diversity. The Forum must go to Venezuela, to Arab countries, to China.

Grzybowski stressed the importance of reaching countries (such as Muslim countries, for example) in the face of many false preconceptions. The WSF must negotiate with Muslim countries. They had tried to negotiate with Morocco to see if the Forum could be held there, but negotiations had fallen through.

Civil Society and Governance

How are we defining global civil society? What relationship could be established between governments and civil society organizations at the global level? How can global civil society groups relate the grassroots with the policy sophistication of high-level global institutions such as the World Bank? Is there anything being done to build civil society's capacity to participate, learn new skills, and come to the UN or the World Bank and give recommendations? Even local authorities should be represented at the UN.

In terms of participation in global institutions, Grzybowski answered that he could not speak to that, being more involved in public debates. The problem with organizations such as the UN, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, he argued, was that they are not willing to listen to civil society. No matter how much discussion one has with them, at the end of the day they are there not to listen, but to control.

Global governance is necessary, but it must not entail concentrated power. As it stands, the UN is not really a democratic organization. If the democratic process is to be strengthened, it will be a matter of asking pointed questions. When you vote for someone, what exactly are you delegating him or her to do? Who controls those who

control the means of the democratic process? The best way to work on these questions is to deal with local realities.

In the case of countries where civil rights are either limited or non-existent, what can be done for citizens living in these situations? As much as there is a desire to be inclusive—to involve both civil society and those from the private sector—in the case of regions and countries where there are difficulties (in northern Africa, for example), specific strategies will have to be developed if they are to be included. Should individual identities—based on one's gender or other societal categorizations—be undermined in order to "militate as one big society" in support of Africa?

Parliament and Civil Society

Parliament is part of civil society; parliaments have mandates from their electorate; parliaments are citizens. Yet some parliamentarians feel that they are being usurped by civil society.

Should civil society play a different role in decision-making phases? How can issue-based networks be fostered? How can we establish learning structures to ensure that they address all aspects of the issues they are meant to deal with?

2) Democratizing the Global Economy and Global Governance: Rethinking the Roles of Multilateral Institutions, Rules, and Key Actors at the Global Level

Victoria Elias of the Center for Environment and Sustainable Development "ECO-ACCORD", Russia Federation, facilitated this session. The resource person was **Jan Aart Scholte**.

One participant noted that global governance and democracy were reminiscent of "a chicken and egg scenario." Which comes first? Government and civil society are still pondering definitions; the private sector on the other hand has clear models that govern their activities.

It was suggested that, in order to be effective, civil society needs legitimacy and the power to influence. Consensus is important, since "hundreds of opinions will weaken the movement." Another participant agreed, stating that a lack of a mandate and communication "to the people on the ground" is problematic. If political change to the neo-liberal agenda is to be effected, the current disconnect between the mandate and the people has to be addressed. Everyone's voice is different, said another participant, but each voice can be guided into commonality. This would lead to civil society bringing forward not one but several voices from multiple stakeholders (e.g., Land Mine Treaty negotiations and the World Summit on the Information Society). Another participant reminded the group that people change laws and regulations: civil society has fought several fights, including NAFTA and water rights.

Another participant suggested that civil society shouldn't necessarily have a vote but that their voice should be heard by decision makers before decisions are made. Furthermore,

decisions should be made public so that those affected can understand the issues and respond.

Does government really represent the people? Or the elite? There is no seamless anti-government push, said one participant. There is some conceit on the part of NGOs who think that the more professionalized NGOs are, the quicker the world will change. The moderator added that civil society has a role in monitoring itself as well; newcomers to organizations can provide assistance here.

Scholte reiterated that civil society is asking to open the conversation in order to develop strategies. He suggested that participants think about what civil society wants and how to get there. He also noted that that the very term civil society is problematic; after all, civil society includes the mafia. The term "blurs power struggles within countries and states."

Powerful countries are running IFIs and their directors are chosen without input from others, said one participant. How can this be changed? Another participant agreed, noting that "it all comes back to money." One participant suggested that the IMF is underfunded, with most of its resources borrowed from elsewhere. It is a mere intermediary; were it better funded, the issue of equitable voting rights could be addressed.

"I am not convinced that civil society has a place in IFIs," commented one participant, adding that participation of civil society in institutions like the World Trade Organization has resulted in civil society embodying national interests. When that occurs and the only voice is protectionist, the interest of the people is not served.

During a discussion on the World Bank, another participant pointed out that many global institutions like the World Bank have standards about governance and participation that are not consistently implemented; they need to be held accountable to those. What is participation for? A real fight over equity is looming within institutions like the World Bank. The question is how to work with people within those institutions to ensure equity and governance. Growth in itself does not enhance equity, but equity enhances growth. He invited participants to look at the board of directors of the World Bank. "The most difficult to move are those from our countries," (e.g., India shot down social policies) he explained. Many push agendas that are not in the interest of the people they are supposed to serve. Furthermore, many countries would be able to contribute (e.g., voting rights) at the World Bank if the 1940s outdated formula were changed. China exemplifies the lack of relationship between economic power and representation.

One participant suggested that the questions of transparency are also applicable to civil society organizations and that they should consider applying standards of consultation and reform as well. She saw "too many voices" at the table. This smacks of a lack of efficiency and tolerance in accepting opposite points of view. The North–South power issue needs to be addressed. The former NGO Steering Committee to the UN was an example of an organization with good South/North and gender balance, which abided by a rulebook that equalized the process. This, said the participant, brought smaller groups into the discussion and provided a system of transparency.

Scholte addressed and summarized some of the points raised by participants:

- Can global democracy be found within present systems, or is it necessary to go beyond those? If one buys into the overarching existing structures, one is stuck there. In contrast, those with very different views might "talk past each other."

- Is consensus within civil society possible? "Civil society is a mess and so it should be." The monocultural view associated with neo-liberalism does not apply; an alternative view of global democracies is more appropriate.

- Clearly, in order to speak with legitimacy, civil society needs to be connected to what is happening on the ground.

- There is a problem about access; generally, the stronger voice gets in. "This is about class." It is the middle-class, professional English-speaker's voice that is heard. That being the case, it is "our responsibility to engage and involve others."

During the discussion on local governments, one participant suggested, "I see local governments as natural, strategic allies of civil society." They can offer legitimacy to civil society. More than 70 countries are decentralizing; empowering local authorities is a key area. Furthermore, if democratic processes are not possible at the local level, "how can we pretend for democracy at other levels?" Agreeing that local government and governance are critical to global democracy, a participant remarked that local government isn't immune to social class and institutional biases. Local government structures can be much more discriminatory than nation-states (e.g., Nepal, India, and Bangladesh).

Scholte summarized the key questions put forward in the forum:

1. What strategies offer the best possibility for achieving global democracy?
   - Does one work within the current system, change it entirely, either, or both, and in which proportions?
   - Is democracy acted out at the supra-state, state, or local level (or even further, within the family and household unit) and, if across all levels, in what combination?
   - Which states make the decision? Currently, only the major ones. Does civil society only relate to its states or others that will make an impact?
   - Does democracy stand by itself in this debate? Or should it be reconciled with other goals and what are the boundaries? What democratic processes are leading the way?

2. What criteria and signposts should guide civil society action in enhancing global democracy?
   - One must relate back to the base; the people must be heard and civil society must be accountable to them.
   - The issue of a few vs. an infinite number of goals and objectives need to be addressed.
   - How do civil society actors relate with others in the goal for global democracy (e.g., social movement)? How do they relate with parliament and to the state?
   - Who should civil society work with for fruitful coordination? How about the private sector (they already have a corporate social responsibility framework to work with)?

3. What innovative strategies, processes, and practices will enable civil society to achieve the multi-faceted goals that support and advance global democracy? There was no single answer here since participants had different approaches and ideas.

3) Realizing the Democratic Potential of Parliamentary Initiatives: National, Regional, and Global Possibilities

An approach to global governance that is dynamic and interactive, involving local, regional, national, and international levels, is needed. It should be founded on principles such as ecological development, international justice, and universal access to clean water, health care, and education, said facilitator **Michael Cooke**, the Carold Institute, George Brown College, Canada.

Modern globalization and technological developments have eroded democracy, with the transfer of many democratic powers to experts, often beyond national borders, without conscious decision making, said **Heidi Hautala,** resource person for this forum. The biggest losers are parliament and parliamentarians, who are supposed to be the representatives of the will of the people. It is difficult to speak of global democracy unless there is democracy at the local, regional, and national levels.

Today, representative forms of democracy must be complemented by more direct, participatory forms of democracy, through linkages between elected representatives, civil society organizations (CSOs), and citizens, Hautala said. She suggested that CSOs and parliamentarians suffer from an ongoing democratic deficit and that a federalist model for decision making would give citizens the opportunity to make a difference at all levels.

The past decade has seen the emergence of regional blocks, from Europe to Africa and South America. Citizens generally do not yet understand these new formations. What kind of powers and representation should such regional blocks have in the current system? Parliaments continue to play important roles as defenders of fundamental citizen rights, Hautala maintained. Together with civil society, parliamentarian networks can be an effective watchdog for good governance by governments and international institutions.

Participants identified and debated a number of program priorities:

• **Encouraging more debate in national parliaments**
  Citizens do not really know how decisions are made at regional and international levels; in fact, issues are generally dealt with by executives at the top level. Parliamentarians need to consider issues beyond their national interests and borders.

• **Enhancing capacity building at all levels**
  Intermediate models at the local, regional, national, and sectoral levels would build toward a world parliament structure. There is a need to strengthen knowledge and

practice at all levels and to create a strong foundation for the global structure. This involves capacity building for both parliamentarians and staff.

The way globalization is managed today is undermining democracy everywhere, and the outcomes of the current global system are in the interests of neither the North nor the South. A better system needs to be built from the national level upwards, with a focus on good governance and accountability. Moreover, it is important to distinguish which initiatives work in different contexts.

- **Promoting global democracy at all levels**
  Principles of global democracy must be cultivated among national bodies and international institutions; these principles would then flow down to lower levels. There was some disagreement on whether to focus energies on building global democracy working from the grassroots and strengthening democracy from the local level up to the international, or vice versa. It would be useful to distinguish the initiatives that work in different contexts (e.g., North and South). One suggestion was a dual process that addresses both regional and sectoral issues.

- **Providing sustained support to parliamentary organizations**
  Organizations such as the African Union are facing lack of funding.

- **Facilitating more exchanges among parliamentarians**
  Greater North–South exchanges are especially recommended.

- **Creating better collaboration between parliamentarians and civil society on global democracy**
  Better collaboration is needed among parliamentarians and other stakeholders. Strategies need to be developed to truly connect parliamentarians to civil society and citizen concerns. CSOs and NGOs need to be better represented in international policy-making fora.

  There is a need to identify key programs that are supported by civil society that would make a difference at the international level, provide a means for lobbying parliamentarians, and encourage citizens to sign up in the international registry for an election of a civil society parliament.

  Partnering with governments will also be key. National policy makers must be involved, to ensure governmental support and resources for global democracy initiatives.

  Heidi Hautala noted that the World Bank has initiated a parliament twinning project, which can be a good tool for promoting democracy building and good governance.

- **Providing support to failing states**
  Programs may be nascent or non-existent in failing states.

- **Creating and strengthen parliamentary oversight**
  Parliaments should play a larger role in addressing regional and global issues like ecological security and sustainability, poverty reduction, corruption, citizen engagement. Regional and global approaches to parliamentary oversight are needed.

  Parliamentarian linkages need to be formed with international institutions like the World Bank; once these linkages are in place, stakeholders can work out principles and processes toward realizing global democracy.

- **Developing a global standard for national democracy through greater representation and participation**
  Holding elections does not in itself equate to democracy. It is important to develop a global framework for measuring the degree of democracy in a given country.

  Different assumptions exist regarding the meaning of "parliament." One definition is the elected body that oversees the executive, which in turn holds all the power. Hautala suggested that parliaments are elected by the people, who thereby give them law-making responsibilities. The emphasis was that members are elected, not appointed, to parliament. At the same time, it was noted that parliaments can be partisan. Countries have proven to be reluctant to transfer their elected sovereignty to regional institutions such as the European Union.

  It is important that democracies represent the *demos* in its full diversity, and include the representation and participation of women, people with disabilities, etc.

  One proposal is that "delegative voting" could bring civil society representatives into parliaments and give them actual real power based on how much support they have from citizens. This would also bring civil society expertise into parliament.

  Standards need to be defined for both representational democracy and participatory democracy.

- **Creating a world parliament**
  Whether elected or appointed, a people's parliamentary assembly of national legislators and parliamentarians could act as a meeting body with the UN and help define the global agenda. Such a body could speed up the process toward realizing global democracy. Smaller countries would discover strengthened ability to bargain with the more developed countries.

  However, an opposing argument was that almost one third of the world population, more than 2.5 billion people, do not enjoy democracy because they are ruled by monarchies or civilian or military dictatorships. There are pressing issues that need to be addressed in order to bring countries up to speed before global democracy can be achieved. For some, creation of a world parliament is a grandiose idea disconnected from actual issues.

Moreover, it was noted that an international structure for the nations of the world already exists in the UN. Rather than start from scratch, the UN should be revamped and empowered to serve as the world parliament.

However, the counterpoint was that governments have shown themselves to be resistant to structural reforms within the UN or even toward fulfilling their commitments in international agreements. The UN Millennium Development Goals are promising, but far more is needed.

Another challenge is that a world parliament will require a global constitution, which cannot be set up spontaneously. But unless there is a constitution guaranteeing citizen and human rights and governmental and institutional obligations, a world parliament will offer no empowerment to the people.

The powers, responsibilities, and above all, authority, of a world parliament also need to be determined. Should such a body have the authority to develop and enforce policy, or should it be an elected advisory body that passes resolutions reflecting the interests of citizens globally? Another role would be to bring coherence to the progressive positions of different states, parliamentarians, and different international bodies.

Consensus and Divergence

While there was consensus on the urgency to develop strategies toward global democracy, there were different priorities and some disagreement, particularly on developing a world parliament. One note of caution was that strategies and programs must not disenfranchise the third of the world population that has yet to enjoy democratic lives.

4) Building Democratic Linkages at the Local, National, Regional, and Global Levels: Identifying Strategic Possibilities for Responsive Democratic Governance

Facilitator **Thierno Kane**, United Nations Development Programme, USA (UNDP) opened the discussion by saying that it was imperative to construct a vision for civil society before developing strategies for implementation at different levels, because such a vision is seen by many to be lacking. It was also necessary to consider if it was more appropriate to implement participation at multiple levels simultaneously, or to focus on one level at a time.

One participant suggested that the vision for civil society was alive and well at the local level. Very often, local people sharing their local experiences can be helpful to the construction of a vision for civil society at national and international levels. A number of participants echoed this sentiment, and shared their experiences.

For example, in Colombia, local issues such as public space for democratic participation are in need of support and protection from international organizations, as local institutions (i.e., police, local governments) often use violence as a way of stifling such spaces. In these situations, international support is imperative to protecting local rights and democratic processes.

Lalita Ramdas, acting as the forum resource person, voiced her agreement that participation in civil society needed to be worked on many levels at once. She contended, as well, that historical repression of peoples needed to be taken into consideration when evaluating methods for increasing participation in civil society. Essentially, the point was made that sustained participation can be difficult when you consider the socialization process (i.e., women shouldn't disagree or speak up) that is still very strong in many parts of the world. International and national levels can help provide protection for those in local communities trying to implement civil society participation.

During the discussion of the definition of civil society, a participant wondered what would not be considered as part of civil society. One participant replied that dictatorship was a clear example of a non-civil society. Another added that, in Guinea, neither political parties nor the military were considered part of civil society because that had been the choice of the people there. It was suggested that civil society describes those people who speak for the welfare of all society and not solely the welfare of their respective organizations. He noted that in an ideal democratic society, people elect governmental officials who act on behalf of the entire society, but that all too often these officials end up protecting special interests rather than the society.

The discussion surrounding a definition and vision of civil society was brought to a close by the acknowledgement that definitions are still contested and debated. Participants agreed that developing strategies to increase participation on all levels and increase linkages between levels needed to be further discussed. Lalita Ramdas suggested that "civil society" is a rather generic title under which, most times, fall vastly differing organizations and goals. She pointed out that this generic title can sometimes be misleading, in that it implies solidarity among all members when, in reality, there may be vast differences among groups.

Participants then turned their attention to deficits affecting democratic participation, suggesting ways for addressing them at multiple levels of governance.

In considering how to *increase quantity of participation*, one woman, drawing on her experiences in Guinea, said that education of people at different levels and in appropriate languages was important. She suggested that media can be a useful tool for educating citizens but emphasized that the media must be free to express various viewpoints. She noted that Guinea has employed both a bottom-up approach, as community radio had become more popular in recent years, and a top-down approach that could help local organizations take education to higher levels of governance.

Kane pointed out that in Africa there had been movements working toward more democratic processes for centuries, but that the key hindrance these movements had faced was the lack of visibility and the lack of democratic space open for them to influence higher levels. One participant suggested that trust was a key hindrance to increased participation. She pointed out that there is an inequality of power at various levels and that the assumption is always that there is more knowledge at higher levels. This leads to mistrust of higher levels by local people, who feel their concerns are neither respected nor listened to with any sort of appreciation. Trust must be built, then, between local, national, regional, and international levels if successful communication and increased participation is to occur.

The Millennium Review and the MDGs: Opportunity for Impact

The governments of many developing countries are not asking CSOs to help them accomplish the Millennium Development Goals, this despite a proven presence on the ground, said participants in the self-directed workshop, "the Millennium Review and the MDGs." Instead, there is concern that international aid is being used to promote security issues rather than to fight poverty.

A switch from short-term goals to a structural change over the long term will only happen by mobilizing the international community and focusing on the "big picture." Civil society must learn to use the media to its best advantage—to bring the case for change directly to the public—in order to help set the agenda. As one participant said, "Unity is strength!"

*Notes on self-organized workshop 7.

Another participant described the "divide and conquer strategy" whereby local and global levels have been pitted against each other. In his experience, participation increased when moving from local to national levels, but then decreased at the global level. He concluded that local and global levels have the least amount of power and, therefore, should be careful not to see the other as an adversary, but rather an ally.

There was then discussion among several participants that resulted in consensus that *quantity and quality of participation* will be increased only when equality is addressed. Marginalized people—who feel their voices are not being heard—see little point in joining democratic processes.

One participant suggested that it was crucial to celebrate successes if sustained participation is desired. People need to see the positive things that have been accomplished if they are to have strength and desire to strive for a democratic civil society. Addressing this, another participant cited two examples of successful linkages between levels:

• International campaigns, which have raised awareness and participation between local, national, and global levels;
• The fallout of the recent tsunami, which required all levels of society (local, national, regional, global) to work together toward a common goal.

Efforts toward sustained participation in civil society should learn from these (as well as other) examples as the unique responses undertaken in each situation have recognized the "power in numbers," and the need to draw on social capital from multiple levels to achieve sustained civil societies.

The facilitator summarized the discussion, noting that there is a tendency to oversimplify levels we are working on and that the gap between levels—whether it be a gap in power,

knowledge, equality, or language—is something that must be addressed if participation in democratic processes is to be fully realized.

Welcome Reception

Rajesh Tandon thanked the City of Montréal and the Government of Québec for their support for the Conference. **Nigel Martin**, Founding President of FIM, welcomed participants and dignitaries, Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, Québec Minister of International Relations and Minister for La Francophonie; and Claude Trudel, Associate Advisor to the Mayor, International and Intergovernmental Relations and City Councillor, City of Montréal.

Claude Trudel acknowledged the valuable work accomplished daily by civil society to protect and reinforce democracy at the international, national, and local levels. He gave several examples of what civil society has been doing in Montréal for democracy. This city was the site, in February 2003, of the largest protests in North America against Canada's involvement in Iraq, with over 200 000 Montréalers on the street. Similarly, 100 Montréalers joined the Québec delegation at the recent World Social Forum in Porto Alegre.

It is also in Montréal that the Coalition for Cultural Diversity was created in 1999. It is the biggest cultural lobby in the world and is an important leader in the fight to preserve and promote cultural diversity in the context of globalization.

In May 2005, the Montréal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities was proposed. It outlines a number of rights and responsibilities in terms of democracy, economy, social life, culture, environment, and sustainable development. If this Charter is adopted, the City of Montréal will be the first Canadian city with such a democratic instrument.

These examples, Trudel said, show how leadership is now a partnership with citizens and organizations. The public service culture is evolving as a result, and citizens, elected officials, and bureaucrats now often work together.

Various initiatives have been undertaken to reduce the distance between citizens and decision making. The City of Montréal has created a number of councils representing the views and interests of women, youth, the cultural sector, and the heritage community. These bodies provide information and advice to help City Council make decisions. Another important body is the Office de consultation publique de Montréal, an autonomous body dedicated exclusively to citizen consultation. The administrative and political powers of neighbourhoods have also been increased to promote citizen participation and proximity democracy. "We do not believe that democracy is something that you have once and for all. It must be reincarnated many times."

Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, Minister of International Relations and Minister for La Francophonie, opened by saying that institutions that were established following the Second War World are no longer an adequate reflection of new international realities. They do not respond to the expectations of international civil society.

In many ways, she said, globalization contributes to a widening distance between politicians and citizens. The result is growing cynicism on the part of citizens, a steady decline in their participation in elections, and the creation of non-parliamentary citizen bodies. Many citizens around the world are worried that globalization will take away their ability to decide their own future.

"We are keenly aware that globalization is an unstoppable movement and that, as a result, traditional structures of governance must adapt," she said. According to the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, our current difficulties are not due to globalization itself, but to governance problems, and any reform of global governance must be guided by the vision of a fair and integrative globalization.

Québec believes that one of the best ways to gain citizens' support for globalization and modernized multilateral governance organizations is to counterbalance this evolution with decentralization. This is why the province is pushing to have a seat at the negotiation table, nationally, when issues that matter to the province—national or international—are being discussed. Québec, for example, played a leadership role on the international stage to encourage the adoption by UNESCO of a charter ensuring the right of governments and states to support their culture through their policies.

Québec also participated in the Hemispheria 2005 Conference that took place in Mexico. For the first time, these discussions included representatives from the federated states of Canada, Mexico, and the United States. She explained, "We demand to be where decisions are made because we live where these decisions are felt."

Dialogue with the United Nations

José Antonio Ocampo, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, acknowledged the positive input the UN Secretariat has received from civil society, both in the lead-up to the Millennium +5 Summit and in the specific deliberative processes that are under way at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

"This is a crucial year for many reasons," he said. "We think this is a great opportunity to restate the principle of multilateralism, with the role of the UN at the centre of that system." Citing the three major pillars on which the UN was built—development, human rights, and peace (now reframed as peace and security)—he said the recent Report to the Secretary-General was framed around freedom from want, freedom to live in dignity, and freedom from fear.

These three dimensions are brought together through the rule of law, particularly international law. "States will continue to be the central players in an international system based on nation-states, but the need for a denser democratic network is broadly recognized." That network must include civil society and the private sector, as well as a variety of regional processes, all of which is consistent with the "very concrete mechanism" of global democracy.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will continue to be the focal point of the UN's development agenda, and a central message is that the MDGs are achievable. Ocampo said the development agenda takes a broad view of societal development, is built on a "strong rights-based framework," and incorporates a broad definition of poverty and equality as a central issue for humanity. The Global Partnership for Development, in turn, is based on a framework that

includes development financing, international trade, and emerging issues like international migration.

Ocampo acknowledged concerns about accountability for UN commitments to social, economic, and environmental objectives, in contrast to some of the enforcement provisions behind the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund. While the recent Report to the Secretary-General stopped short of recommending formation of an economic and social security council, it called for peer review of commitments flowing from UN conferences, summits, and development co-operation fora.

Cândido Grzybowski expressed concern that citizens and international institutions are moving in different directions, with limited understanding between them. CS is invited to participate in consultations with the UN on agendas they did not help create. While the UN is considering small reforms, he said that there is not enough focus on the dangers confronting humanity. Change happens because citizens demand it, but he explained there are no tools or instruments to support that dynamic at the international level—the Report to the Secretary-General focused mainly on creating wealth in a private sector economy.

This raises the question for civil society of how to enshrine the principles of multilateralism within a system that has no place for community voices. Those principles are not reflected in a system that sets millennium goals that are inadequate to meet development needs, destroys ecosystems to benefit 10 per cent of humanity, and provides aid in response to a disastrous tsunami…yet fails to address the need for debt relief.

Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki recalled the initial resistance to engaging with the MDGs on the part of civil society, including African civil society and the women's movement. The general sense was that the Goals failed to reflect the commitments of the development decade, or to address issues of inequity or unequal distribution. That position changed over time, as it became clear that the MDGs would be the organizing framework for all UN agencies. In this "worst-case scenario," the only option has been to try to influence the process wherever possible, at the national and international levels. CSOs have mainly concentrated on Goal 3, reproductive rights and using Goal 8 to influence the financing-for-development agenda.

But "it's very clear now that the possibility of civil society having a real impact on the agenda of the Millennium Summit is extremely limited," she said. Civil society reform proposals have already been narrowed down, access to official processes will be very limited, and there will be no formal method of capturing civil society input. From that starting point, she asked what will become of the two key elements of the Summit agenda—the MDGs, and issues of reform and participation. "No doubt, we can expect a millennium +10 summit, which is one way to see that we're on this treadmill," she said.

Ocampo stressed that his own group within the UN defines the organization's development agenda more broadly than the MDGs. At the same time, eliminating poverty and hunger "would be a huge advance for humanity," and adherence to other targets would be beneficial as well.

"Are they minor targets?" he asked. "I don't think they are. The fact that this is a limited agenda does not mean that these are not ambitious targets for society." Although structural issues matter, "that doesn't mean that meeting the MDGs is not important."

Similarly, although there is a great deal of advocacy around accountability and democratic engagement, Ocampo said the UN can already be proud of its openness to civil society, and the September summit could yield further progress. "Some would say that incrementalism is irrelevant," he said. "I don't think so."

A participant asked Ocampo to reconcile his comments with a high UN official's recent statement that civil society engagement with the MDGs is not a high priority. He called on the UN General

Assembly to adopt the kind of participatory process that civil society had introduced for its work on the Cardoso Panel and beyond.

A couple of participants stressed the need to shift the focus from a war on terror to a war on poverty. One participant suggested that terrorism is great for a military-industrial complex that needs to "run down the inventory every two years," but pointed out that the war on poverty was never won—and the daily attack on the globe's biodiversity continues unabated.

"What kind of future are we looking at?" he asked. "You can't just focus on MDGs to solve the problem."

Another participant questioned the value of structural reforms like peer review, noting that the United States and other G7 governments had urged the UN not to interfere with the governing structures of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. "If you can't have that influence, how can you do peer review?" Several participants called for a stronger civil society role in multistakeholder dialogues, noting that only half of the governments that attended the Johannesburg conference in 2002 have followed through on sustainable development commitments that were to have been implemented by 2005.

A participant asked Ocampo for his view of the linkages between the development and security agendas.

Ocampo assured participants that the UN places high value on civil society participation, adding that civil society organizations can play a key role by influencing their own national governments and tracking their adherence to international commitments. He explained that the UN attaches major importance to poverty, and is addressing the issue through a lens that includes access to education, health, and gender equality.

He further added that the UN's peace and security agenda extends beyond terrorism, to include peacebuilding measures in the poorest countries of the world. This ties in with poverty, as well, since six of the world's 10 poorest countries have gone through civil war in the past two decades. "For us, peacebuilding is quite an essential part of the war against poverty," he said and the UN's agenda is heading toward that direction more and more.

Part II: Thematic Summary of Conference Tracks

Track 1: Civil Society Engagement: Changing Territorial Priorities?

The process of building global democracy has to relate to the shifting of territorial boundaries and decision-making processes at all levels (local, national, and global). Regional integration (through trade and political agreements) is significantly transforming traditional notions of state sovereignty and the role of governments, as well as multilateral and bilateral relations, thus having an overall affect on democracy's development from the local to the global levels.

In light of these changes, this track's over 70 participants representing various sectors and countries looked at how civil society can engage with regional blocks such as the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), and Mercosur, and especially in regions where the democratic deficit is high, to influence decision-making processes at all levels and make them more democratic. The coordinator of Track 1 was **Ziad Abdel Samad**, Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Lebanon

The emergence of regional blocks may herald more space for democratic participation and a new role for civil society. Through regional blocks, civil society can potentially gain greater influence with actors at the regional and global levels, such as the UN, transnational corporations, and other international institutions. At the same time, regional integration may lead to a changing role for governments and affect democratic development in the national context. The role of regional blocks in bilateral and multilateral negotiations has yet to unfold.

The challenge for civil society amidst changes brought on by the pressures of modern globalization will be to contend with the democratic deficits in some regions, and to work to ensure a more democratic and participatory process globally, said Abdel Samad.

Civil society will need to think more consciously about the impact of global processes, discourse, and institutions at the local level, according to one participant. Advancing economic and social justice in the world today is complicated by the presence of five levels of government: local, state, national, regional, and global.

CSOs are trying to affect policy formed by regional inter-governmental organizations. Whether at the global or regional level, intergovernmental organizations today tend to have four shortcomings in the area of civil society:

- **Compliance deficit:** There are many good policies concerning human rights, gender equality, and other issues, but no enforcement mechanism.

- **Coherence deficit:** Various aspects of policy making within the regional entities tend to be dispersed and uncoordinated.

- **Democratic deficit:** Citizens do not have a sense that their voices are being heard by those representing their countries.

- **Accountability deficit**: The lack of accountability undermines the legitimacy of intergovernmental organizations.

Diverse Experiences

Euro-Med Partnership

The Euro-Med Non-Governmental Platform was formed 10 years ago as a partnership between EU countries and neighbours south of the Mediterranean, explained **Mourad Allal**, Paris coordinator for Euro-Med. For the first time, the EU presented a coherent regional integration project to its southern partners that encompassed civil society, human rights, and democracy aims. However, the project is overall an economic partnership, designed to create a free-trade zone between the EU and neighbouring Mediterranean countries.

Euro-Med brings together networks of CSOs concerned with the environment, sustainable development, gender equality, migrants, and human rights. Together, they have gained authority within governmental, civil society, and institutional circles, and have struck a chord with the public.

Mercosur

Regional integration can strengthen the bargaining capacity of southern countries vis-à-vis more powerful countries, and lead to more balanced South-South trade, explained **Norma Sanchis** of the Latin American Gender and Trade Network in Argentina. She described how the integration of social movements is vital for the growth of effective and sustainable national and regional development programs, and for negotiating relations that are more equitable among regional partners. However, in many cases, members of regional blocks face contradictory initiatives: internal economic rivalries, political or economic asymmetries, and other tensions can weaken their potential to challenge the liberalized capitalist economic system.

The Mercosur regional integration process was initiated in 1991 by Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Chile, Bolivia, and Peru are now associated with the initiative. Although Mercosur has great potential to strengthen its negotiating power with other blocks, it is limited in practice because member states are not always capable of developing consensual policies. Furthermore, Mercosur is hampered by the scarce participation of broad sectors of civil society in negotiations. Decision making remains centralized among governmental negotiators and corporate interests through the Economic and Social Consultative Forum.

Sanchis described how Mercosur showed its capacity to limit the expansion of Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations and helped halt the World Trade Organization (WTO) process in Cancun, demonstrating that multilateral strategies are more viable than bilateral negotiations, especially when regional blocks are involved.

African Union

After decades of disenchantment with the Organization of African Unity, African civil society now prioritizes engagement with the AU because of the institution's successful interventions in recent crises, explained **Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki**, director of the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET).

In February 2005, the death of the Togo President Eyadema ignited hopes for democratization among the Togolese and other Africans. However, the military installed Eyadema's son as successor, along with constitutional amendments to legitimize the illegal succession. When the Togolese took to the streets in protest, civil rights were suspended. "In the face of dithering by the international community, the African Union response was immediate and inflexible, insisting that the original Togo Constitution must be respected," Wanyeki said. Civil rights were restored, the constitutional amendments reversed, and elections were called. The AU response reflected its new determination to act in the interests of African peoples, she underlined.

In the crisis in Darfur, Sudan, the AU has provided leadership by assuming responsibility for mediation between the Sudan government and rebel factions, and deploying peacekeepers to maintain the ceasefire and prevent widespread human rights violations, particularly those targeting women.

In 2002, the AU Summit established the Peace and Security Council, which recognized the need to engage civil society and women's organizations in efforts to promote peace, security, and stability in Africa. The Summit also endorsed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as its program of action.

New Avenues for Civil Society Within the Framework of Regional Blocks

Over the course of the conference, two overarching objectives (highlighted below) emerged from this track:

> **To encourage and promote regional integration among civil society organizations, in order to enhance their role and influence in regional blocks and treaties.**

> Beyond abstract goals like coalition building and networking, there is a need to develop substantive strategies, tools, and mechanisms to optimize civil society engagement in global governance. For example, leading up to the next summit of global civil society organizations, CSOs could meet at the regional level to assess information and communications technology (ICT) capabilities; at the summit, there could be a parallel forum for developing a framework for information sharing.

> **To create alternative, community-based knowledge, drawing from and responding to community needs.**

The creation of regional clearinghouses would improve discourse among regional coalitions. Many processes, networks, campaigns, and initiatives already exist. The Global Campaign Against Poverty is a good example of how mobilization can take place using existing global networks. At the same time, information and communications technologies have enabled decentralized campaigns that focus on local circumstances.

Regional Integration Strategies

Coalitions for global democracy, security, and peace exist at different levels, ranging from the World Civil Society Conference (WOCSOC) to state structures such as the permanent forum for civil society, security, and peace in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. They also exist for different purposes. For example, ICTs (information and communications technologies) are transforming election systems and electoral processes, and work is being done to define democratic regional norms among different countries.

Wanyeki described how the African Union has helped strengthen the African group in the UN. African countries are now much more coordinated, negotiating and taking decisions collectively, including within G77 as the Africa Group. A collective position has also been taken with respect to the G8, the WTO, and a range of Economic Partnership Agreements currently being put in place in Africa. State ambassadors have demonstrated a willingness to submit to the AU jurisdiction in a manner that they weren't prepared to do with the Economic Commission of Africa.

It was suggested, however, that it is difficult to compare region blocks such as the AU, the North American Free Trade Ageement (NAFTA), and Mercosur. Of the 23 regional blocks in existence, only two (NAFTA and the EU) work in an integrative manner, while the other regional blocks fail to truly foster integration. For civil society, the challenge is to tackle the proliferation of bilateral negotiations and work effectively at both the regional and global levels.

One participant explained how, with the growing influence of private corporations under neo-liberal policies, profit and non-profit entities occupy an increasing share of public space. As such, governance structures for global democracy must encompass business associations and cartels, large industrial lobbies, and transnational corporations, as well as NGOs, CSOs, and grassroots movements.

- **Foster sustained dialogue among civil society and social movement networks.**
  There is a disconnect between community and citizen movements for global justice, and global civil society rhetoric, according to one participant. At the same time, he cautioned, NGOs and CSOs must be careful not to be co-opted into the public relations strategies of global institutions seeking legitimacy by engaging in dialogue with select NGOs.

  Civil society and social movement networks encourage citizen integration into global processes, such as the creation of free trade areas.

- **Democratize funding processes.**
  Funding mechanisms need to be better adapted to meet local needs. Civil society and parliamentarians should monitor aid along with regional integration, which should not be left to government alone.

- **Engage in ongoing dialogue across all levels.**
  If civil society organizations are to be actors with true weight, they must be able to make the linkage to the national and global levels. Mourad Allal called upon them to look beyond the issues specific to their region in order to find a common thread at the global level. Regional coalitions play a key role in facilitating dialogue and keeping pressure on governments at the national and global levels. Civil society regional coalitions can increase their effectiveness by working first at the regional level with NGOs and governments, then returning to the national level for discussion of issues and propositions, then once again engaging governments and institutions on the regional and global levels—this keeps the dialogue moving.

- **Engage local governments.**
  There is clearly a new role for local governments, arising from decentralization in many countries. In some countries, local governments now have direct access to funding agencies, a revolutionary development. What strategic alliances can be made between local governments and civil society?

- **Identify parliamentary areas of regional integration.**
  It would be useful to identify areas in which parliaments are regionalizing and those coalitions that offer the most opportunity to advance the global democracy agenda. (For example, the European Council may offer more opportunities for change than the NATO parliamentary assembly may.) It would also be helpful to develop civil society networks parallel to parliamentary initiatives.

  As parliamentary assemblies evolve, they will begin to gain more power. Civil society must not only lobby for change through parliamentarians and existing regional structures, but should also address the knowledge gaps in policy development.

- **Develop a consultative process with various national stakeholders.**
  Civil society needs to work with other stakeholders to create a vision to address democratic governance issues.

- **Strengthen existing regional, sub-regional, and sectoral networks.**
  These networks need capacity-building programs at the institutional, organizational, and operational levels.

- **Foster civil society and democratic participation at the sub-regional level.**
  The regional arena offers different opportunities depending on the part of the world, historical background, and type of governance in place. Sometimes, the sub-regional level is an important arena where representative democracy and participatory democracy come together.

- **Reconcile local and international approaches to security and crime.**
  Prohibitive approaches to crime at the international level can differ from local approaches, which tend to favour prevention, treatment, and cure. There is a need to reconcile local approaches, which are based on citizen involvement, with international approaches, which are based on security and politics.

  One participant pointed to human trafficking, weapons and arms trafficking, the illicit drug trade, and environmental degradation as criminal activities facing communities around the world that call for collaboration at all levels. He described the "war on drugs" as an extreme approach that rests on prohibition and creates corruption. He explained how the 1920s-style prohibition led to an increase in the availability and purity of illicit drugs, a decrease in prices, and the resulting corruption of the police forces, justice system, and elected officials. In contrast, the City of Vancouver, Canada, adopted a "harm reduction" approach.

Knowledge-Sharing Strategies

With the process of democracy and governance increasingly being negotiated by actors beyond institutional forms of democracy, knowledge surrounding core issues is one of the biggest challenges of civil society. Unless the knowledge and communication technology gap is bridged, the language of democratic governance will increasingly be the language of law and economics.

- **Establish a regional clearinghouse of information.**
  Knowledge related to democratic governance and global organizations, and impact studies needs to be made more accessible. The clearinghouse should be institutionalized at one of the regional networks.

- **Develop awareness-building programs.**
  Greater education is needed at the national, regional, and international levels. Fora would allow stakeholders to follow the implementation of the recommendations of the various conferences.

- **Train a pool of global advocates**
  Advocates and lobbyists are needed at national, regional, and global levels.

- **Develop an effective media strategy.**
  This is key to inform the agenda of global organizations. The mainstream media currently does not tend to report on alternatives to international institutions.

- **Increase public awareness and education.**
  Creative campaigns such as the upcoming Live 8 concerts in July 2005 capture public attention and increase the sense of solidarity across continents. These free concerts, to be broadcast around the world, will carry the message for citizens to push their governments to act on issues of trade justice, debt relief, and development aid. With 2 billion viewers expected, the concerts will be an effective mobilizing tool and means of communicating alternative information on trade justice and aid.

- **Build coalitions.**
  Capacity building among community-based networks is critical: building coalitions with likeminded organizations (such as women's, environmental, and human rights networks) helps strengthen organizations.

- **Identify best practices.**
  It would be useful to comment on the different policies of various international institutions. Campaigning is needed at the local, national, and international levels: tools include fact sheets, pamphlets and brochures, and position papers.

- **Use champions.**
  Civil society will need to look among itself for champions to address these issues. For example, Wangari Maathai was elected first president of the African Union ECOSOC because civil society leaders believed she would be an effective person to mobilize resources for their case. Other champions who have access to powerful political corridors include Kumi Naidoo and Rajesh Tandon. It is important to use those who already command respect as ambassadors as advocates.

- **Develop an advocacy model.**
  The model aims to strengthen the linkages between the CSOs, social movements, and local communities.

Other Strategies

- **Secure financial resources.**
  Financial resources will be critical to moving forward the global democracy agenda.

- **Initiate a civil society review panel on official development assistance.**
  The review panel would liaise with other stakeholders such as governments and international institutions.

- **Initiate a compliance committee.**
  A compliance committee involving both governments and NGOs would have the authority to act if it is deemed that rules are not being followed.

- **Create dialogue between civil society and international institutions.**
  Governments implement policies that impact on the people, but it is important that institutions such as the African Union and UN institutions also interact with civil society.

- **Hold public consultations.**
  Should the public be involved in urban planning and development? How are public consultations financed? What is the real role of consultations and their influence on political forces? How can autonomous consultation systems be implemented? Mourad Allal of Euro-Med explained that regional formations are inter-state organizations, are not transparent, and do not involve public consultation.

- **Develop people's protocols**
  One participant suggested that people's movements provide a counterbalance to the power of corporate lobbies and the multilateral triad of the WTO, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. In places such as the Philippines, lobbying processes are underway for protecting interests such as agricultural sustainability and workers' rights through the development of people's protocols rather than confronting authorities about modifying laws.

- **Create a community endowment fund.**
  A self-financing endowment fund would support global democracy advocacy and initiatives by CSOs. There is a need to sensitize local private sectors, which particularly in the African context, would be the main source of funding for civil society projects.

- **Involve youth groups.**
  Youth groups represent untapped potential that needs to be integrated into the global civil society movement. For example, regional integration in Eastern Europe is taking place at the governmental level and among youth organizations that coordinate cross-border seminars, training, and leadership sessions.

- **Democratize internally.**
  People perceive NGOs and civil society as dominated by elites.

- **Hold a global vote.**
  A field test is needed to prove that capabilities for a global vote exist. Regional parliaments are viable, but a global vote would give people of the world a say in how the world is run.

Key Concerns

Market economy importation or development does not necessarily guarantee the importation of civil society or democratic activity; the presence of markets does not automatically enhance democracy.

The aim of regionalism has been to counterbalance the negative effects of globalization. Some regional integration is principally economic, but there are coalitions whose focus is social, political, or institutional. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), for example, is premised on regional co-operation along a broad range of economic, political, cultural, and social concerns. Some key concerns related to regional strategies for global democracy include the following:

- How can regionalism complement global governance? What is the link?

- How does one determine the appropriate strength of regional blocks for negotiation purposes?

- How do we strengthen the south–south co-operation processes through the participation of civil society?

- How do we assess the convergence potential of civil society goals with southern governmental goals and policies?

- How can regional processes converge toward a world parliament?

Some participants at G05 saw the need to proceed with caution. Existing democratic frameworks have failed to include accountability or compliance mechanisms and failed to deliver on the promise. "Before we try to create something on a global scale, can we create it on the ground?" a participant asked. **Ezra Limiri Mbogori**, the facilitator for Track 1's report to plenary, acknowledged that there is a need to ensure that everybody is on a reasonable footing, with basic access to food and water, health, education, and democratic institutions.

One participant wondered whether the promotion of good governance also fosters compliance with human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. He pointed out that there are different outcomes depending on how one defines good governance. Export-oriented, resource-intensive economic development often tends to contribute to violations of human rights and environmental degradation, working against good governance, he said.

Discussion also focused on other issues and concerns:

- **Proliferation of African plans**
  From the G8 African Initiative, now called the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Africa Commission and its report released in March 2005, and UK Chancellor Gordon Brown's lesser-known proposal to intensify debt relief, plans for Africa abound. Are these rival plans or do they complement each other? Where does it leave civil society engagement internationally if they fail?

- **Official Development Assistance (ODA) for cities**
  In some cases, local governments are becoming attractive for ODA investment or loans from multilateral lending institutions; should civil society work to strengthen this position of local governments? While such loans can be a way to address urgent situations, caution was advised, as cities could find themselves in the same debt situations as countries.

- **French rejection of EU Constitution**
  The referendum on the EU Constitution in France was described as a "No" to the elite for producing a text without public consultation.

- **Conflicts in Africa**
  The conflicts in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have roused African civil society, who must continue to monitor the conflicts and try to alleviate these tensions. A cynical perspective is that the African Union has taken increasing responsibility for peacekeeping in Darfur because after Rwanda and Somalia, the

international community is simply not interested in intervening beyond providing logistical support.

- **Diversity of regions**
  Given the region-specific issues and diversity of each region, what is the strategic role for regional blocks in terms of linking to the national and global level?

- **Bilateral and multilateral negotiations**
  The more integration is social and political—not just economic—the more it challenges the tradition of establishing relationships that are strictly bilateral and allows social movements and CSOs to penetrate the arena.

Mbogori suggested that many of the strategies are well within the capacities of CSOs to pursue—structures are already in place that just require a little cultivation to bring about the emergence of regional clearinghouses. It is essential to cross-pollinate and build upon the strengths of existing movements and harness the collective influence that comes with regional integration. "I think these are strategies that are all well within our abilities despite the resource challenges that we will continue to grapple with," he said.

Track 2: International Treaties/International Law: A Hierarchy of Values?

Building global democracy cannot be achieved when some treaties, specifically in the area of trade and finance, are enforced while others, related to human rights, labour rights, gender equity, social development, environmental protection, and peace, are not enforced. The accountability of global governance bodies, such as the WTO, must also be re-evaluated so that accompanying organizations can be established to regulate their activities and make sure they answer to all their stakeholders' needs.

Track 2's discussions between participants and the invited legal experts and civil society practitioners focused on strategies that would bring forth the establishment of a new, more democratic hierarchy of international laws. This new hierarchy would give precedence and legitimacy to UN rule over that of international economic institutions.

Participants called for priority for human rights and social development over the regulations of international institutions. The coordinator for Track 2 was **Kristin Dawkins**, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Blue Mountain Global Governance Network, USA.

Accountability

There is a rampant lack of accountability at various levels, whereby policies are implemented without disclosure of how they came to be. Accountability is intimately tied to coherence; where policies are not coherent, accountability diminishes.

Participants discussed the example of the World Bank. It dictates that the institution should not interfere in non-economic affairs of nation-states, yet it does so profoundly. How can the institution act with such impunity and no accountability? Participants called for an impartial organization (a high court perhaps) that would evaluate the actions of the World Bank. Further, the World Bank lends itself money, but remains unaccountable. The bank behaves like a commercial institution but is not subject to audits.

Participants suggested potential strategies:

- Compile a compendium of international financial institution (IFI) clauses that establish jurisdiction or hierarchy of social importance to the UN charters;
- Apply norms to all actors, not just states;
- Encourage UN-oriented outcomes and use review mechanisms to ensure that existing agreements are met;
- Ensure accountability of international bodies that enforce treaties;
- Make the public more aware about how IFIs use their power (e.g., they cushion many actors and activities but not the poor);
- Look at violations of fiduciary responsibility, as there could be challenges in the context of corruption;
- Put pressure on multinational corporations (for example, Phillip Morris and its subsidiaries) in order to accomplish greater goals.

Fundamental Conflicts

Conflicts between humanitarian and commercial jurisdictions arise frequently and the important question is what standards dictate the hierarchy. Article 103 in the UN Charter should apply in such conflicts and elevate human rights above others.

Participants wondered whether there could be another way to give priority to human rights—would the *jus cogen* prove useful here? Customarily it includes the right to self-determination, which is generally unchallenged. But should fundamental rights protected by human rights treaties be included as well? In the restricted interpretation of the UN, it seems not.

Participants found it useful to distinguish among conflicts. There are, for example, special conflicts of interest (e.g., trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights) and broader ones where the effect is spread across society. Conflicts can also occur between individual and collective interests, and global and national interests.

Fundamental conflicts also lie in the power exerted by international institutions and powerful countries. The WTO, for instance, has completely changed the global trade system by introducing economic sanctions against grievous countries. The United States often uses this procedure to target developing countries. Furthermore, the United States increasingly promotes bilateral treaties. The phrase "this agreement does not take precedence over trade law" is becoming more and more common in environmental treaties, as is trade language.

Participants suggested potential strategies:

- Address the fundamental conflict between WTO-implemented user fees and human rights;
- Constrain the role of the UN Security Council, which is taking on the law-making role of the world (this is in conflict with its original mandate);
- Identify current key conflicts between economic and human rights provisions.

Compliance, Enforcement, and Legal Challenges

Currently, the mechanisms of enforcement available for human rights and environmental infractions are weaker than those for investment and trade protection. These clearly need to be strengthened. Campaigns resulting from the most glaring contradictions could lend themselves to litigation.

Compliance is a problem. If a powerful state is found to be guilty, it can ignore its infractions. One participant suggested strengthening the mechanisms of compliance through a specific declaration by the UN that defines the responsibility of all stakeholders based on conventions that define rights.

In Canada, there is a body of comprehensive and indivisible normative law, but it is largely unapplied. One participant pointed out that, "we need to be more aggressive when human rights provisions are being violated."

Judicial systems need to be strengthened within countries. Currently, there are judicial bodies (e.g., the Caribbean Court) designed to interpret WTO regulations. In a similar vein, the WTO provides funds to train people in interpreting its laws and how to apply them. Who is being trained in civil society?

Participants wondered which institutions could be the basis for starting legal challenges to the World Bank and the IMF. In Canada, there has been debate about the impact of international trade agreements on the power balance between provincial and federal governments. It was pointed out that virtually every country could find elements that violate some part of its constitution.

Participants explored the recurring theme of supra-nationals binding member states. For example, the World Bank has social norms and standards but does not recognize its obligations to them. One mechanism to achieve this would be to "submit the IFIs (international financial institutions) to their masters in the UN system."

Many participants agreed that litigation should be the last resort for only the most strategic purposes, since there are enormous real and lost opportunity costs associated with legal processes. More emphasis should be placed on prevention. Civil society should concentrate its energy to fight the battle and to carve out an area of trade law dominance (e.g., tobacco).

Civil society, for its part, needs to overcome its fear of "setting bad law." Chances must be taken and, while a case might be lost, a constituency will be gained.

Participants discussed possible legal challenges or legal precedents of interest:

- AGOA and the United States vs. Ghana's rice production;
- Ecuador oil exploration and the resultant genocide;
- Labour rights violations, particularly with respect to child labour;
- Water services (local authorities vs. national interests);
- National vs. sub-federal subsidies for private interests (e.g., mechanizing Florida's citrus production, US competing with Brazil's sugar exports);
- World Bank/International Monetary Fund accountable to charters/fiduciary responsibility to private investors in US courts;
- War in Iraq;
- Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights vs. human rights;
- The enforcement of economic, social, and cultural rights with intellectual property rights case;
- Litigation with respect to the General agreement on trade in services ("quality of service" vs. "universality of service") and with respect to subsidies, where user fees violate human rights;
- Cultural conventions that are not WTO-compliant;
- IFI adherence to specific articles.

Participants listed potential strategies for compliance and litigation:

- Develop new mechanisms that ensure better hierarchies through the grassroots "name, shame, and blame" strategy ("Dirty Dozen" and Best Practices). For the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, select cases that conflict with their Articles of Agreement and publicize them;
- Emulate globally the European system of human rights protection, with its mechanisms of sanctions and binding resolutions and obligations;
- Give out prizes and publicize lists of "good" and "bad" companies, with high profile to those respecting human rights;
- Use assessment tools (e.g., risk and environmental) to determine the impact of legislation rather than continuing on the reactive path;
- Develop enforcement capacity using technical tools such as digital tracking, bar codes, and the use of websites for monitoring;
- Mobilize local populations and prepare national campaigns to demand new and stronger mechanisms for human rights that include reparation and compensation for abuses;
- Amend the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes rules of procedure (put rules of subsidiarity into the Rome statute);
- Explore WTO–UN ECOSOC terms of relationships;
- Create a uniform legal system which would not exempt anyone from prosecution;
- Ask the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion of hierarchy;
- Study European Court of Justice and European Court of Human Rights cases;
- Use parliamentarians to declare procedures for the creation of new law;
- Establish new overall contract/venues for human rights adjudication;
- Extend those laws that currently apply to governments to corporations as well.

Marriage to Other Movements

There may be fruitful relationships with other movements (e.g., environmental and health) that tie in well with a move for global democracy. One participant brought up the importance of including labour rights at all levels and in the treaty system whereby labour and other fundamental rights are elevated above the regulations of international financial institutions.

Civil society appears not to have a clear strategy in terms of when and where to fight corporate battles. It was suggested that trade unions might have some helpful insights with their international agreements. The trade union movement can be a major force in human rights. Labour rights are part of human rights. It was pointed out that labour has framework agreements with corporations; the long-term goal is to elevate this into law.

Participants suggested potential strategies:

- Emulate the success of the right-to-water movement;
- Explore relationships with powerful movements like HIV/AIDS;
- Emulate the Aarhus Convention that brings together various movements to allow non-governmental organizations to initiate action. Furthermore, allow non-European nations to join the Convention and to adapt it to their regional needs.

Shifting the Balance of Power

Participants looked at how the supra-national level has evolved over the last 50 years, but treaties have not changed. There is no treaty that gives multinationals or IFIs the power over human rights, yet they have often assumed that power in lieu of nation-states.

Participants discussed the critical power dimension: multinational organizations and rich countries have a vested interest in promoting a profit-oriented world that places investment and capital rights above social, health, and development concerns. "This needs to be turned around."

Corporations "have political clout and manipulate and form the debate for their purposes." This statement points to a gap in enforceability and the strength of law. While corporations can ensure that rules are binding on states (to the point of giving up sovereignty), human rights conventions are hardly that binding.

Participants called for a shift in the balance of resources as well: whereas there are hundreds of government officials working in international investments department, fewer than 20 are in the human rights division.

It seems that civil society often follows the agenda set by corporations and international institutions rather than setting their own. "They provide the window dressing." Can civil society not set the agenda for corporations? There are precedents for this in Europe.

Currently there is no reciprocity between countries in the South and IFIs. In fact, IFI complaint mechanisms are modelled on the basis that countries that receive a bad mark lose their privileges.

Participants suggested potential strategies:

- Introduce a right of initiative for civil society. The European Council has changed NGO status to one that is participatory. Now, NGOs have the right to partake in debates as well as a legal process that allows them to pursue governments that don't meet human rights obligations.
- Work with the UN in setting an agenda for human rights processes and setting up bureaus.

The Importance of the Citizen

A common thread in the discussion was the notion that the larger goal of global democracy can only be achieved when the problems that plague citizens at the local level are dealt with first.

Some participants thought that perhaps "we would be better off to put more effort in working at home than negotiating international treaties." They pointed out that it is important to make sure that national environmental laws and international human rights laws are not violated by international trade agreements that have been brought to the local and regional levels. This can be achieved by building awareness and capacity at those levels. (Contact on the ground is important to promote better interaction.)

Participants felt that there is currently not enough effort made to speak the type of language and/or use the metaphors that would motivate the population and plant the notion that their rights would be respected at various levels. Furthermore, the concentration of the media means that people's right to be informed is not respected.

The question of values is crucial: one individual called for the promotion of consensus-building values. Values give strength to the issues and need to be added to the discussion of accountability and power balance.

In the environmental and human health arena, participants identified a "huge gap" between the large urbanized population and natural processes. If individuals don't protect the river in their own neighbourhood, no international treaty will. Bringing issues back to the local level where the population demands better of their governments was seen as one way to improve the balance of power.

Participants suggested potential strategies:

- Strengthen the application of the Biodiversity Convention and the Food and Agriculture Organization's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources. This would allow people to retain their traditional connections and access.

- Advance public debates about local cases in order to enhance awareness at the local level; "internationalize communities." Examples can be seen in public policy tools used in California and Washington, where public discussions move people toward a legislative solution.
- Make use of the Law Commission of Canada, a federally mandated, independent body that surveys legal developments and listens to the public that is touched by areas of law in debate.
- Build capacity and engage constituencies, including parliamentarians, the public, and sub-constituencies.
- Include the right to self-determination as a provision in the declaration for social development. Although the UN thinks it's no longer relevant, it applies to today's neo-colonialist world.
- Encourage participation in civil society activities at the local level.
- Inform the public of corporate activities and the activities of international financial and trade institutions since their trade issues concern the rich and the poor.
- Bring about full awareness at the micro level of international negotiations (NAFTA, WTO, etc.). Laypeople should know what these treaties entail.
- Raise awareness on employment issues. It is good to have labour standards but without a job to apply those standards to, people are faced with the bigger problem of a lack of income.

Loss of State Power

One participant suggested that if decisions can be made at the local level, then they should be made there rather than moved into another sphere. At the same time, subsidiarity is not about strict borders. Few issues reside in only one arena; most are articulated at multiple levels. The state has been disempowered in its ability to fulfill human rights obligations. The "policy space" for this has to be enlarged in order for states to regain that ability.

Participants discussed the contradiction in how international institutions are encouraged to articulate human rights dimensions, yet kept out of those areas.

One participant suggested there were linkages between all levels and the ways in which they operate. He provided the example of seeds and genetic plant material, which encompasses plant breeders' rights and corporate interests, as well as farmer and country rights.

During the discussion of employment, "the link to the local political priority to which every politician is held accountable," it was felt that employment is a complex issue and that decent work might simplify the issue.

It was agreed that when countries sign WTO and other agreements, they must be aware of which recourses are available to them should things go wrong with the agreement. In fact, it was pointed out that states should feel empowered enough to refuse to sign any treaty that they do not think would fully benefit them and serve their interests in a positive way.

Other points were discussed:

- Québec has recently demanded negotiations rights at the international table. This scenario is also being played out in Germany and Spain, and might provide good testing grounds for future efforts in other jurisdictions.
- Countries in the South are often excluded from negotiations of treaties that affect them. In global democracy, better integration would ensure that this is rectified.
- Before treaties are incorporated into law and implemented at the state level, there is often a long internal process.
- UN Security Council resolutions are binding for all member-states even those that were not at the negotiation table. This needs to be transformed into a consensual, democratic process.
- There is a convergence in the interests of the international business world and those at the national scene. For example, in developing countries, the informal business sector is not valued by the government.

Participants explored potential strategies:
- Focus efforts of redress at the national and state level;
- Ensure that governments become more accountable for their actions and implement laws and regulations with the interests of their citizens as their primary concern;
- Lobby governments before treaty negotiations since their decisions are usually taken before the meeting;
- Encourage countries to join to adopt a human rights declaration or resolution rather than create a global human rights charter (which is unlikely to succeed).

Big Bad Corporations?

International law not only functions to rein in international corporations "gone amok." This would suggest that everyone else is in step, when this is not always the case. A realistic look at civil society is necessary. Other participants agreed that not all corporations are bad and that some could enter into partnerships with civil society. In the health sector, there have been a few examples of "good" companies that have, for example, provided cheap drugs to populations, but in general, human rights provisions have been ignored.

Currently, the absence of rules rewards the less scrupulous. What framework will reward the just ones? Standards need to be enforced and transparency should become operative. Are there potential conflicts of interests with their business practices and human rights provisions? Are voluntary measures an avenue for corporations? This has seen success in Australia and Israel, for example. Sometimes, what makes economic sense is also logical in terms of the environment and human rights.

Alternative International Bodies

The establishment of courts addressing human rights issues around the world is an important milestone. The International Criminal Court is a key one in this respect. Such universal jurisdiction is desirable and a space in international litigation needs to be found for this to happen (e.g., the Pinochet case). The International Centre for Settlement and Investment Disputes may provide a precedent in the near future if it gets standing in court on behalf of the abuses in Argentina. (On the other hand, this could make human rights negotiable even though they are absolute.)

Participants explored potential strategies:
- Establish an international civil court modelled on the International Criminal Court;
- Create a legislative assembly with popular input.

Summary of Successes

- Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (in the area of health) provide an opportunity to elevate human rights provisions above trade issues.
- The Aarhus process under the UN regional sphere provides an example of what happens when environmental concerns are brought together.
- The water referendum in Uruguay in October 2004 provides an interesting example of citizen campaigning against corporate interests. They have managed to keep water in the public domain. Can this experience be repeated?
- The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control points out that the industry has a fundamental conflict of interest. The industry was not a participant in the treaty even though the treaty has significant implications on economics and trade. This model could be applied elsewhere.
- An international environmental, bio-economic, and social council is a potential body that could be created to implement what has been discussed here.
- The right to food and shelter goes against WTO rules on intellectual property rights in the seed sector. There may be an opportunity here to break apart the status quo.
- Water treaties are more comprehensive and can guide hierarchies (e.g., first in the hierarchy is the need for access to clean drinking water). Such treaties could be an opening to reconstruct hierarchy of values and laws.

Track 3: Global Security: Undermining Democracy?

Global security goes hand in hand with global democracy. Securing the basic needs and freedoms of people sets the ground for a more participatory form of governance. Over the last few years, especially since 9/11, the definition of global security has been increasingly centred on the enforcement of peace using military and police forces. This focus on "hard" security must be re-defined with an emphasis on fulfilling people's needs to food, shelter and employment, and right to freedom of expression and association. In

turn, this focus can help eliminate the vicious cycle of fear caused by not meeting these needs and rights which leads to violence, greater fear and the "need" for harder security measures. Otherwise, global security will continue hindering the development of a more democratic and rights-based global governance system.

The goal of this track was to offer a more holistic understanding of security and explore concrete and innovative ways for civil society to work with other sectors, including the military, on the issue of global security as it affects global democracy.

The coordinator of this track was Gustavo Marin, Foundation Charles Léopold Mayer for the Progress of Humankind, France.

Discussion

"Peace will not come out of a clash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds." While it has been over 50 years since Ghandi was advocating for peace through non-violence, the notion of creating world peace without the force of military and the subsequent loss of lives has yet to make it to levels of global (and in most cases, national) governance. Weapons are still used by most nations' militaries and are proclaimed as necessary by the governments of these nations in order to protect their citizens. It has been suggested by many that the protection of special interests of a very privileged few has replaced the protection of citizens and that, as a result, security has become a hindrance to national and global democracy, as well as to human rights around the world.

The notion that world security, in its present state, serves as an obstacle to democratic processes was a major theme in the discussions. Why and how has this happened? Perhaps more importantly, how can this situation be changed so that security and democracy complement—rather than work against—one another as vital components of civil society and of a peaceful world?

Recognizing that the subject of "why and how" was too vast to be completely addressed at this conference, the track coordinator noted several paramount events that have recently helped shape the current juxtaposition between security and democracy. Marin pointed out that in the past 50 years, societies have made huge improvements in the democratic process, citing a few key events that have stood out, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the charter of the UN, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1990, and the triumph of the anti-apartheid efforts advocated by Nelson Mandela in South Africa in 1994. Democratic regulations, in each of these cases, were seen as the preferred solution to the world's problems. He went on to stress that there has been "serious backtracking" on democratic freedoms since the infamous 9/11 and that the principal challenge facing civil society is how to re-invent the ideas of democracy and conditions of human security so that such backtracking does not continue.

A participant shared her experience with increasingly rigorous security checks when passing through the United States and contended that democratic space in the United States was shrinking. She suggested that US citizens were unaware of this situation and related this to a more global phenomenon which has seen the conditioning of people to

not criticize or debate military armed forces. As a result, freedoms were becoming more restricted and often accepted by many as the supposed cost of "security."

Marin outlined the three issues for the concurrent breakout sessions:

- Changes in the relationship between military and civil society (including their respective roles in fostering democracy)
- Reform of global governance
- Local capacity building in order to facilitate citizens ensuring their own security

Panellists highlighted critical needs that would serve as focal points for discussion:

- Clarifying the definition of "security"
- Evolving from identifying "terrorists" to identifying "terrorist acts"
- Reconciliation
- Redefining military/civil society relationships
- UN reform and the potential for complementary institutions at other levels of governance
- Linkages between local and international levels of governance (as well as those in between) in facilitating security, democracy, and peace

During the discussions, participants came up with four key strategies to help ensure human security while promoting democratic processes at global level.

Strategic Proposal #1: Establish an International Reconciliation Commission on Terrorism

Defining "Security"

It was suggested from the outset that a clear and reinvented definition of security was needed. Several participants noted that security means different things in different parts of the world. For example, in places where violence is used to stifle the democratic participation of citizens, security tends to focus on protection against such violence. In other places, where protection from violence is virtually guaranteed, security may pertain more to liberties and freedoms such as the freedom of information and the freedom of speech—although these freedoms would surely also need to be protected in countries where the primary focus was protecting citizens from violence.

These differences in definitions of security need to be considered when looking at how it relates to democracy. One participant described how security is paramount to human existence; simply put, basic needs must be met and people must feel secure with this fulfillment if they are going to be able to live in peace. Another participant questioned the purpose of the military if such needs were being met, offering that its sole purpose once basic needs are met becomes nationalism and border protection. Ensuring human security—rather than border or nationalistic security—should be the chief function of the military. While an actual definition of security was never tabled, it seemed generally

agreed that such a definition should include satisfying basic needs and should take into consideration different cultural expectations of security.

Terrorism

A participant described the current "war on terrorism," instigated by George W. Bush in response to 9/11, as an attempt to instil fear in people in order to gain support for the use of military (armed) force. He argued that the definition of terrorism being used now narrowly—and mistakenly—focuses on the terrorist ("who's the bad guy and how can we get rid of him?") rather than the terrorist act. This has prompted the imposition of draconian laws against terrorism around the world that have been used to trample on democratic rights and freedoms and to justify arrests (and lengthy and unjust detentions). He suggested that the focus should be on terrorist acts, rather than groups or individuals who commit them. This shift in focus would have the obvious benefit of increasing justice (and therefore, the opportunity for democracy) by diminishing state-sanctioned terrorism, which has most recently been exhibited in Iraq by US soldiers. More attention would then be paid to societal factors that foster terrorist behaviour (including a perceived—or real—marginalization of voices that go against status quo ideals) in the hopes of preventing future terrorism, ensuring human security, and fostering global democracy.

In one discussion, it was argued that the war against terrorism is counter-productive because it seeks to destroy terrorists, rather than attend to the factors that caused the terrorist behaviour. In addition, it was proposed that the war on terrorism has economic/commercial benefits for a privileged few who will go to great lengths to sustain these benefits. Participants agreed that overcoming these forces will take the conviction and participation of many to reform ideological frameworks around terrorism. Violence, it was said, cannot be successfully countered with violence; such rebounds do nothing to prevent future terrorist acts but instead create never-ending cycles of violence.

In a similar vein, it was agreed that terrorist acts should be addressed in a similar fashion across the board—whether it is a tactic by those frustrated with their lack of visibility or by nations that claim that such behaviour is promoting a more secure world. The outlawing of terrorist acts, it was proposed, would make terrorism a matter to be handled in legal arenas (law enforcement) rather than by forceful (armed and violent) military intervention.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation was seen as an indispensable component to ensuring human security, addressing terrorism (in its newly defined form), and fostering peace. It could go hand in hand with peacekeeping efforts and would facilitate a new approach to dealing with terrorism and ensuring human security without military force.

The first of the four strategic proposals came out of discussions involving reconciliation and terrorism.

Participants recommended that an International Reconciliation Commission on Terrorism be established in order to deal with terrorist acts.

This commission would be composed of member states that would form a negotiating team for well-known and identifiable terrorist groups and organizations. In addition, the commission would address root causes in societies for terrorist acts and, in doing so, would be able to establish some accountability for acts without giving them legitimacy. Because it would be international in scope (and ideally democratically elected), the commission would go far in restoring a sense of justice and peace in citizens.

Strategic Proposal #2: Establish a New Partnership between the Military and Civil Society

One participant launched the discussion by saying that military personnel are nothing more than citizens in uniform. He then described the changing view toward violence and military intervention in the past several decades, contending that the role of the military (as well as definitions of peace within civil society) has changed. In northern countries, military forces no longer invade other northern countries, but are used to stop violence in other countries. The definition of peace has evolved from a no-war situation to a broader mandate of stopping violence, and then helping society after such violence is stopped.

Participants discussed how conflict has evolved from a situation between states to internally within a single society, and how the military must evolve as a result. While the military has traditionally served roles of aggression—either offensively or defensively—it was agreed that it need not be relegated solely to these roles. It was believed that a new framework should be established whereby armies would play a more peacekeeping role, while maintaining their role as law upholders. This transformation would require help from civil society. Civil society could help in the training of intercultural intervention and preventive and peacekeeping measures.

In addition, it was maintained that the military must be held more directly accountable to civil society and all its members. To this end, civil society could play a watchdog role, documenting and intervening if such behaviour began to deviate from newly established roles.

Participants recognized that there might be confusion during the transformation of roles for military personnel: those who have been steeped in violence for so long may find it difficult to assume the less forceful role that is required in intervention, mediation, and prevention efforts. The United States, for example, has been quite reluctant to take on peacekeeping roles for its military.

The second strategic proposal to come out of this track addressed the reform of military roles and the relationship between military and civil society.

> **Participants proposed a new partnership between civil society and the military, in order to ensure human security and foster peace on local, regional, national, and international levels.**

It was suggested that information surrounding the transformation of the role of the military from force to peacekeeper be distributed as widely as possible, in order garner support for the idea at an upcoming conference with the UN. As a longer-term measure, it was proposed that conference participants go back to their respective countries and increase communication between civil society and the military to promote the new role for the military.

Strategic Proposal #3: Make the UN More Transparent and Accountable to Citizens

A New Architecture for the UN and Complementary Regional, National, and Local Institutions

It was pointed out that the UN is considering more charter reform and security reform issues in the next four months than it has in the past 60 years. Many participants voiced concern that the measures being proposed do not go far enough in ensuring increased democratization, accountability, transparency, and legitimacy of the UN.

There was considerable discussion surrounding reforming the UN, although there was no consensus within the group on how best to do this. A civil society vision of the UN was seen to be timely: there was general agreement that the UN needed to become more democratic in its proceedings and more transparent. It was suggested that the election of the Security Council should be democratized (more so than is currently being proposed) and that the veto power be abolished.

It was generally held that the UN should be more accountable to citizens directly rather than to nation-states. Funding—which comes from nations—was identified as a key component that could be adjusted in order to create more of a direct line of accountability between the UN and citizens. There was some concern expressed over the over-dependence of the UN on funding from the United States. With all international banking depending on the US dollar, the country has managed to survive despite high debt. It was suggested that the power of four countries to throw the US into crisis should be considered as a tactic for preventing US hegemony within the UN.

Another participant suggested that the UN could create a way for citizens to donate funds to the UN (for example, UN credit card, holding a "UN day" when citizens could contribute). While donations would be optional, it was believed that the opportunity to donate would give citizens a more direct hand in how the UN operates, lending legitimacy and transparency to the organization. (Donations could also help alleviate the current funding shortfall.)

While UN reforms were seen as necessary, failing such transformations, it was proposed that institutions at the regional, national, and local levels be established that could

complement decision making within the UN. This discussion focused primarily on increasing the role of parliamentarian members: one participant pointed out that, as parliamentarian figures can be involved in peacekeeping processes in ways that everyday citizens cannot be; they represent a valuable link between civil society and global governance and peacekeeping efforts. Moreover, he highlighted the ability of parliamentarians to provide an essential voice for their constituent citizens in matters of international governance. He went on to describe how networks of parliamentarians would foster communication within and between regions.

There was some discussion around the establishment of a global parliament, but no consensus was reached on whether such a parliament was in the best interests of civil society. Some voiced concern over the attainability of a global parliament, explaining that it was idealistic and therefore perhaps not the best strategy to pursue at this point in time. Others felt it was important to focus on lofty initiatives in order to advance new visions and capture people's imagination. One participant cautioned that a global parliament might turn into a sort of global party with political uniformity, not reflective of the various needs of diverse cultures and societies. Although this notion was countered by at least one participant with the emphasis that political diversity should be the focus of such a parliament, some remained hesitant and the subject was left with the general understanding that there was still much to be discussed.

The third strategic proposal incorporated this discussion about reform of international institutions and governance.

> **Participants agreed that the UN needs to become more transparent and accountable to citizens.**

It was emphasized that the UN should work toward democratization of decision-making processes, which could include reform of the election process for the Security Council and/or the abolition of the veto.

Strategic Proposal #4: Focus civil society efforts on increasing democracy at local levels

Two participants shared experiences of local efforts to ensure human security. Both experiences lent very concrete examples to the discussion around the need for linkages between different levels of governance in ensuring human security.

The first participant talked of extreme poverty in Rio de Janeiro, in an area where groups of six people (mostly women) often live together in substandard apartments. Average schooling is three to seven years, and many live on less than $10 US a month. Stemming from indignation brought on by the release of a movie based on life in the favela (*City of God*, 2003), community members began to realize their power in unity. There are now weekly meetings to discuss tactics to fight for basic rights (health, sanitation, schooling, etc…), although sustained rallying is difficult when most people don't have their basic needs met. The barriers faced by the community are many: the

federal government directs community members to the provincial government for complaints, but the provincial government will not communicate with the community. Aside from a complete lack of basic sanitation, education, and health care, drug trafficking is a major problem; violence is perpetuated by drug traffickers and many fear for their lives. The mass media has portrayed a sensationalized image of the community, which has undermined community confidence and outsider empathy.

While the community has received no help from provincial or national governments, business owners in and around the community have lent incredible support. In addition, increased use of Internet has begun to open up lines of communication with outside organizations, which has the potential to help the community.

The participant described how community trust and confidence must be rebuilt: many members are currently extremely mistrustful of any aid attempts because they have been treated so poorly for so long. In addition, many fear for their lives because of the violence perpetuated by drug trafficking.

The participant called for international support for these local efforts. It is clear that the community, surrounded by a police force that is both corrupt and often afraid to go into the neighbourhood, and abandoned by provincial and federal governments needs support from higher levels of governance. While initiatives should come from local communities that know their own situation best, support should be given by those in higher levels of governance whose voices are often more visible and who can put pressure on national and local governments.

The second participant echoed the need for local initiatives and global support for those initiatives. He described the devastating aftermath of the 1994 genocide of Rwanda and the complete breakdown of governance. The past 10 years have seen more than 107 local governments, democratically elected, that have allowed people to be more directly involved in their own security and welfare. Unlike the situation described previously, communities have been empowered by local government. The missing link in Rwanda, however, is between local and national governments. Local governments (and subsequently, community efforts) could be made stronger by support from the central government. To this end, international levels of governance can help put pressure on national governments and can create direct links for support to local governments in order to aid them in rebuilding their communities, ensuring human security, and fostering democracy.

As the last of the four strategic proposals, participants concluded from these stories and subsequent discussions that democracy can be most participatory at local levels.

Participants proposed that civil society focus efforts on increasing democracy at local levels as well as on higher levels of governance.

In addition, it was recommended that local governments work hard to create safe space for discussion, questioning, and dissent so that a healthy and secure democratic state for communities can be attained. Participants agreed that, in this sense, strong local democracy would support efforts for global democracy. Lastly, it was suggested that local authorities should embrace opportunities to engage in national and global forums

on democracy. They should not be afraid to use methods and ideas from these higher levels if this brings greater democracy and rights recognition to their local communities.

Track 4: Civil Society Participation; Opportunities and Responsibilities

Civil society's involvement in decision-making processes is paramount for the emergence of a more democratic global system. The growing involvement of civil society activity in local, national, and global decision making brings forth a greater representation of the voices of a diversity of constituencies. This interaction includes civil society meetings with international economic institutions (the WB, IMF, and WTO) and its participation in multilateral fora (such as those of the UN, L20, and G8). Strengthening the voice and representation of civil society on global decision-making tables continues to be a priority. However, to achieve legitimacy in its call for greater global democracy, civil society must cultivate and use democratic practices within its own system.

Track 4 looked at strategies that would make civil society's participation in decision-making processes more effective in influencing policies around different strategic entry points in the multilateral system. Also, participants discussed how civil society organizations could meet the responsibility they had toward the constituencies they represent to be more transparent and coordinated in their own activities, within individual organizations or in a network of many different ones working for the same cause.

The coordinator for Track 4 was **Jagadananda** from the Centre for Youth and Social Development, CIVICUS, India,

Making International Institutions Accountable

The accountability of IFIs—to civil society and to humanity as a whole—was a central theme in this discussion track. A key problem is a form of monetization that has transferred power from states to financial markets. Concurrently, states have been weakened by a trend toward decentralization, the emergence of China and India is transforming international relations, and new technologies are changing the nature of work.

Discussion on the politics of participation in international institutions touched on two self-evident truths: the neo-liberal model has failed, but NGO efforts to reform institutions like the World Bank and the IMF have failed as well.

One speaker noted with concern that the World Bank and the IMF divide civil society organizations into two groupings, based on whether they consider them "constructive" or "destructive." The "destructive" groups "are the ones who in any way challenge the orthodoxy" of the major IFIs, and those groups aren't invited into the room. Yet even those organizations that have successfully engaged with international institutions have been unable to bring about a major shift in policy.

A participant described the "revolution of associational activity" carried out by an "astounding" number of civil society groups at the global level. "There is a stronger acknowledgement of the central and essential role of civil society in achieving good governance," she said, and a number of civil society organizations have demonstrated the value they bring to multilateral institutions.

Yet, "we're also living in a time where there seems to be a backlash toward both civil society and toward multilateralism," placing NGOs in the paradoxical position of criticizing the deep flaws in multilateral institutions they hope to bolster. "At the end of the day, she said, "we want to see multilateralism in the UN system improving."

Civil Society and the L20: Creating Democratic Spaces in New Global Governance Fora

While participants agreed that civil society is being excluded from the L20 process, they had differing opinions about how far they should cooperate with the think tanks involved. Many felt that consultation would be acceptable, whereas others worried that consulting with organizations such as the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) would imply a degree of support. They wanted to find a mechanism by which CSOs could engage in the process without actually giving it their seal of approval.

They asked that a meeting be arranged between CIGI or Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC) and NGOs to explore the best way forward. There is a chance for movement given that Prime Minister Paul Martin is engaged and supportive of the L20 mechanism. A representative from the Canadian Government offered to take the suggestion to FAC.

Notes on self-organized workshop 10.

She described how, in their interactions with multilateral organizations, civil society organizations tend to distinguish between operational engagement and advocacy. But even the groups involved in front-line implementation have "a lot of scope to influence the way decisions are made and funds are disbursed." She said a diversity of strategies and roles will be needed to bring a greater degree of democracy to international institutions.

Participants debated the formation of an "L20" forum as an alternative to the "rich man's club" of the G8. One panellist said the L20 would include developing countries like Brazil and India, and would "present a better opportunity to deal with issues like global health and terrorism." While some participants saw merit in the proposal, most were unconvinced, noting that the world's poorest societies would still be excluded.

The Cardoso Panel: A Time for Damage Control?

There was a strong sense among panellists and participants that the recommendations of the Cardoso Panel must be carried forward, not forgotten. But the most realistic course of action for civil society might be to engage in a form of damage control, in the hopes of preserving as much of the report as possible.

The problem, said one participant, is that "the current context is not as favourable as perhaps a few years ago, when the initial thinking around the Panel came through." Despite numerous examples of effective civil society engagement, at least one NGO based in New York has been looking for pieces of the Cardoso framework that can be implemented in the present environment.

Follow-up strategies could include the following:

- Focusing on consensus elements for more immediate implementation, particularly the items that are most meaningful to NGOs and civil society;
- Seeking to reopen the debate around Cardoso at the local and national levels;
- Attempting to dissociate the useful content of the Cardoso report from the forum in which it was generated.

Inside and Outside: Preparing for September

Looking ahead to the Millennium +5 Summit in September 2005, participants discussed the level of participation to which civil society should aspire as well as the outcomes and follow-up mechanisms that should flow from the meeting.

So far, the news has not been encouraging. NGOs have had to fight for the right to be present for the Summit—not even as participants, but simply to observe and listen to member states' comments on the issue of UN reform. With the Summit approaching, participants agreed on the value of an information clearinghouse that would enable them to share their knowledge of effective deliberative fora like the World Summit on the Information Society or the Helsinki process.

A key message from civil society is the need for states to agree on clear follow-up mechanisms, including a review process with strong civil society participation, to ensure that specific commitments at the Summit are fulfilled.

Participants proposed an "inside/outside" strategy leading up to the Summit, in which civil society advocates proceed along two parallel tracks. The "insider" track would consist of an information clearinghouse to pool the experience and expertise available to NGOs. The "outsider" track would involve creating an institutional space where citizens can debate the international institutions they want and the role of civil society organizations as "connectors" between citizens and international institutions. The first step would be for G05 participants to open debate within their own organizations, as a means of raising awareness, generating citizen involvement, and coordinating more closely around the September summit.

A World Parliament

A world parliament was put forward as a model of institutional democracy that would go beyond the existing framework of the United Nations. One breakout session in this track

reached wide consensus on the long-term feasibility and desirability of such a structure, though there were serious concerns about modalities, mechanisms, and representative structures. These issues could not be resolved in one afternoon, noted a participant, "but there was a very articulate, convincing presentation of a possible model and a set of starting points," including a set of initial meetings organized by a group of "vanguard countries" in the next year.

At the closing track plenary, one participant identified a UN parliamentary assembly and a separate civil society forum as precursors to a directly elected world parliament. The two structures "would be feasible right now with the political will," he said, and could be based on a long-term vision that places human rights at the top of a broader hierarchy of values.

A Hierarchy of Values

A number of participants commented on the need for a hierarchy of values that places the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) above the current preoccupation with trade.

"If we could actually agree that what we want to defend is the fact that there are some values that are above other values, if we could agree that there should be a classification of values, that would be a step forward," one group member suggested. "The next step is not to forget that the best leverage is at the national level," where it would be possible to mandate that state institutions and structures work to defend the UDHR.

Another participant said discussion had emphasized the individual citizen as the source of governments' legitimacy, while demonstrating broad agreement on a hierarchy of values: "[…] human rights are fundamentally a better foundation for global, local, regional, and national governance than commercial rights." One of the track breakouts discussed the need to "deconstruct the values and interests behind our work," including the expectation that international institutions will channel citizens' voices on matters that concern them.

One participant expressed concern that the traditional human rights approach "does not include the actual world of the 21st century, where we're faced with very severe ecological problems and resource implications." The UDHR does nothing to address the decline of oil or the environmental crises facing the world's fisheries, water tables, forests, or climate, he said.

> **"We need a vision that includes resources, and the best starting point I know is the Earth Charter." - participant**

Closing the Loop on Citizen Engagement

To be seen as legitimate, consultation and engagement processes conducted at the national and international levels must close the loop with the citizens who participate in them. Civil society organizations have a crucial role to play in this process.

At one time, it was thought that civil society could set the stage for broader citizen engagement through a strategy of "reintermediation," in which local institutions became involved in domestic political processes and institutions. But too many people felt they were "participating without power," since their involvement gave them no access to the real centres of decision making. The experience underscored the need to strengthen intermediate institutions and connect global and local issues.

More specifically, participants noted the following:

- Consultation processes often lack a feedback mechanism to let citizens know what has been done with their comments, research, or advice.
- Little is being done to link related engagement initiatives that operate in parallel at the local and global levels.

The key elements of citizen engagement—and some of the challenges that arise—are sometimes most obvious at the local level. In a review of citizen engagement exercises in Canada, Scotland, and India, participants determined that active involvement is more likely when consultation processes are transparent, less likely when the approach is overly procedural, and easier to encourage when a topic captures public attention. In Scotland, for example, debt relief emerged as an important focal point.

Strategies for increasing citizen engagement could include the following:

- Iterative drafting processes, in which stakeholder participation continues right through the stage when consultants might otherwise have withdrawn to write their report;
- Adaptation of budget tracking, report cards, and other local mechanisms to increase accountability for participatory processes at the national and global levels;
- A concerted effort to help citizens acquire the information they need to engage in meaningful consultation;
- Publication of meeting minutes and other public records of intergovernmental bodies to make them open to scrutiny.

In developing citizen-friendly processes, a good rule of thumb is to "always ask the question: 'Who is not there?'" a participant said. "People have different barriers (to engagement), and it's important to not just level the playing field, but to slope the playing field to enable certain groups to participate." Participants stressed citizens' right to engage in the issues that affect their lives, as well as the need to create critical mass for action "so that you are not crushed before you even start."

Community Capacity to Engage on Global Governance

At different stages in the track discussion, participants acknowledged the enormous importance of local, national, and subnational contexts in shaping citizens' engagement. "The capacity to engage is vastly different in different regions," noted a participant.

A participant from one of the "poor" countries noted that street campaigners are "struggling in the streets" in some parts of the world, knowing that their governments have granted immunity to development banks, armies, and other institutions whose objectives are at odds with the values of citizen engagement and global governance. "I don't know whether that's a local or a global governance issue," he said. "It's happening in my country, but it's a global concern to make everyone accountable for whatever they're doing."

In keeping with a commitment to local empowerment, one participant questioned who had mandated a conference attended primarily by people from the industrialized north to come up with a vision for developing countries.

Participants noted that civil society engagement is often inhibited by a "culture of expertise" that has given rise to "a certain arrogance" in some of the international institutions. The problem is compounded by a level of secrecy that becomes a major impediment to consultation and engagement, as well as complex decision-making structures that make it very difficult to mount effective lobbying campaigns from the outside.

Even when an initiative seems to be structured appropriately, a key problem is that the World Bank and the IMF consider themselves responsible to their shareholders first, rather than the people who are "affected by their policies, bad or good."

Grassroots dissatisfaction with institutions is beginning to surface. For example, decision making has become so complicated that it's hard for people to understand where the responsibility lies. One participant described how "There can be the most beautiful and advanced treaties and agreements at the global level, which we all hope to see in the coming years so that the free-riders will be brought on board, but nothing will actually happen unless people at the local level come up with new innovations" that change production, consumption, lifestyles, and citizens' sense of responsibility. She identified access to information as a key factor in making institutions more accountable, and underscored the value of referenda and ballot initiatives in building citizen engagement.

Several participants cited the results of France's referendum on the European Union Constitution as evidence that elites are out of touch with the grassroots. At least one of the track breakouts reached consensus on the need for a multistakeholder model of citizen engagement, based on success stories like the Coalition for an International Criminal Court, the work of environmental NGOs in defence of the Kyoto Protocol, the international campaign against landmines, and the indigenous peoples' forum at the UN.

A couple of participants asked for further details to firm up these visions and strategies, as a step in reclaiming the UN for citizens and civil society. One organization called on the UN to introduce a peoples' parliamentary assembly of sitting legislators from different

countries, as well as a global civil society forum, both as advisory bodies to the General Assembly.

Participants in one track stressed that citizens are motivated by specific issues that affect their lives, not broad principles. "Telling people that this is good governance is not very interesting to them," one of the participants noted. "It's the issue that is interesting." Another breakout looked at what it will take to get ordinary citizens engaged and empowered. "The overriding value was the issue of courage," said a participant. "Courage of the individual, courage of the group, courage of the association, and the need to encourage others and each other."

Partnerships across Civil Society

While some participants described the initial inroads they had made in putting forward a civil society voice in different international fora, others underscored the need for more effective collaboration among NGOs. They discussed the transformation of social movements, old and new, in ways that support international co-operation and grassroots leadership. Civil society is still constructing itself, he said, but the sector can still play an important role in transforming large international institutions.

A number of participants stressed the potential for trade unions, the women's movement, faith-based organizations, local governments, and many other groups to strengthen themselves and each other by reaching out across sectors and areas of specialty. Some track panellists also encouraged civil society organizations to work together—at the national level, and through broad international coalitions like CIVICUS. One of the track breakouts stressed the value of the Internet as a worldwide networking tool for civil society organizations.

Accountability and Transparency within Civil Society

A large number of panellists and participants underscored the need for civil society organizations to model the behaviour they would like to see elsewhere by becoming paragons of transparency and accountability.

One of the breakout discussions in this track focused specifically on issues of civil society legitimacy and accountability. Civil society has little money or formal power, participants said, and undermines its own effectiveness whenever it fails to articulate a set of ethically based values—to the public, and to its critics. The group identified four key issues:
- How to build appropriate accountability systems, for individual NGOs and for groupings like development NGOs or advocacy groups;
- The challenges involved in building effective evaluation systems, at a time when many NGOs have separate measurement frameworks to meet their donors' requirements and their own;
- How to extend the notion of accountability and legitimacy from the local to the global level, in a way that examines international NGOs' effectiveness in responding to the grassroot groups they claim to represent;

- The extent to which accountability and legitimacy systems can be developed for multisectoral relationships.

"What emerged from this discussion was a sense that this is an important issue, that it's one on which we're not going to come up with instant solutions, that the solutions will be developed and negotiated over time, and that there is evolution in a lot of sectors around these issues," said a participant. There was agreement that this issue "will have to be dealt with if civil society is going to continue to make a big impact on global governance."

One participant stressed the need to engage with this issue, "not from a position of defensiveness, but from a position of strength." Governments draw their policy mandate from their electorates, businesses can at least claim that they are accountable to shareholders, but both challenge civil society to demonstrate its mandate to comment, criticize, or participate. This dynamic exists in spite of the "perform or perish" challenge that is a day-to-day reality for any non-profit organization. Compared to other sectors that can count on a reliable flow of funds, he noted that civil society organization rely entirely on voluntary contributions. "There can be nothing more powerful in terms of accountability than actually having that reality to deal with." He added that the right-wing attack on NGOs is not unexpected, and can be seen as a reflection of civil society's growing credibility in international advocacy.

One of the track breakouts echoed this concern about the government tendency to question civil society organizations' legitimacy as stakeholders—with the result that the private sector is represented in decisions, but affected communities are not. It is frequently suggested that citizen activism threatens to undermine democracy by bypassing formal decision-making structures, even though civil society has historically aligned itself with the most vulnerable, marginalized groups in society.

A participant encouraged civil society organizations in the United States, in particular, to work together in response to legislative and regulatory initiatives designed to control NGOs and undermine their work. "We have to monitor what's happening in the regulatory environment and engage with those activities," she said. At the same time, civil society organizations must "do the internal work we need to do so that we can assert our legitimacy and get the credibility we deserve."

Social exclusion, accessible language, and the disconnect between levels of governance were all seen as key accountability issues for international NGOs. A participant said his group had developed a framework that unpacks what accountability means for a civil society organization. Key policies and procedures would cover transparent decision making, stakeholder participation in decision making, continual evaluation against goals and objectives, and a redress mechanism for stakeholders who aren't satisfied with the organization's performance.

Participants at one of the breakout sessions acknowledged that NGOs' effectiveness in engaging the UN to promote global democracy will depend in part on their own ability to address issues of internal and external representation. A participant pointed out that G05 participants' own in-depth discussion of a possible world parliament had involved a group drawn almost entirely from the industrialized north, more specifically from North America. More broadly, fair mechanisms are needed to guide the selection or election of civil society organizations to take part in multistakeholder deliberations.

Track 5: How to Democratically Regulate the Global Economy?

The democratic deficit within the global economic system is seen in the asymmetric power and representation between states in core decision-making processes regarding trade, debt, financial transactions, corporate social responsibility, and sustainable development. The lack of transparency within these processes along with the lack of accountability of international financial institutions and their representatives to the needs and interests of various stakeholders (and not just those that privilege the North) is ever present and deepens the asymmetries that already exist. Given that civil society along with other actors oppose the current international economic system and its related policies, Track 5 looked at how civil society can intervene in and offer alternatives to regulating the global economy more democratically.

The coordinator of Track 5 was Maria Fernanda Tuozzo , Falcultad Latinoamericana de Sciencas Politicas (FLACSO), Japan/Argentina.

Discussion

The global economy is running at a high human price at the local level. What should be considered a basic standard of life—including some degree of job security, health care, the freedom to associate with trade unions, and make informed decisions when voting for representatives at the local, provincial, and national levels of government—is threatened by global commercial interests anchored on self-interest and the acquisition of benefits. Examples can be seen in many different policies that have been recently undertaken and sometimes favoured by IFIs such as the IMF. Its support for the privatization of public services, has led, for example, to the privatization of the water supply in many countries thus making access to water more problematic for the poorer populations.

Participants called for a shift in understanding of the role of the economy: if it is seen as a means of creating better jobs and as way to ensure better living conditions, sustainability and greater equity. But democratic regulation of the global economy will be difficult to achieve without more active, informed democratic participation at all levels of governance (local, regional, and national as well as international levels).

Tuozzo identified four recurring themes in conference discussions:
- Increase public awareness through education and capacity building
- Re-focus on national and local levels of governance and decision making
- Transform financial institutions
- Increase discussion and co-operation among civil society organizations

These were presented as possible courses of action to deal with three overarching problems:

- A rift in knowledge and understanding among individuals and organizations of the technical details of economics;
- A lack of transparency and accountability among international financial institutions and corporations;
- The top-down nature of current economic decision making.

Participants shared concerns about the rift in knowledge and information that divides financial specialists and the public. One participant suggested that "It shouldn't take a PhD to understand the WTO website." Another participant questioned whether civil society currently has the capacity to critique information provided by corporate managers, international financial institutions, and governments. If the global economy is to be reframed as a means to a better quality of life for more people rather than as an end unto itself, much will have to be demystified: terms and arguments proposed to civil society, economic scenarios that make use of perceived competitiveness among nations, technical details regarding national debts and loans, the real significance of large financial flows on the national level, etc. With this kind of information, individuals (workers, investors, and voters) and civil society organizations will be better positioned to take an active part in decisions making on economic issues.

"Don't accept the terms of debate as they are proposed," urged one participant. He described meeting with a Korean labour minister and asking him about the motivation behind a clampdown on labour rights. The answer was in ironic reversal of the reasoning of Thatcher's government: companies were threatening to go to the UK. Some facts are found to be only partial truths; for example, managers pushing for longer hours told Mexican workers (who already had a 48-hour week) that German workers were increasing their hours. The actual increase in Germany was from 35 to 37 hours.

A lack of transparency and accountability in international financial institutions was seen as a core underlying problem throughout discussions. The lack of sufficient technical knowledge about economic issues among members of civil society aggravates that problem, as active participation in decision-making processes requires an understanding of the terms of debate.

There were calls to activate all levels of decision making, the local and the national as well as the global. Local political leaders must be pressured to effect positive change. One participant explained that "It's wrong to regard the IMF and the World Bank as entities in their own right: they are guided by our governments. The Millennium Development Goals have quantified the number of resources that should go to developing countries. We have to hold our governments accountable to those objectives." Another commented on the lack of debate on economic issues during Britain's elections, and in Parliament. "That the WTO Marrakech agreement went through without debate is appalling." And some participants voiced concern that strategies addressing action at the national level were neglected in favour of the global and local levels.

One participant called for "devolution to sub-state governments and local civil society. In governing global trade—investments and other economic activities—macro governance is inevitably essential, but have local governance whenever it's possible." The sovereign nation state as a "comprehensive supreme authority" is an anachronism in the global economy. Yet, sovereignty-based thinking persists. "You can't bring democracy to the global economy with that kind of framework. That's why subsidiarity is important."

The asymmetrical nature of the relationships among different countries, cultures, and populations was brought up many times. International bodies are heavily influenced by northern interests; participants acknowledged that northern countries do not have enough of an understanding of the realities facing southern countries. Muslim nations, and countries in the East and mid-East in general, are under-represented in organizations dealing with economic issues.

Debt

The debt system should be transparent at the international level and to debtor countries. Discussions acknowledged that the democratic management of debt within the current legal system is not feasible. In Africa, for example, civil society has little practical information about national debt and loans.

Some participants suggested that debtor countries form a network in order to better position themselves in negotiations. Within individual debtor countries, a "participation barometer" should be developed to gauge the democratic role of parliaments in the management of debt, and civil society should have access to information about loan mechanisms, negotiations with international financial institutions, and the uses for the borrowed money. Citizen inspection panels and new laws could make the consent of parliament a necessary step before any loans would be accepted.

Within middle-income countries, participants felt that debt should be restructured. On the international level, a new debt framework should be set up to provide crisis prevention and resolution through ongoing debtor-creditor dialogue. G20 countries should create a secretariat of International Debt Framework.

International Financial Institutions

"How," asked a participant, "do you turn a tiger into a vegetarian?" The relationship between international organizations (such as the IMF) and the world's poorer countries is unequal. The same representatives are active in negotiating, forming, and judging regulations that are often favourable to the privatization of public services. Poverty reduction policies fail to take into account the realities of specific countries. These policies do not carry any credibility for local populations: they are negotiated behind closed doors, without the involvement of elected government representatives, and they are most often influenced by northern interests that have little consideration of local situations.

Northern countries should be educated about the realities confronted by southern countries. One conference participant offered an example of the disregard on the part of northern governments of the work being done on the ground in developing southern countries. A summit of African countries in Ouagadoudou developed a poverty-reduction platform that prioritized job creation and the development of a social protection net. Yet when British Prime Minister Tony Blair released a report on Africa, there was no mention made of this conference.

Although there is now better representation of southern countries at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, decision-making power is still weighted toward the northern countries. Within southern countries, democracies are increasingly dependent on economies based on investments originating in northern countries. Participants discussed options for abolition (which was seen as a rather long-term process with little short-term applicability), reforms, and alternative paths. Also, many participants shared the belief that, "If we work within existing institutions, chances for effective change are very low."

Corporate Social Responsibility

One participant opened the discussion by describing the corporate stage of action as "akin to holding the Olympics and doling out gold medals without the use of any referees." The flexibility of corporations able to strategically shift locations from one state to another is an obstacle in the enforcement of corporate law. One participant pointed out that, "There is a significant problem with tax evasion and avoidance that goes against both the spirit and the letter of the law."

Enforceable laws against tax avoidance need to be developed, agreed participants, but at which level? The argument was made for developing them at the national level: if domestic laws are strengthened, and corporations exceed those norms, the local government will be encouraged to increase the standards. The development of laws at the international level should then follow, and global governance will have to back the enforcement of these laws. One participant wondered if existing corporate laws from one nation (i.e., the United States) be imported for international use? "Unless we have a system where corporate behaviour is transparent, regulations cannot be voluntary."

However, another participant responded to this proposal by pointing out that, for example, the existence of tobacco laws in the United States is due to its strong civil society. Although similar laws should be instated in Africa, the effects would not be similar because the mechanisms civil society uses to intervene will have to be more developed; otherwise, the laws will not be enforced. On the international stage, who, he asked, will enforce laws for oil companies, for example? The establishment of international enforcement mechanisms is therefore a key priority for future discussions and action.

Yet, one participant suggested that, given the problem of regional tax havens competing in the "race to the bottom" even within countries as small as Switzerland, local regional authorities should be involved in the development of these laws.

Along with the implementation of international corporate law that would be applied regardless as to a corporation's location, proposals called for work on the national level of corporate legislation, lobbying of corporations, global governance of international corporate law, lobbying national governments to strengthening domestic law, and public education on corporate activity.

A final proposal addressing corporate responsibility called for working "toward socially responsible business practices through statutory, regulatory framework, including progressive taxation, and robust respect for labour and environmental regulations."

Trade

Discussions stemmed from an understanding of current issues at the WTO: unbalanced representation, lack of transparent and accountable decision making, a proliferation of bilateral agreements, and a disproportionate representation of northern NGOs. As well, participants doubted the practical capacity of the WTO. With a staff of 500, is it well equipped to take on the tasks at hand?

Proposals made included reinforcing communication between northern and southern NGOs and developing a common agenda, updating WTO practices to include mechanisms to ensure accountability to the public, and reframing the fundamental purpose of the economy as a means to providing jobs.

There was a call for interventions at the Hong Kong meetings scheduled for December 2005. Citing the extremely high numbers of unofficial strikes that occur in China every year, one participant proposed more discussion with Chinese authorities about the lack of labour rights in that country. He explained that, although companies were quite interested in a conference on the rights of migratory workers that would have brought together Chinese officials, trade unions representatives, and foreign investors, the authorities cancelled it at the last minute.

Discussion turned to how bilateral free trade agreements have produced serious costs in terms of job losses. One participant suggested, "Hit the system where it is weakest: make providing jobs an explicit policy objective." Alternative trade models should be explored.

One participant suggested that the goal should be to have an effective multilateral institution to deal with international trade, rather than shifting, regional, or bilateral coalitions.

Sustainable Development

The issues of terrorism and climate change have become competing agendas, suggested one participant. Further, increases in oil prices and stress on water supplies (in California, for example) have hit in successive waves.

But in developing countries in particular, economic growth takes precedence over environmental concerns. Although sustainable development has important social and economic implications, concern over debt has overshadowed the issue.

Some participants agreed that, although a transformation of the United Nations Environment Programme might present potential, it would still not be able to compete with the WTO without a significant increase in resources. They also agreed on the necessity of including civil society organizations in the building of agendas within international organizations.

The issue of sustainable development should be demystified. Discussion participants agreed that sustainable development has not been included in development agendas

due to a lack of understanding. If a single definition of sustainable development is difficult to articulate, it should at least be possible to recognize that the consumption and production practices of the northern countries are unsustainable.

While there was consensus that the public should have access to sustainable development agreements that have been signed by governments and syndicates, there was some disagreement as to how much more development of expertise or how much concept building had to be done to further this cause. The argument was made that there is enough of a specialized knowledge base in this field among members of civil society already. If progress is not being made, participants attributed it to the fact that those involved in the debate are often in the position of defending the interests of their respective nation-states.

On the international level, participants called for lobbying to set a deadline for the meeting of the eighth of the Millennium Development Objectives, and including sustainable development on the Security Council agenda. They suggested that regional NGOs should be strengthened and should be able to make use of international courts in cases where arbitration is needed.

The breakout session discussions called for transparency, accountability, greater public participation, and public access to understandings signed by governments and syndicates.

Financial Flows

Does civil society currently have the capacity to understand and critique capital flow? In the opinion of one participant, "There are several markets that are totally obscure, only specialists understand them. We have to get at the heart of the system, which is Wall Street and London." In the financial capitals of the world, there are organizations of closed groups of 50 or 60 people who are key decision makers within capital markets, pointed out one audience member, and these groups are free to evade public scrutiny.

One participant discussed the myth that large financial flows are essential to a state's economic wellbeing. What is the real value of the loans going out to developing countries? When the sum total of all development aid is compared to the amount of capital flowing out of developing countries, it turns out that capital flight overshadows capital inflow. It was argued that the problem of national debts is not so much a problem of longer or shorter repayment schemes, but of the "dubious analytical work" behind the basic premise for the loans. "Is it true that developing countries need a lot of loans? There must be a move to stop capital flight out of these countries."

Participants argued that the incentive structure at international financial institutions does not encourage poverty reduction; in fact, individuals are more likely to make gains in taking advantage of economic volatility. "The more volatile the situation, the bigger the bonus." Could an incentive structure be practically linked to poverty reduction? There was a suggestion that the World Bank should situate its offices in some of the poorer regions. Within the World Bank, there is a "ratchet effect": the incentives encourage the continuation of rightwing policy making, and there is no means of access for leftwing policy makers.

Participants called for public knowledge of the connection between parent corporations and their subsidiaries. They agreed that more understanding of corporate activity—for example, the use of proxy voting—would help individuals make ethical investment decisions.

Summary

More information must flow to more individuals and civil society organizations if the global economy is to be democratically regulated. As the global economy is seen as an end unto itself, in terms of policy making and practical effects, there is a top-down dynamic that has a negative impact on communities and individuals. For that to be righted, the flow of decision making must be redirected: from local governments and civil society organizations, to regional bodies, to national bodies and parliaments, to global organizations.

Increased networking among civil society organizations was considered essential to the creation of alternative initiatives. With increased access to information about corporate activity and international financial agreements, civil society would be in a position to press for greater accountability from these groups.

Increased transparency should bring about greater accountability. Capacity building on the part of civil society organizations and more successful networking between northern and southern NGOs and debtor countries should lead to systemic change.

Economic change on a global is feasible: it is technically, organizationally, and politically possible. There is, according to one participant, "a growing alternative global movement, and a growing sense that self-interests are tied up in global interests, even in elite circles." But, he warned, neo-liberal concepts and sovereignty-based thinking are proving to have a lot of staying power, global capital is heavily concentrated, state and supra-state organizations do not have sufficient capacity to bring about significant change. "You need more than a core of civil society activists." Finally, the democratization process must be fundamentally intercultural.

Maria Fernanda Tuozzo summarized the two final proposals:

> **Proposal 1: Enhance capacity building at national and local civil society and parliamentary levels to increase involvement and oversight capacities.**

This would help with the following:
- Trade negotiations;
- Macro-economic policies and decision making (including contracting of debt and international loans);
- Government positioning regarding international financial design and local standards of financial regulation.

> **Proposal 2: Maintain and complement civil society strategies and demands through calls for systemic change and through reforms of the current established international economic system to better articulate proposals that challenge the dominant neo-liberal paradigm.**

These would include action toward the following:

- Creation and support of alternative initiatives or institutions that perform similar functions to those of IFIs;
- Expansion of pressures for the inclusion of sustainable development and environmental issues in the Security Council agenda
- Expansion of campaigns and demands to modify the shareholding structures to make IFIs more equal, transparent, and accountable
- Support of greater co-operation for the establishment of international corporate laws to increase accountability
- Expansion and support for initiatives that endorse alternative models of trade

Track 6: Cultural Diversity—Maintaining Cultural Diversity in Global Solidarity?

Building global democracy requires that diverse constituencies have equal access to decision-making processes and the capacity to be heard and participate fully. However, globalization favours cultural homogenization and endangers the diversity of cultures worldwide. The sacrifice of identities and languages emerging from these cultural reference points to commercial interests deepens the inequalities between people and societies and invigorates the democratic deficit by empowering those who have historically put in place the structures upholding these inequalities—the media, private companies and Western governments.

Track 6 was devoted to discussions on how civil society, diverse in the communities it represents, can maintain this diversity of cultures within its own organizations while remaining united against the homogenization that has come with globalization.

Seán Ó Siochrú, CRIS Campaign, Ireland, was the coordinator for Track 6.

The Threat to Cultural Diversity

The commercially driven process of cultural globalization through media differs from previous forms of colonialism because of its for-profit dynamics. This gives it the power to challenge cultural identity and the sustainability of cultural diversity among, for instance, indigenous peoples, immigrant groups, and linguistic groups. Further, it can lead to the misrepresentation in mainstream media of women, immigrants, linguistic and cultural minorities, poor and marginalized groups, and others.

During the discussion about media concentration and the profound influence of television, one participant gave the example of the sudden interest in and knowledge of Islam throughout the world following the attacks on the USA in 2001, and the impact this has had.

Participants pointed out that the context created by globalization is not entirely negative. It opens the possibility of accountability and helps civil society to challenge inequalities in some global issues. It also gives rise to local forms of social power, from which successful forms—not only of resistance, but of counter-hegemonic strategies—might be developed. New communication and information technologies allow civil society to become an actor and to promote democratic global governance.

These challenges call for civil society's "appropriation" of media (in the sense of gaining control over governance in the public interest), the democratization of global governance, and the establishment of a human rights approach to identity and cultural diversity issues.

Participants agreed that the issue of cultural diversity is a central concern at all levels, and must not be treated as an "add-on." Different peoples' needs and interests must be taken into account effectively, and that will not occur if peoples' cultural diversity is not recognized as an asset, an inalienable right, and the basis for any sustainable democratic gain. For culture to be sustainable, it should therefore be higher up on the agenda of international NGOs active in governance issues, the present Forum included. It needs to be articulated from the international to the national to the local level, and vice versa, and the language used should be understandable at the local level.

Local and global initiatives are being implemented in media and culture, and must be reinforced in order to defend and invigorate cultural diversity, particularly with regard to media culture.

In governance issues relating to cultural diversity, participants called for more attention to development at the regional level (e.g., African Union, regional trade agreements, etc.). A worldwide NGO network in cultural diversity and cultural affairs should be developed.

Participants were reminded of the important work done by the World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD) established jointly by UNESCO and the United Nations in December 1992. The Commission prepared a policy-oriented report on the interactions between culture and development entitled *Our Creative Diversity*.

Cultural Sustainability, Especially in Relation to Indigenous Cultures

Is culture a renewable resource, participants wondered? If depleted, will it take more than one generation to regenerate? Some argued that culture is indeed a renewable resource, because people are strong—yet others were less optimistic.

Youth play a critical role in cultural sustainability and renewal. On the one hand, it is important that they are exposed to and take on the "cultural memory" of their

communities; on the other, the community's culture must be transformed into the language of youth. They have a major role to play in the evolution of sustainable culture. It is also important, participants said, to help youths recognize and respect others' ways of seeing things and, more generally, to attract them to culture. They have to be involved in all discussions regarding culture. Women, especially in traditional cultures, can be key players as they pass on traditions, arts and crafts, and other aspects of cultural heritage to children.

Participants were reminded that culture is something that children have in them, not something they learn in school. Not only do children have a name, a language, values, inherited traditions and images, and learned behaviours long before they enter the school system, but they also have creativity and imagination. "They *are* culture, they do not go to school to be cultivated. Culture is inherent."

Information and communication flows within and outside communities are essential to cultural sustainability. However, one participant pointed out that the sustainability of Indigenous cultures requires that a part of that knowledge be maintained within the community itself and not shared. Cultures are dynamic, and cultural transformation should not be a forced process. Each cultural community, in order to survive, has to seek a balance between change and tradition, between openness and protecting its cultural identity.

It was suggested that cultures, in particular indigenous cultures, are not commodities for the tourist trade. When preserving threatened cultures (especially when doing so from the outside), there is a danger of turning these cultures and their members into folkloric commodities for visitors to gape at. Yet one participant argued that tourist appeal can become a central condition for cultural survival. She felt that cultural preservation efforts must be forward looking, not exclusively focused on the past. In that sense, tourism can have both positive and negative effects on culture.

Global and regional agreements concerning cultural diversity must be translated into languages and forms that indigenous communities can understand. Indigenous communities must also have the right to participate at all levels in their design and implementation. Participants called for ways to promote the dialogue among community, regional, and international organizations regarding cultural sustainability, and to commit local communities to vigorous participation in all development efforts. UNESCO can play an important role in ensuring cultural diversity. The vision should be to develop and promote a binding convention on cultural diversity to monitor, measure, and protect it. However, if some of the key players do not support the convention, or if UNESCO only comes up with a declaration with no binding power, the situation will not improve. An organization is also needed to monitor the effects of globalization on culture and to measure the impacts of trade agreements on culture. The commodification of culture must not be allowed—culture should not be included in trade negotiations.

Cultural sustainability has to be seen as local as possible—or there will not be any sustainability. "All communities should have the opportunity to make choices." Participants suggested that when communities are informed about options and consequences, they can develop realistic strategies that will safeguard their interests and respond to their needs.

Generally speaking, participants agreed, it is very difficult to mobilize people around culture, as it is not seen or treated as a political issue. However, Québec is doing better than most other countries and provinces.

Linguistic Diversity

At the current rate, half of the 6700 languages that exist today will have disappeared by the end of the century: many of the threatened languages are spoken in the poorest countries. Yet language diversity is essential to cultural diversity. To lose one's language is to lose one's identity. In that sense—and because people can only participate in the social, political, and economic activities of their region and their country if they understand the language spoken—linguistic diversity is a fundamental condition of democracy.

The domination of English is obvious in every region of the world, participants agreed. Two thirds of the world's population learns English (for various reasons), yet it is the mother tongue of only a fraction of these people. The English used for international dialogue has a limited vocabulary of only 1500 words, which prompted one participant to ask if English could be the language that is threatened.

One participant suggested exploring the possibility of using a neutral international language (such as Esperanto) for wider communication, in order to protect linguistic diversity from the linguicidal effects of hegemonic languages. However, others pointed out that the adoption of such an international language is an improbable proposition, given the stronghold of the English language, and that the neutrality of Esperanto is debatable, given that it is a Western creation. Participants concluded that the domination of English is not necessarily a bad thing. For one thing, as some pointed out, iconic figures such as the Dalai Lama and Nelson Mandela speak English. In addition, one main language of communication allows for increased citizen participation in civil society and government, as well as in development.

Participants discussed how language diversity can be a source of inconvenience, making communications between groups difficult. One member of the group suggested that it is essential to get the stories and language of the minorities and the least powerful.

Beyond language differences, there are also differences in communication styles. Sometimes, stories are needed to make a point, although discourses and abstracts are the prevailing mode of communications. Having to learn two languages in school can also handicap some children and thus compromise their academic achievements.

International and national NGOs should practise linguistic diversity in their own activities. As a start, the group called on all those present—

- To examine their current linguistic diversity and report on it;
- To create spaces for linguistic minorities in national, regional, or global civil society organizations' fora (such the World Social Forum and national and regional counterparts);

- To draft, implement, and promote codes of conduct in the area of linguistic diversity;
- To enhance the sections on linguistic diversity in the UNESCO Convention; and
- To help UNESCO exert leadership in the area of linguistic diversity, with the creation of a global charter.

It would be useful to gather and disseminate best practices for linguistic diversity. For example, community media and Internet are excellent means to breathe new life into minority and endangered languages. Community radios could give air time to minority languages. Some participants suggested that a holistic approach to community development, focusing on its culture in the broadest sense as well as on its linguistic repertoire, is most likely to help endangered languages.

The most important element in any minority-language group is young people: their use of the language and their desire to pass it on to the next generation determines whether the language survives. Education has a key role here. The education system must find ways to teach multiple languages without sacrificing quality for quantity. Revisiting education policies from the point of view of linguistic diversity could strongly increase the likelihood of achieving the second goal (universal access to education) of the Millennium Development Goals.

Civil society also has a part to play. Participants pointed to Québec where, from a declining language, French has been made the language of culture and economic success. Civil society should appropriately address current threats to cultural diversity and reaffirm commitment to linguistic diversity. For example, civil society can play a role in ensuring that local knowledge, customs, and languages are valued over those from elsewhere. Pressure should be put by civil society on governments at national and regional levels to adopt linguistic and cultural policies and legal frameworks to protect and promote linguistic diversity, with a special regard to basic education.

Language policies constitute one of the main dangers for language diversity, as they can allow the imposition of a language at the national level. As language is a path to power, language policy should facilitate the participation of the population in a democratic way.

One participant stressed that linguistic and cultural diversity should not be confused. While some Aboriginal peoples in Canada have lost their language and speak only English or French, they nevertheless have retained their Aboriginal culture and values. Once traditional cultures and values are revived, then languages can be revived.

Participants concluded that linguistic diversity even has implications in terms of human sustainability, as language barriers can prevent some marginalized groups from understanding various socio-cultural and health issues.

The Role of the Media, Especially "Pro-People" Media

Community media, especially community radio, help civil society to appropriate media and communication. In Colombia, for example, there has been a successful push to consolidate community radio, in light of a changing political culture and the recognition of social diversity in the country. The program of Community of Citizens Radios promotes

the direct expression of groups of citizens through local mass media. It succeeded in bringing together the very diverse players of the country's civil society, through a community radio that has been broadcasting successfully for 10 years. Over the years, it has extended its reach and now covers close to half the Colombian territory, despite serious economic, political, and military problems. Most citizens have access to it, even in areas of extreme poverty.

Underlining the central role played by community radios in making information accessible to all, a participant denounced the closing down of CKAC (the first francophone radio station in Canada dedicated to news) after it was bought by one of the country's largest radio stations.

To respect cultural identity and protect cultural diversity, participants called for not only a "for-the-people" but also a "by-the-people" approach to counterbalance the mainstream media-driven global culture. They also saw a need for global and national legal and regulatory recognition of community radio and community media as a common good. Funding should be provided for local people to access media, as well as for technical tools and capacity building. They pointed out that the key problem with community radio is that of copyright (where compliance is extremely complex and expensive), and that copyright laws should be demystified.

A number of suggestions were made by participants:

- Improve representation of minorities in mainstream media (including television) through networking.
- Develop horizontal networks between individuals and communities.
- Promote children and adult education on media literacy.
- Explore civil society proposals for a communication rights approach, in support of cultural identity and the protection of cultural diversity.
- Pressure governments and civil society in the discussion of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Products and Cultural Expressions.
- Clarify civil society demands for accountability in the World Trade Organization and its intellectual property agreement, as well as bilateral commercial treaties affecting cultural diversity.
- Make culture freely available for all use, and restrict only to maximize the diversity of cultural forms.
- Prevent an excessive concentration of media.
- Increase communications among socio-cultural groups, including existing local and community radios.

Pros and Cons of Globalization for Culture and Cultural Diversity

In closing, participants discussed how globalization has the potential to increase freedom for everyone—depending of whose vision defines globalization. Film industries, for example, have access to markets without restrictions. However, how do artists in developing countries access major distribution systems?

Participants agreed that globalization poses dangers to culture:

- It can increase the income gap, an area in which the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization bear a great responsibility by imposing the neo-liberal model;
- Smaller cultural industries may not have access to subsidies;
- Free trade regulations make it difficult (and sometimes impossible) for governments of developing countries to provide subsidies for culture in their countries;
- Cultural agreements do not necessarily foster cultural diversity depending on their focus;
- When driven by profit, culture becomes a commodity. If treated like a product, it will become homogenized.

Three key recommendations:

1. Create a lobby network among G05 participants for the UNESCO Convention and related processes.
2. Support appropriation of the media by the people at all levels—"the democratisation of the media sphere"—as a means to energize ongoing cultural diversity from the ground up. (This includes community media and media education activities in schools.)
3. Enable G05 organizations to launch concrete initiatives to ensure linguistic diversity in their own midst (through a linguistic diversity audit, for example). "NGOs should practise what they preach."

Twelve Most Relevant Civil Society Proposals for Building Global Democracy

Track 1: Civil Society Engagement; Changing Territorial Priorities

1. Regional integration should recognize cultural and social issues beyond the political and economic; it could, in fact, empower civil society. To help meet that end, a civil society charter or protocol should be developed.

2. Information clearinghouses or portals reflecting the information needs of all levels of civil society could provide links to information at local, national, sub-regional, and global levels. This will help meet the challenge of creating alternative community-based knowledge.

Track 2: International Treaties, International Law; A Hierarchy of Values?

3. Although Article 25 of the Declaration of Human Rights guarantees a minimum standard of living, the regulations of the IMF and the World Bank (both of which have far over-reached their original mandates) lead to regular, ground-level contradictions of those standards. The issues of trade, debt, and human rights should be considered in concert.

4. Sovereignty (the nation's power as decision maker on behalf of its people) and subsidiarity (decision making that can occur at many levels) are both key. For example, while decisions about global warming should be made on the global level, in cases where industries have caused water contamination, local government should have power to decide whether to pursue legal action.

Track 3: Global Security—Undermining Democracy?

5. Legal intervention is necessary to counteract the push to eliminate or deregulate controls on environmental and human rights issues that have been associated with globalization. Civil society will have to become involved to provide the political will to carry out this intervention. When citizens take on their own security, it becomes a lever for governance. Local authorities and governments should involve civil society in security issues and maintain guard over all levels of democratic process.

6. An international reconciliation commission should look into the root causes of terrorism. We must distinguish the terrorist act from the reasoning of men and women who are pushed to these acts. We must not leave the military aside when discussing peace.

Track 4: Civil Society Participation; Opportunities and Responsibilities

7. Global governance is not about global institutions, it is about civil society. The UN could be reclaimed, and the culture of unaccountability broken, if the local and the global were bridged by a strong civil society that was itself grounded in accountability.

8. If we want to reclaim the UN, we must insure that recommendations are followed up on through all national governments and fora. Better and more communication (new spaces for public consultations, capacity building for civil society organizations, and "report cards" on all levels of governance, among other things) could forward the drive for accountability.

Track 5: How to Democratically Regulate the Global Economy?

9. There's a need for more education among civil societies. Without it, local civil societies are unable to push for accountability on the part of nationals and financial institutions. More information is needed for individual investors in order to make ethical investments and for middle-range decision makers who make policy decisions.

10. Existing IFIs must be transformed. Since significant reform will be slow (or, given the nature of the goals of these institutions, unlikely), in the meanwhile, complementary strategies and alternatives to existing IFIs must be created, including the creation of alternative institutions that have a similar purpose to IFIs.

Track 6: How to Maintain Cultural Diversity in Global Solidarity?

11. Cultural agreements should be equal to or more powerful than trade agreements. The UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity must be supported through lobbying and networking.

12. There is a need for local, rights-based media, and more media education in school systems. Media is becoming less and less diverse, and more and more controlled at the international level. At present, the legal recognition of peoples' rights to use their media is not clearly recognized. This should be righted at all levels, and the radio spectrum should be recognized as a common public good.

There was also a suggestion in Track 6 that a linguistic diversity audit be conducted. NGOs should practise what they preach when it comes to linguistic diversity. They should be taking the lead in promoting diversity. Specifically, the Forum International de Montréal should report on its linguistic practices.

Discussion

The facilitator opened the discussion to the floor, beginning with the suggestion that two themes had emerged:

- Life and all its aspects should be weighted above profit.
- The necessity of working within the box of existing global institutions while thinking outside the box.

A participant acknowledged the recurring call for a rights-based approach and an emphasis on local and global action. Common goals must back work on institutional transformation. However, participants voiced concern about the generality of the conclusions that had been presented, and felt that they would undermine the group's credibility if they were published. The facilitator, acknowledging that many would agree with this, reiterated that the objective was to provide a general overview and identify reoccurring themes. Responding to the criticism of lack of vision, an audience member underlined that the identification of the need for a rights-based approach was in itself a vision. The observation was made that an overall goal, a vision of "where do we want to go from here," had to be established: goals and objectives should be culled from the conference reports to develop a framework that could be used in subsequent fora.

Over the last three years, among people working at the global level there is increased interest in working on strengthening democracy at the local level. Strategies are needed to meet this task. Yet a participant from the private sector saw a lack of vision and strategy building at the conference, and other participants agreed. "What is the new

vision that will replace the neo-liberal order? We should develop the blueprints for the new world order and then develop it at the local level."

There was a response to the emphasis on local action seen in various tracks. "I didn't come here to work on local democracy. Global democracy is being stifled by the five bullies in the UN…. Let's accept the challenge of dealing with the five bullies."

The democratic deficit at the conference, another suggested, was comparable to the global democratic deficit. If the sovereign rights of individuals, the primacy of the principle of one-person-one-vote could be brought to bear at a conference, it could also be instilled at the international level.

Part III: Self-Organized Workshops

On both Monday, May 30 and Tuesday, May 31, participants had an opportunity to take part in a number of self-organized workshops, which consisted of either joint presentations or panels. These workshops allowed G05 participants to share their experiences in democracy-building initiatives and solutions to democratic deficits.

Although a full report on these workshops is unavailable, a short description of each one is included below.

Workshop 1

A World Constitution: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

Jean-Pierre Arcoragi, Global Democratic Council, Canada, noted that the tremendous burden that humanity places on the world's limited environmental resources and the exponential increase in cultural and economic interactions implies that the different peoples of the earth have to coordinate their efforts. As a way to counter these effects, the presentation proposed the possible integration of a legally binding universal code of conduct into each of the constitutions of the United Nations' member states.

Defining a Popular Mandate Through the First World Vote: Global Human Referendum

Is the extension of universal suffrage to all men and women on the planet possible? Can a world vote define a clear path, backed by a popular mandate, on how to resolve the vital issues of health, access and security for all? Asking these questions, **Joel Mardsen,** Global Human Referendum, Spain, explained that there is a possibility for a safer and saner decision-making situation when everyone adheres to democratic principles.

Workshop 2

From Mongolia to Qatar: The Path to Democracy

This presentation by **Cyril Ritchie,** International Civil Society Forum for Democracy (ICSFD), Switzerland, focused on how civil society has gone about building an unusual path to democracy through the International Conference of New and Restored Democracies (ICNRD). The ICNRD held its fifth session in Mongolia in 2003 and will hold its sixth session in Qatar in 2006. In all, 119 governments attended in Mongolia. In parrallel, the ICSFD held a major event in Mongolia and plans one for Qatar.

Global Partnerships: Promoting Global Governance or Global Democracy

The experience of using the term "global partnerships" is that, under this camouflage rubric, the North tends to address the consequences of the world's unequal political and economic system rather than the root causes of this inequality. Presenter **Katarina Sehm Pätomaki,** Network Institute for Global Democacy, Finland, argued that this terminology should be replaced with more appropriate terms such as cooperation between unequal partners, soft imperialism, dictatorial cooperation with a human facade, etc.

Workshop 3

Global Governance of the Internet

As sectors globalize, they experience the need for governance. This presentation by **Hans Klein**, Georgia Institute of Technology, Syracuse University, USA, provided an analysis of sector-based politics that emerge in light of globalization. It also explored the impact of policy-actor networks and epistemic communities in the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

Workshop 4

Building Local and Global Democracy: Innovative Experiences in Citizen Engagement

The workshop presented the Carold Institute's mission and that of their most recent project, *Building Local and Global Democracy*. Panellists provided action-based solutions that could be used to redefine national and international governance priorities to answer citizen demands.

Workshop 5

Creative Proposals for Democratizing the IMF and World Bank

This workshop, coordinated by **Manish Bapna**, Bank Information Center, USA, and **James V. Riker**, The Democracy Collaborative, University of Maryland, USA, highlighted innovative proposals for democratizing the World Bank, the IMF, and other financial institutions at a time of glaring democratic deficits, especially after the nomination of Paul Wolfowitz as President of the World Bank.

Workshop 6

Self-Regulation: Learning Across the TNC and NGO Sectors

This workshop explored the rise of self-regulation (codes of conduct, certification scheme, accreditations schemes, etc.) within the transnational corporation and civil society sectors, with the aim of identifying areas in which there could be cross-sectoral learning. The coordinators, **Simon Burall** and **Robert Lloyd**, One World Trust, UK, identified the different self-regulatory structures that have been emerging; conditions under which self-regulation is effective in increasing stakeholder accountability, and the main obstacles to the effective implementation of self-regulatory systems.

Workshop 7

The Millenium Review and the MDGs: Opportunity for Impact

In this workshop, coordinated by **John Foster,** The North-South Institute, Canada, and **Pera Wells**, WFUNA, New Zealand, ways of making civil society more influential in the Millennium Review and the UN Summit in September 2005 were discussed.

A short report highlighing key discussion points can be found on page 18.

Workshop 8

Generating Citizen Activism Toward Global Democracy

Dick Burkhart and **Mona Lee,** members of the recently formed Coalition for a World Parliament and Global Democracy, USA, gave historical overviews of the diverse activist organizations and endeavors they have led, culminating in the recent World Social Forums in Mumbai and Porto Alegre. They explored methods for creating a participatory democracy at the global level, especially Internet-based procedures including citizen deliberation and polling, and innovative citizen/civil society voting methods such as delegated voting.

Workshop 9

The World Corporation Registry

The presentation by **Doron Dekel,** World Federalist Movement Canada (WFMC), explored the governance of trans-national corporations through the creation of a new "global corporation" legal entity.

Shaping the Trade Negotiating Agenda

Kristina Hinds, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK, examined the changing responses of CSOs in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to an international trade environment where agreements to codify trade liberalisation abound. There was a comparison of CARICOM CSO participation on trade affairs in the 1990s to the limited levels of participation, or attempts at participation, before the 1990s (the 1960s–1980s).

Only the Little Pay Taxes: Regulating the Offshore Shadow Economy

Matti Kohonen, Tax Justice Network, UK, looked at new regulatory efforts to curb the global shadow economy and ways to shift the burden of taxation away from the poorest in the developed and developing countries.

Workshop 10

Civil Society's Role vis-à-vis the G8

Peter Hajnal, Munk Centre for International Studies, Canada, looked at the historic relationship between the G7/G8 and civil society, the changing role and influence of civil society in this context, and implications for democracy, legitimacy, and efficiency in the G8. He also examined recent trends, G8–G20 reform proposals, prospects for the forthcoming G8 Summit in the UK, and asked what lessons could be learned from these civil society interactions.

Global CS Platforms: Challenges and Opportunities

The unbridled power and influence of global institutions has stunted the growth of indigenous democratic institutions, values, and ideals. What are the challenges for civil society in attempting to counter balance these dominant forces? **Rajesh Tandon,** PRIA, India, addressed these challenges through the analysis of three examples: the NGO–World Bank Committee, the southern NGO-created International Forum on Capacity Building, and the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education.

Civil Society and the L20: Creating Democratic Spaces in New Global Governance Forums

Fergus Watt, WFMC, and other paraticipants gave their perspective on the utility of the proposed L20 and addressed possible steps toward wider civil society engagement with it. A short report highlighting key discussion points can be found on page 52..

Workshop 11

Civil Society and International Organizations: Strategies for Promoting Democracy

With the decrease of overtly authoritarian states in the post-Cold War world, the concept of democracy has become a worldwide governance ideal. Some regionally based international organizations have increasingly become key actors in promoting and encouraging member states, or potential member states, to adhere to democratic norms. In this presentation, **Edward R. McMahon**, Department of Political Science, University of Vermont, USA, looked at the progress these organizations have made along with their key challenges.

Getting it Wrong on the Security Council Reform

Joseph E. Schwartzberg, Citizens for Global Solutions MN Chapter, USA, argued that both models for restructuring the UN Security Council set forth in the report of the High-Level Panel's dicussions on Threats, Security, and Change are anachronistic; they retain the veto privileges of the P-5 and the equally objectionable idea that some nations are somehow entitled to permanent SC membership. The presentation looked at a more effective system of representation and proposals for a more sensible set of regions to be represented than the Panel's crude four-continent recommendations.

Workshop 12

Three out of the four presentations below were developed as case studies for the Carold Institute's Building Local and Global Democracy project; the discussions in this workshop were continued from thos of workshop 4.

Équiterre : From Individualism to Personal and Political Activism

Sidney Ribaux, Équiterre/The Carold Institute, Canada, focused on Équiterre, a non-profit, non-governmental organization, and how it has engaged citizens in its vision of making Québec a society that adheres to environmentally friendly and socially-conscious consumption choices that are beneficial both locally and globally.

Capacity Building in Kitamaat

Mark Selman, Simon Fraser University/ The Carold Institute, Canada, provided an example of the challenges faced by Canadian Aboriginal communities in their capacity building activities. The various communal, corporate, non-governmental, and governmental actors influencing the Haisla First Nation community of Kitamaat Village (Canada) were explored.

Adaptive Leadership, Social Networks and Civic Change

Marcy Schnitzer, Institute for Governance and Accountability, Virginia Tech, USA, looked at the application and development of adaptive leadership in creative non-traditional fora as a way to activate social networks into developing community capacities for democratic governance. A case example from a rural US community examined how a state university, working as an adaptive leader, employed an arts and a grassroots leadership program to encourage a broad scale civic conversation concerning the past and potential future of regional communities.

The Democratization of Knowledge: Lessons on Community–University Research Practices in Social Economy Initiatives

Yves Vaillancourt, School of Social Work, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)/ The Carold Institute, Canada, explored the key lessons learned while he participated in several academic-community action partnerships that have taken place in Quebec over the last 30 years.

Workshop 13

Beyond Watchdog: New Civil Society Strategies for Holding Government Accountable

In this presentation, **Carmen Malena,** Canada, explored the proactive and participatory methods that local civil society groups use to hold governments accountable, and reflected on the key challenges.

Deliberative Governance: Models and Institutional Reform

Lars Hasselbald Torres, America Speaks/The Deliberative Democracy Consortium, USA, explored the basic rationales for deliberative forms of public participation, provided a framework for distinguishing among various forms of public deliberation, offered several concrete examples of deliberative governance, and outlined the challenges to moving toward sustained and institutionalized governance mechanisms.

African Civil Society Engaging with NEPAD, the MDGs, and Multilateral Institutions

Helder Malauene, Foundation for Community Development(FDC)/ WK Kellogg Foundation, Mozambique, presented the experience of FDC in national, regional and global level initiatives and the lessons and challenges that can be derived from the experiences of this organization and other African CSOs in their interactions with multilateral decision making bodies.

Workshop 14

The Charter of Human Responsabilities: Implementation Strategies

Cécile Sabourin and other panellists who are part of Citizens' Alliance for a Charter of Human Responsibility/Alliance for a Responsible, United, and Plural World described the various regional efforts made to disseminate and put in place a Charter of Human Responsibility. In facing the 21st century's challenges, this Charter, it was argued, can serve as a new social contract that incites each person to assume his or her responsibilities for a better future for all human beings and the planet.

Workshop 15

The democratic regulation of global governance (*La régulation démocratique à l'épreuve de la gouvernance mondiale*)

This workshop led by **Jules Duchastel,** Chaire de recherche du Canada en mondialisation, citoyenneté et démocratie,Canada, offered solutions to the problems faced in the process of conceptualization of democratic institutions. Panellists offered an analysis of the growth of civil society movements and their effectiveness in influencing the democratization of global governance.

Workshop 16

Global Accountability: The Need for Civil Society Organizations to Lead by Example

Robert Lloyd and other panellists, One World Trust, UK, looked at the lessons and challenges of CSOs in their attempts to increase their legitimacy and accountability. By strengthening their internal mechanisms, it was argued, they can teach other sectors to do the same. CSOs have begun to embrace this challenge and are developing new approaches to accountability, both at the level of individual organizations (e.g., ALPS) and the sectoral level (certification schemes such as HAP-I).

Workshop 17

Beyond the Security Council Reform

Workshop coordinator **Manuel Manonelles,** UBUNTU Forum, Spain, led a discussion on how to achieve greater support within civil society and the public that, in turn, can lead to a political consensus for the reform of international institutions. Panellists

considered the effectiveness of the World Campaign for the Reform of International Institutions, and key documents, especially the work done by the Campaign, the UBUNTU Forum and other actors regarding the Secretary General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change and the ensuing report, "In Larger Freedom."

Part IV: Closing Plenary

Creating a solid foundation

Grzybowski said the conference provided a space to explore issues and share philosophies. Over the course of the conference, he had observed a vibrant network and organic relationships within civil society that should grow beyond the event. He saw progress despite differences between and within movements, and pointed to shared values and numerous initiatives that will provide the basis for practical action.

Democracy is happening at all levels although its progress is difficult to evaluate. A solid foundation for global democracy is needed or it will crumble easily. Such a foundation must be based on openness and transparency. The challenge within the current culture is to see more than one truth and to recognize each other's ideas. Civil society is not exempt from the danger of building silos. Grzybowski also observed a lack of articulation of civil society organizations' vision and a disconnect with the public. Summarizing some of what he heard, he related discussions of the preceding days about whether or not the vision is too broad, or alternatively if it is too focused on the human rights approach. Grzybowski suggested that the ideas, visions, and strategies expressed at the conference don't necessarily reflect actions on the ground. Civil society is still viewed as disorganized and, with that view international institutions, will continue with the status quo.

Civil society has had small victories but how do these translate into tools at the international negotiation table? Furthermore, how can civil society be at that table if it can't get others on board? How can it build diversity? What is the human rights approach and what does it mean to different sectors of civil society?

Grzybowski said that much has been mulled over during the meeting but the topic of power and the definition of state, for example, had not been broached. These pressing issues need to be advanced. What does sovereignty of the people mean at different levels? The question of regionalism is also crucial.

Democracy at all levels

Victoria Elias observed that although United Nations reform is important at the global level, it is less of an issue at the local level.

Coming from Eastern Europe, Elias was particularly interested in the discussions on regional blocks. "How do we continue our lobbying activities in this context?"

The discussions about trade highlighted the need for accountability, while the discussions about cultural diversity and the idea of collaboration with the military were also noteworthy.

"Democracy and participation are not favours provided to people; we all share this right," said Elias, adding that it is also "our duty to ensure this."

How can ideas from conferences such as this one be further disseminated and followed up at the regional level? Global democracy won't work without national democracy—it must pervade at all levels.

Practical steps at home

Rajesh Tandon was most struck by the passion for global democracy. He described how, in India, that passion is not commonly shared, and is only voiced at voting time. Even then, many are not able to exercise that right.

The presence of parliamentarians and trade unionists at the conference has opened doors to new relationships in a "monolithic world where we generally only reproduce old forms." Although little progress was made to promote the meaning of global democracy beyond formal institutions, he suggested that this kind of understanding will come when different voices are heard with humility and when people disagree respectfully. "I take with me a new set of strategic ideas but the practical actions emerging from those will take place at home," said Tandon.

In looking back to G02, Nigel Martin noticed that this conference attracted the same kind of people but that the agenda had advanced. "We have a focus that we didn't have then," he said.

Bridges were built between different constituencies and even within NGOs. That bridge building was crosscut with representation by parliamentarians, academics, scholars, and union activists. "We have opened doors with the parliamentary sector that weren't open before." He believed that progress was made in all sectors except the corporate.

Appendix: Acronyms

ANND	Arab NGO Network for Development
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CARICOM	CSOs in the Caribbean Community
CSOs	Civil society organizations
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communication Network
FIM	Forum International de Montréal
GATT	General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs
IBASE	Instituto Brasileiro de Análises sociais e economicas
ICNRD	International Conference of New and Restored Democracies
ICTs	Information and communication technologies
IFIs	International financial institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MWENGO	Reflection and Development Centre for NGOs in Eastern and Southern Africa, Zimbabwe
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
PRIA	Participatory Research in Asia
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UQAM	Université du Québec à Montréal
WCCD	World Commission on Culture and Development
WFMC	World Federalist Movement Canada
WFUNA	World Federation of United Nations Associations
WOCSOC	World Civil Society Conference
WSF	World Social Forum
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society
WTO	World Trade Organization

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