

## **SCENARIO 3**

### ***Towards A Just and Peaceful Planet***

A Concept Paper for the Civil Society Conference

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David Brown, Hauser Centre for Non Profit Organizations, Harvard University

Budd Hall, Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria

Rajesh Tandon, Society for Participatory Research, New Delhi, India

*“As for the global challenge of terrorism, we have reason to expect, from the leaders of the world working against it, rather greater clarity”*

Amartya Sen, Identity and Violence p 79

*“The increasing political engagement by certain NGOs stems largely from the fact that development keeps increasing the gap between the rich and the poor”*

Goren Hyden Civil Society: What Next? *Development Dialogue* June 2006  
p 187

## **Summary**

Global civil society occupies a key position in international policy circles. There is every reason to think that this position will remain strong or even grow in importance over time. What are the values, the ideas, the hopes, and the dreams that will underpin a next stage in strengthening the voice of global civil society? The authors of this scenario believe that the mechanisms of collaboration are already present within existing global civil society structures. Eurodad is one example of such an advocacy alliance but there are many others. The challenge is not so much one of designing the new car, but of knowing where we want to go and how we wish to travel together. It is an opportunity for deepening shared values, building relations of trust and creating a permanent process of alliance building. We suggest that the two fundamental desires of global peace (peace in households, communities and nations) combined with the urgency of dealing with the gap between the rich and the poor (Make Poverty History campaign for example) may well be the gathering themes for global civil society. These gathering themes must acknowledge the leadership and vision of women and understand that a just and peaceful planet must deal with all living systems.

Global civil society in its diverse and complex forms offers three important and distinct capacities in the search for a more just and peaceful planet. First GCS has a proven track record for its power to convene. The WSF and other similar networks and regional events have been the largest international gatherings of human beings in history. Second, GCS has a vast repertoire of skills, communications networks, campaigning experience and successes in building global consensus. Third, GCS has privileged access to grass roots knowledge, values, culture and perspectives.

Global civil society needs to continue to move as is often said, from protest to proposal, from reaction to action, from consumers of UN and Global political structures agendas to the fostering of a vision of the world we want. The scenario elaborated briefly in this paper is designed to stimulate our collective imaginations. It is a contribution to a new utopic vision, not utopia as in an unrealistic dream, but utopia as a necessary vision in building a more just and peaceful world. The scenario hopefully also lends some credibility to the notion that even complex challenges are possible to achieve. Finally it is dedicated to the idea that we have no choice but to work towards a new global diplomacy. This is offered in openness, humility and the desire to be helpful.

## 2016

It is the year 2016. A set of global protocols, institutional arrangements and processes for drawing on the capacities of civil society organizations is working well. This set of arrangements and understandings are multi-centred with research, advocacy and communicative capacities distributed throughout existing organizations and networks throughout the world. One could see the beginnings of the alliance in the practices of the global campaigns of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century (i.e. Global Campaign for Education, Jubilee Campaign, Anti-Dam Campaigns) and the lessons of the World Social Forum during that same period. Specific tools for consensus building and effective advocacy were already present in many organizations in 2006. The achievement of an effective and established set of protocols and processes for tapping global civil society capacities grew from a series of common projects and meetings where a shared analysis was built and where trust and common values were established.

The heart of the communications structure is an interactive internet-based structure (sometimes referred to as Web 2) that combines elements of call-centre technology with interactive tools for knowledge creation, distribution and exchange. Expertise and up-to-date knowledge is always available from grass-roots sources. Global Civil Society has in this way taken advantage of one of its time-honoured advantages Vis a Vis work with governments and the private sector; access to grass roots knowledge about what is needed and what is working throughout the world.

The protocols and ways of working (which we refer to in places as a “venue”) is an alliance of autonomous and diverse GCS networks many of which were founded in the 1990s and early 2000s. By 2016, the venue has established communications, research and partnership protocols with the several groupings of global political networks (G-20, L-22, G-8, non-aligned). The purposes of the GCS venue include:

1. Highlighting the vision of citizens everywhere of a just and peaceful planet as a way of bringing us all together
2. Representation of diverse GCS views within the context of specific global political and policy contexts;
3. Increased visibility of the roles, diversity, capacities, rights and responsibilities of GCS organizations/networks;
4. Enhanced collaboration and specialization amongst GCS organizations and enhanced capacities for analysis and action on critical issues facing citizens of the world.

## **How did it happen?**

The years 2005-2008 were difficult ones for the poorest peoples of the world. Governmental resources had been redirected on a global scale towards security issues and military approaches to conflict resolution. A narrow understanding of security had replaced development, poverty elimination, health (including HIV/AIDS) or education-for-all as the dominant focus for global expenditure. The use of or threat of the use of military force had become for the global super power of the day, a key tool for global political intervention. Policies in the military super power of the day such as the legitimacy of the “pre-emptive” military strike overcame generations of preference for the primacy of international law. Opposition to the use of military tools and violence by many sides in the global struggles of the day was often denounced as naïve, siding with terrorism or even treason. Many innocent persons were jailed, disappeared or killed in a global climate where violence had become both the object of fear and the tool to achieve better security.

## **Shared Concerns**

Global civil society organizations of the day had diverse histories; goals, strategies and ways of viewing the world of 2006, but they found themselves in agreement that a world system built on:

1. Violence as a key instrument of security;
2. Failure to address historic global conflicts (Israel-Palestine, Southern Sudan, Kashmir);
3. Failure to address poverty (and its incumbent issues such as HIV/AIDS) and;
4. Aggressive competition for control of non-renewable resources such as oil;

Had little to offer the majority of citizens of the world. The false polarization of the world into “good” and “bad” guys was conceptually bankrupt and dangerous to the survival of all people, rich and poor and to the biosphere itself.

Person by person, organization by organization, network by network it had become clear that the fate of the earth was too important to leave to the governments and ‘market forces’.

The Globespan polling data of 2005/2006 across 20 northern & southern countries suggested that people trust NGOs more than they trust the United Nations, Transnational Corporations or governments. It was noted that that over the years 2000-2006 trust for all those institutions had been declining but it was still highest for non-governmental or civil society organizations.

## **Building on positive developments**

2006 was a time when more rapid positive changes began to happen. The shared concerns of the rise of violence as an instrument of global policy was countered in the minds of many of the delegates in Waterloo by an awareness of many positive developments which could be seen as enabling factors in moving a just and peaceful GCS agenda forward.

The rise in numbers of national, regional and global civil society organizations over the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century was an unparalleled expression of human desire to work towards a better world. Information technology has among other things become a catalyst for worldwide consciousness and information sharing. The European Union was seen as a practical example of international collaboration and interdependence. Led by CSOs nearly universal awareness of climate change and ecological fragility had been achieved (in spite of slower mechanisms to act on that awareness). The global march of February 2003 when vast numbers of people took to the streets of the world in rejection of US unilateralism offered much hope for what can be done and what people care deeply for everywhere. The identification these and other positive trends became a base for describing the emergence of GCS as a positive force.

The meeting of some 40 citizens from around the world who had gathered in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada was one space where the search for a kind of “global peace tent” (building on the metaphor and actual practice from the 1985 International NGO Women’s Conference in Nairobi) began to come together.

### **In Waterloo, it was noted that:**

1. Timing was right for a push towards a deep vision of a just and peaceful planet, a gathering theme for civil society organizations.
2. GCSOs voices needed to be more widely heard on the critical issues of the day;
3. An alternative approach to global diplomacy which eliminates/reduces violence as a key instrument needs to be identified and put forward;
4. That the unmatched capacity of GCS to convene citizens (WSF), the effective tools of GCS (campaigns, networks, direct grass roots interventions) and the unmatched access of GCS to grass roots knowledge be mobilized in the interest of a just and peaceful planet; and that
5. The experiences of women working together in global networking over the past 20 years are foundational to hope for success;

## **What is the Basis for Legitimacy of Civil Society Organisations?**

An important discussion was begun in Waterloo to better understand the underlying base for GCS legitimacy and influence in global decision-making? Participants were cautious about assuming that democratic representation is the sole or most important base, since that puts GCS in direct competition with arguably democratic national governments. It was suggested that a focus on representing regional constituencies (e.g., indigenous peoples) or populations with special interests at issue (e.g., affected by dams) or bringing special technical knowledge or capacity to speak for widely held values was an important base of legitimacy. There was also discussion about relying on trust in GCS to mobilize popular support. It was broadly agreed that getting clearer about bases of legitimacy will help define what sort of "critical mass" is needed and what kinds of global values need to be articulated and accepted.

## **Principles of Collaboration**

The Waterloo meeting, among other things, noted that any movement forward amongst GCSOs would need to:

- a. Create initiatives that utilize the information and resources of multiple sectors to solve problems that cannot be solved without joint action.
- b. Emphasize fairness and sustainability in transnational problem-solving outcomes, especially in distributing resources and responsibilities between Northern and Southern constituents.
- c. be inclusive attending also to spiritual, ceremonial and cultural dimensions of life

## **Key Moments 2006-2016**

### **October 2006**

Meeting of the GCS Venue Working Group at the University of Waterloo

1. Agreement to continue exploring a process leading to the creation of a venue for global civil society
2. Identification of next steps: themes, working groups (with a majority of majority world representatives), process of mapping global civil society, an interactive web site, consultation with members and leaders in each of the various GCS
3. Agreement on the usefulness of Summit of GCS representatives in 2009
4. Agreement to identify 3-4 Eminent Persons who would serve as conveners of the 2009 event (Names put forward for discussion included but not limited to Nelson

Mandela, Graca Machal, Desmond Tutu, Amartya Sen, Joseph Stiglitz, Wangari Mathai, Kofi Annan (ex UN S-G by then), Bill Clinton, Stephen Lewis.

5. Agreement to work together on the next G-8 conference in Germany
6. Identification of who is missing that is critical to moving the venue process forward

## **January 2007**

### **Making use of already existing GCS spaces**

Each of the organizations present in Waterloo will take back the ideas from Waterloo to their constituencies for further clarification and creativity. Which aspects of a new “venue” or of the on-going process of alliance building could any of the GCS take on? Are there sectoral themes (environment, poverty, human security, education, health, HIV/AIDS) that can be taken up?

### **World Social Forum**

1. Many of the participants at the Waterloo even are also leading networks involved in the Nairobi WSF process.
2. The WSF was seen a space for further consultation and identification of additional persons, resources and ideas.
3. The structure of the WSF and principles were examined for possible lessons for a GCS venue.
4. Further consultation on appropriate eminent persons to act as conveners was carried out (a prominent Muslim personality, a Latin American, a person of Aboriginal heritage, a business leader all considered)

### **Preparing for the G-8 gathering in Germany**

A GCS working group on how best to present a united front in the G-8 lead-up, how to influence the agenda (not merely respond), building structures of advocacy and communications.

### **Knowledge Exchange Structures: Gates Foundation discussions**

It was brought to the attention of those participating the GCS Process that the Gates Foundation needed to spend \$3 Billion per year to meet it legal obligations. Conversations began with the Gates Foundation to created the informational infrastructural platform for global civil society that could assure lower cost effective communications amongst key players in every part of the world.

There were many issues to be resolved including agreements for multiple platforms and open source collaboration on the development of tools, but this led to an agreement in

2008 to begin work with a global civil society working group on communications and knowledge exchange structures.

### **2008 – Regional, Sectoral and Network consultations**

Regional meetings to discuss the 2009 “The World We Want” plan. As well alternative arrangements for increased global civil society collaboration are worked out with local, regional, sectoral and alternative global networks.

Regional meetings are held in: China, India, Europe, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, Arabic-speaking states, Latin America, North America, and Caribbean. Consultations are also held within each of the cooperating partner organizations

### **2009 – “The World We Want” Gathering of GCS Representatives/Leaders**

#### **Building the legitimacy of GCS**

Under the personal invitation of the “Eminent Persons”, 200-250 leaders from global civil society organizations gather to formulate a definitive process for the achievement of a venue (a set of agreed upon protocols and administrative arrangements) for GCS and discussion of the already by now fairly well evolved practices of making decisions within GCS on how to respond to various activities, which global joint action themes to move forward, how to avoid being captives of either the UN bureaucracy or the big government agendas

The purpose of this event was to deepen the participation of civil society organizations, broaden the alliance-building process and identify action themes structures

CIVICUS and FIM with the involvement of other key GCS networks organized this event.

### **2010 – Review of Millennium Development Goals**

GCS are involved in the review of the MDGs noting that five years remain with much work to be done. A GCS strategy is released prior to the MDG review meetings. Advocacy, lobbying and influence to be used with national delegations.

Clarification of expectations and roles of GCS in the monitoring, implementation and achievement of MDGs is obtained.

### **2010 and 2011 Further Identifying specific areas for joint action and development of sectoral action plans**

Regional, sectoral and technical consultations on what the critical areas for joint GCS action are to be. The development and elaboration of research agendas, advocacy strategies, and degrees of grass roots support are held during these two years as a lead up to the Global Summit and to further advance the “venue” process.

A working group on a Global Charter is established which is understood to carry the weight of the 1945 UN Charter on Human Rights.

**2012 Global Summit of Civil Society**  
An enhanced World Social Forum event?

This would be a large gathering of 10-15,000 persons who come together to agree to:

- a. A Charter on a vision of the “World We Want” – a just and peaceful planet and the role of global civil society
- b. Identification of action agenda for collective GCS work together
- c. Development of country and sector action plans
- d. A moving symbolic event –builds on the universal need for hope

**2012-2015 “Venue” is in place**

2006	Waterloo Agreement	Next Steps	Working Groups	Communications Means established
2007	World Social Forum  Gates Foundation  Consultations within GCS networks on the way forward  Working groups  G-8 in Germany	Consultation  Initial talks  Follow-up to Waterloo conversations  Piggy-back working groups on existing events  Developing GCS agenda	Eminent persons identified    Communications, G-8 Preparation Sectoral campaigns	Funding identified
2008	Regional Preparatory meetings  Developing Action Plans	Mapping  Division of labour	Development of papers	
2009	Global Gathering of GCS Leaders-“The World We Want”  Agreement on “venue”-process of continual alliance building	Agreement to hold global gathering of CS in 2012		
2010	Review of UN MDGs	Full involvement of GCS networks	Revision of targets	
2011	Preparation for GCS Summit			
2012	Global Civil Society Summit (10,000+)	Involvement of market and government partners	Agreements to create “Venue” for Global Civil Society	