

# CONFERENCE NEWS

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## Global Civil Society Movements

### *Dynamics in International Campaigns and National Implementation*

*Report of the UNRISD International Colloquium at the  
World Social Forum, 22–23 January 2007, Nairobi, Kenya*

## Introduction

Since the 1970s, the work of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) has emphasized the importance—both normatively and in practice—of popular participation in development. Attention has been paid to the mobilizing dynamics of particular actors, such as peasant farmers, workers and labour unions, as well as to movements involving the urban poor, indigenous peoples and women. As a research institute, UNRISD has undertaken critical analysis of how these political actors contribute to the transformation of the global public sphere by breaking away from traditional state-to-state dialogues. Recognizing that civil society activism has increased and grown in importance, UNRISD has sought to tackle issues that are crucial to improving UN–civil society dialogue and mutual understanding. Legitimacy is central in this respect: for a strong relationship, it is essential to know whose interests are represented by all parties.

The legitimacy of civil society organizations (CSOs) is among the crosscutting issues addressed in research conducted by UNRISD under its recent project, *Global Civil Society Movements: Dynamics in International Campaigns and National Implementation*. This project, which began

in 2003, examined the strengths and weaknesses of selected civil society networks and movements. Thematic studies were commissioned on the social basis of activism, and the implications of North-South relations for social movements. The project also studied the nature and organizational structures of five international campaigns—debt relief, international trade rules and barriers, anti-corruption, fair trade and the currency transaction tax (CTT)—that have brought together activists at the global level. Five country studies were carried out—in Argentina, Bolivia, the Philippines, Senegal and Turkey—to look at national-level activities around the five campaigns. UNRISD worked with research institutes and universities in all five countries to examine the key national actors, forms of contention and institutionalization, and roles of public opinion and development debates that surrounded the five international campaigns.

UNRISD held an international colloquium—bringing together civil society activists, academics and others—at the World Social Forum (WSF) in Nairobi, Kenya.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The WSF, an annual event initiated in 2001, is organized by civil society groups involved in the alternative globalization movement. It brings together a large number of organizations and individuals representing global civil society.



A public meeting was held on 22 January to present the findings of the *Global Civil Society Movements* project to WSF participants. On 23 January UNRISD organized a closed workshop that brought together the Institute's research staff and academics who had contributed to the research, to discuss the research findings and explore possible future research areas.

The WSF colloquium was divided into two sessions. The first session was devoted to presenting the findings from research on four of the five transnational campaigns: the global debt movement, the fair trade movement, the movement for the currency transaction tax and the movement to change international trade rules and barriers.<sup>2</sup> The afternoon session covered four of the five country studies, which focused on national social movement activities in relation to the different international campaigns mentioned above.<sup>3</sup>

## Public Meeting

### Opening session

The colloquium was opened by Thandika Mkandawire, Director of UNRISD, who began by briefly presenting the Institute and its place within the United Nations system. He underlined the fact that UNRISD has the advantage of autonomy within the UN system, since it does not receive funding from the UN general budget but instead relies exclusively on voluntary contributions. UNRISD works extensively with an international network of researchers, including many from developing countries. This presents a dual advantage: it gives the institute access to fresh ideas and also allows it to bring voices from the South into international debates on social development. After briefly presenting the Institute's programme of research, Mkandawire explained the importance to UNRISD of presenting the findings of the research *on* global civil society movements *to* members of civil society. Through its research on civil society and social movements, the

Institute has sought a better understanding of the influences, dynamics and roles of social movements in policy making. The research represents a tool to help both international organizations and civil society better understand their constraints and capacities. This research offers CSOs an external and, hopefully, insightful perspective on their activities. In a context where there is always a danger of stagnation, well-informed movements should be able to function better.

Kléber Ghimire, coordinator of the UNRISD research programme on Civil Society and Social Movements, introduced the research project. The goal of the project, he explained, was not just to understand why certain social movements have been successful, but also to study how particular trajectories have led to certain results. What internal resources were available within the different movements at the international and national levels? To what extent were national and international alliances essential to their success? This meant examining the relationship between international networks and national social fabrics. The issue of institutionalization was also present throughout the different studies. There seemed to be a paradox between movements, which, almost by definition, reflected a certain level of spontaneity, and what appeared to be an increasing need for recognition from governments and international institutions alike. This then led to the question of political strategies and ways of dealing with state institutions. All these issues transcended the research and seemed to cut across all contemporary movements. Within the WSF, for example, there was ongoing debate on whether the Global Justice Movement (GJM) should become a new international non-governmental organization (NGO) or whether it should maintain its present form as a mechanism for the exchange and debate of ideas.

In concluding his remarks, Ghimire highlighted two issues that had emerged throughout the research and could represent new areas of inquiry. The first was the relationship between social movements and the political establishment. Even though these movements were relatively strong and well established with the wider public, there was very little evidence that policy makers were ready to accommodate demands put forward by some of them. The second was resources: the international nature of these movements has tended to

<sup>2</sup> Findings from the study on the anti-corruption movement were not presented in Nairobi because the researchers could not participate in the meeting. However, the country studies, presented during the afternoon session, dealt with the movement in national contexts.

<sup>3</sup> The researcher in charge of the Turkish case study was unable to present his findings during the public meeting. However, the findings were presented in the closed workshop the next day.

increase financial pressure on them (due, for example, to the cost of holding global and regional meetings). Furthermore, many of these movements have little or no income from membership fees, making them dependent on public and/or private subsidies. This marks a clear break with past mass movements (such as trade unions) that could, to a large extent, depend on their members for financial support.

### **Global social movements: Issues and trends**

The first session, chaired by Alejandro Bendaña, heard presentations of the papers on four of the five global movements.

#### **The rise and development of the global debt movement: A North-South dialogue**

***Katarina Sehm Patomäki***

For decades, the debt issue has remained a front-runner—perhaps even *the* front-runner—on the agendas of CSOs and social movements throughout the world. A wide range of CSOs—from the reformist to the more radical—are involved with the debt issue, but the church-based movements are the most active. The debt movement has been successful in raising public awareness on the issue, especially in the North. In the South, movements (for example, Jubilee South) argue for immediate and complete cancellation of debt, which they sometimes describe as a mechanism of recolonization. In the North, mass mobilizations have attracted the attention of creditor governments and led to calls in the media to solve the problem of “illegitimate” debt. One of the most impressive mobilizations took place at the G-8 summit in Birmingham in 1997 when 70,000 people took to the streets and created a human chain in the city centre.

If getting an issue onto the political agenda is an indicator of success, the debt movement has been extremely successful. However, although the work done by CSOs has created public awareness of the debt problem, research indicates that actual debt reduction has been modest. Figures show that indebted countries have paid the amount owed to international financial institutions just in interest. Movements regularly use this argument to position the debt issue as a political rather than an economic problem. However, Sehm-Patomäki said, in her research she seldom comes across papers by political

scientists on the debt issue. This gap in debt research is often filled by the sections of civil society whose primary task is to maintain a political perspective on the debate. She also observed that, while there has been a lot of research on debt, there is little on debt cancellation.

#### **Fair trade as a social movement**

***Murat Yilmaz***

Can the fair trade movement be considered a social movement? According to Murat Yilmaz, the question has been complicated by the increasingly close ties between fair trade organizations and large retail outlets. Is the current fair trade movement comparable to what it was 10 or 15 years ago? Yilmaz looked at the evolution of the fair trade movement, concluding that it has evolved in a way that has led to a contradiction within the movement itself. It has generated public interest on the issue of fair trade. In turn, this has increased consumer demand for fair trade products and, to some extent, led fair trade organizations to adapt by improving their efficiency and competitiveness in order to increase sales output. Yilmaz predicted that this might ultimately distance the practice of fair trade from its founding principles: self-sufficiency and autonomy for the producers of fair trade goods. As his research showed, ever since its products had begun to appear on the shelves of large supermarket chains, fair trade itself had faced pressures to adapt to market constraints.

The movement’s founding principles may be jeopardized in order to respond to rapidly increasing demands from the North. Yilmaz believed that the risk for fair trade, as a social movement, was that it would not reach its primarily development-oriented goals and would sometimes even have the adverse effect of reinforcing the mechanisms of dependency that already exist between the North and South. He concluded by saying that the best principles sometimes gave birth to the worst practices and unfortunately, the history of development was full of examples of this.

#### **The movement to change international trade rules and barriers**

***Manuel Mejido***

In presenting his ongoing research, Manuel Mejido focused on some conceptual issues that have emerged so far in his work. Mejido presented a typology of different movements, comprising four categories,

conceived in relation to the movement he was studying.

■ **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):**

NGOs are relatively formal and, on average, have greater resources (financial, organizational, professional staff) than other types of movements. The issues that arise in this category are:

- tensions concerning alliances between NGOs and government organizations;
- the problem of instrumentalization of NGOs by governments; and
- the issue of instrumentalization by NGOs of grassroots social movements.

■ **Social movements:** Social movements are more spontaneous than NGOs. They are less formalized and tend to be more general in the nature of their mobilizations: there is no rationalized type of campaigning or lobbying, which presents a methodological problem for researchers who wish to study social movements and their impact. Their interactions with governments and state actors are far more complex than in the case of NGOs because, in many cases, they express a desire to break away from representative democracy while, at the same time, interacting with it at various levels.

■ **Networks:** Networks represent movements of NGOs (for example, the trade justice movement). Networks use technology to mobilize and create synergies. There are questions about the place of the individual within networks: they tend to mobilize organizations, which may alienate the individual.

■ **Plateaus:** Plateaus are regional, global, thematic forums (such as the WSF) that are usually more related to social movements. However, plateaus are usually centred around specific events, and therefore lack the continuity of networks.

**Global tax initiatives: The movement for the currency transaction tax**

*Heikki Patomäki*

In opening his presentation, Heikki Patomäki pointed out that the political origins of the World Social Forum could be found in the CTT. Attac France created global momentum around the idea of such a tax, and was

also among the founders of the WSF. Patomäki looked at what had led to the emergence of this movement and the conditions for its success. He then described two sequences of events that could lead to the implementation of a CTT.

■ **Proactive sequence:** In the proactive sequence, one country would decide to implement the tax but, because of the possible consequences of acting on its own, it presses for other countries to agree on an international treaty.

■ **Reactive sequence:** In the case of a reactive sequence of events, a disaster would trigger global media hype which, in turn, draws the public's attention to the CTT issue and leads to a demand for new regulatory measures. This is what happened in the case of the Tobin tax. A series of financial crisis in the 1980s and the 1990s created a receptive environment in many countries for the promotion and implementation of the CTT. The Asian crisis, for example, triggered demands for new regulatory systems, and "ideological entrepreneurs" only needed to present an idea that they had already worked out.

Looking at the evolution of the CTT question, it would appear that the momentum created by the Asian crisis slowed by 2004. While Belgium, Canada and France passed laws—in 2004, 1999 and 2001 respectively—to put in place the CTT, the actual implementation is conditional on other countries doing the same. No other country has passed such a law, which has undoubtedly had a demobilizing effect on the CTT movement. Stagnation has been worsened by the fact that, within the movement, different groups have supported different versions of the CTT.

One version, supported by groups like War on Want (United Kingdom), Patomäki described as "minimalist". Their proposed tax would aim to raise \$20 billion to help fund the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This version of the CTT would not seek to distort the market but to gather funds for development aid. Another version was developed by the Free University of Brussels. Rather than simply raising funds for countries to be able to fund development aid and respect their MDG engagements, this version would include

the creation of a democratic organization that would have the power to decide how the revenues are spent.

Patomäki ended his presentation with his impressions on what the future may hold for the CTT. He believed that it would take another financial crisis for the CTT to re-emerge in the public sphere. While he recognized that this was not an ideal solution, it nevertheless seemed to him the only way forward in the current context.

### Discussion

The discussion raised several issues, related to both specific movements and movements in general. One participant said that it was difficult to talk about fair trade without looking at the question of solidarity economics. Broadly defined, this is a grassroots form of cooperative economics connecting local production groups worldwide to create large-scale, viable and creative networks of alternatives to the “profit-over-all-else” economy. In this context, he inquired, what was the role of the state, especially in transitions from fair trade to solidarity economics? In response, Yilmaz reaffirmed his belief in the need for a more explicit distinction between fair trade and solidarity economics. More attention should also be paid to the distribution of profits generated through fair trade in order to guarantee their fair redistribution among local producers. A representative of a Kenyan NGO pointed out that the issue of fair trade was not always at the top of the agenda of movements in the South. For example, there were cases when land was taken over from peasant farmers because of foreign direct investment. Without land, it was impossible even to envisage fair trade. A prerequisite for the implementation and generalization of fair trade would be a resolution of the land distribution issue.

Concerning the CTT, a participant said that the Tobin tax was initially devised as a solution to financial problems, but it was currently being used to raise funds destined for development aid. Was such a tax appropriate for welfare when its original goal, as James Tobin had imagined it, was to deter financial speculation? Distribution of the funds is also cause for concern. Who levies taxes, and how do we ensure that these taxes are democratically anchored? Another participant asked what the largest obstacle was to the realization of a

CTT. In response, Patomäki explained that according to the draft treaty developed by the CTT movement (of which he was an active member), a council of ministers, in accordance with a democratic assembly, would decide on the allocation of the funds. The democratic assembly would be composed of representatives of both national governments and civil society. The possibility of implementing a lottery system had also been discussed within the movement.

Regarding the presentation on the global debt movement, there was a view that European groups still considered debt an economic issue, whereas in the South it was seen as more political. In response to this, Sehm-Patomäki pointed out that this was probably due to the fact that political power was still concentrated in the North. The debt movement offered important lessons that could help actors within the Global Justice Movement collaborate more efficiently in the future.

Regarding Mejido’s classification, some found it difficult to place certain movements within this typology: for example, women’s movements, trade unions, youth movements, human rights and social services movements. The criteria used to elaborate the typology were questioned, as was the absence of trade unions. In response to these remarks, Mejido stressed the fact that the typology he developed was conceived in relation to the specific movement that he was studying. He also explained that variables that were more historically specific were difficult to integrate into a typology of transnational movements.

On a more general level, one participant said that most movements did not emphasize democratic practices within their own processes; yet the importance of this could not be minimized, especially given their own call for global democracy. Indeed, some movements had been led by the same charismatic figures for the past 30 years. In order for movements to advance, the question of accountability had to be studied, and confronted head-on. NGOs are often intermediaries, and in some cases, the majority of their resources are used for administrative purposes. How do civil society actors deal with cases of corruption that take place within their own movements or organizations? In response, Patomäki said that this problem had been overemphasized. In his view, NGOs were not meant

to be accountable to society at large. Because membership to NGOs is open, only members have the legitimacy to question the organization's accountability. Why should movements have to be accountable to outsiders? The main issue is not the accountability of NGOs, but how to conceive and devise accountable systems of governance.

### **Transnational social movements and national linkages**

In the second session, the main research findings from four of the five national case studies were presented. For each country, researchers were asked to look at the national dynamics related to the five global movements presented earlier. The session was chaired by Babacar Diop Buuba.

#### **The case of Argentina**

Sebastian Pereyra began his presentation of the Argentina case study by stressing the ideological dimension of social movements in the Argentine political landscape. Rather than a single social movement, there is a wide variety of movements with diverse demands, but sharing a rejection of neoliberalism. However, this denunciation was set in a regional, rather than global, context.

The campaign related to the global issue of international trade rules and barriers, for instance, has not been integrated into social movement contentions in Argentina. However, regional discussions with regard to the establishment of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) gained momentum as an important issue for a number of organizations and alliances. Criticisms grew stronger with the expansion of neoliberalism in the country through a series of free trade agreements, which led to the mobilization of dissident trade unions opposed to these new policies. During the 2001 financial crisis, the denunciation grew even stronger. It reached a peak in 2002 when many international campaign groups saw in the Argentine crisis an example of the devastating social impacts of neoliberal policies. During the 2002 Argentine Social Forum, the coalition *Autoconvocatoria* emerged as an important moment in the articulation between local struggles and global issues. However, the main issue which appeared to mobilize the majority of the movements in the *Autoconvocatoria* was primarily anti-imperialism and

anti-Americanism. This tended to limit the global scope of the movement since its main opponent was not global trade but a country, the United States.

Argentina does not have a history of activism around the fair trade issue. Only a small number of producers are linked with the fair trade movement since Argentina has historically been a relatively rich and developed country, and therefore never felt the need to find alternative ways of exporting its local products. Argentina has also been able to boast a strong internal market for agricultural products, which clearly differentiated it from other developing countries. This is why there are few, if any, national outlets of large international fair trade organizations. It was relatively recently—after the 2001 economic collapse—that Argentina began waking up to the possibility of producing fair trade goods. Discussions on fair trade have emerged specifically as a result of new interest from activists and organizations. This growing interest is set in a post-crisis context where people and sectors of the economy have started to explore alternative ideas to redevelop their country.

*Attac Argentina* started out by focusing on the Tobin tax question, aiming to open a public debate on the issue. The development of *Attac Argentina* quickly ran into problems, however, the most important of which was its inability to mobilize individuals and organizations active in Argentine civil society. This was further complicated by the country's 2001 crisis, which changed the orientation of militant activity in general but also within *Attac Argentina*. Opposition to the FTAA now became the main objective of the organization, and all efforts were concentrated on the creation of a "militant space" capable of building strong opposition to this project. Thus, *Attac* shifted its priorities: instead of campaigning for a new international tax, *Attac* began to campaign against the FTAA; and instead of focusing on a global objective, it focused on a more nationally oriented one. It would appear that the national militant context and the political situation were key elements behind this shift. In other words, the globalization process lacked the capacity to produce sustained collective action unless it could be directly related to a national problem.

On the issue of debt, Pereyra said that the Argentine state was not merely a target for the movements active

on this issue. It has actually organized activities, supported positions in favour of certain demands of the movements and offered opportunities for action. On different occasions, the state actually led mobilizations in favour of debt alleviation. Over the past few years, the “national” coalition, Dialogo 2000, has been the main actor on the issue of external debt in the country although it had a predominantly global perspective (which was not necessarily an advantage in the Argentine context). Dialogo 2000 originated in a series of campaigns that were initiated by political parties and unions in the 1980s. Both the present movement and its predecessor perceive the debt issue as:

- a political problem, an instrument of dependency;
- one aspect of a system of domination often associated with the neoliberal project of the military dictatorship (1976–1983) and the violation of human rights; and
- the loss of national sovereignty.

However, the difference between the current mobilizations and their predecessors lay in their approach to the issue. Whereas earlier strategies were largely concentrated at the national level, Dialogo 2000 moved toward international action and campaigning. This was linked largely to the movement’s need for support from international organizations since, in Argentina, only a limited number of organizations specifically focused on the issue. The relevance and importance of the debt issue for the wider public contrasted with the relatively limited number of social movements and organizations focused on the issue of external debt.

Pereyra concluded by presenting his research findings on the issue of corruption. As in the rest of the world, there has been growing concern about corruption over the past few years. International support has contributed to the development of organizations specializing in this issue. These organizations are usually funded through a wide range of programmes that have helped support activists and experts. The presence of a variety of international networks has undoubtedly played a fundamental role in providing ideas, which are then communicated to the public in Argentina.

### The case of Bolivia

Fernando Mayorga began his presentation on Bolivia by saying that social movements had been important contributors to the country’s recent political

transformations. Two main factors have led to the emergence of strong social movements in Bolivia: the crisis of neoliberalism; and the crisis within the Bolivian political system. The latter has led several social movements to join the political system and contribute to its transformation. In Bolivia, social movements have embraced global issues and grown in strength through protest and campaigning. They began by proposing alternatives and eventually became purveyors of public policy through their participation in the government of Evo Morales.

At the time of the “water wars” in Cochabamba in 2000,<sup>4</sup> a movement was formed in opposition to the implementation of the FTAA. It brought together a wide variety of actors: trade unions, small farmers, NGOs, intellectuals and leaders from different backgrounds. Bolivia’s current foreign policy is largely based on the legacy of this movement.

Mayorga said that only a handful of artisans or farmers sell their products through the fair trade system. The vast majority of social movements, rather than generalizing fair trade (within current international trade routes), would rather struggle for an alternative form of supranational trade integration that would go against the current free trade agreements promoted by the World Trade Organization (WTO). In the case of Bolivia, the main argument in favour of fair trade is the security that it brings to producers. Fair trade competes with solidarity economy initiatives, such as the Coordinadora de Integración de Organizaciones Económicas Campesinas de Bolivia (CIOEC). This initiative seeks not only to develop fair trade, but also to develop South-South exchanges. Morales has taken on many of the proposals made by these kinds of networks. In an initiative known as Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos (TCP), signed with Cuba and Venezuela, *comercio justo* (fair trade) becomes *comercio con justicia*, (trade with justice). The TCP criticizes, and breaks away from, the traditional approach to trade that is accused of marginalizing the issue of equity and the preservation of cultural identities.

Mayorga then discussed the Bolivian mobilizations around the issue of international trade rules and barriers.

<sup>4</sup> Protesters contested the privatization of the municipal water supply.

The Bolivian movement participates in the Continental Campaign against the FTAA (Campaña Continental contra el ALCA), and the Bolivian Movement against Free Trade Treaties and the FTAA (Movimiento Boliviano de Lucha contra el TLC y el ALCA), later called the Movimiento Boliviano por la Soberanía y la Integración Solidaria de los Pueblos, is actively engaged in the struggle against free trade treaties. Three factors led to the emergence of international trade as a contentious issue in Bolivia: government decisions in the 1990s to privilege foreign investments; mobilization against the negative effects of neoliberalism and against the privatization of public services; and the actions of foreign corporations in Bolivia and their own international networks. In the Bolivian case, the debate on the issue was closely tied to the process of rejuvenating social mobilizations, the most well-known of which related to privatization of the water system in Cochabamba. In 2000, there was a great deal of mistrust between the population and traditional political parties, which were accused of acting in their own personal interests and in a non-transparent manner. Since the 2005 elections, which saw Evo Morales become president, experiences and contacts with social movements have been taken on board and integrated in initiatives such as the TCP as an alternative to the TLC. This has given the Bolivian movement a privileged status at the global level, where it is considered a leading player in the social movement struggle against privatization and neoliberal globalization.

Debt has been a key issue in Bolivia since the 1980s. The decision by the Hernán Siles government to stop repaying debts in the mid-1980s was taken in a context in which developing countries argued that the industrialized North was in fact indebted to the South in environmental, social and human terms. The issue emerged in a context of debt alleviation through various initiatives (for example, the World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiatives: HIPC I and HIPC II). Two important events marked the history of the Bolivian debt movement. The first was the organization of the Foro Jubileo 2000 (Jubilee 2000 Forum), which had a clear impact on policy orientations with regard to combating poverty. This forum made it possible to bring together a wide variety of actors from civil society to discuss and interact on issues that went beyond the debt issue. The second was the creation of the Fundación

Jubileo (Jubilee Foundation) in 2003 which led to a Platform of Action against Poverty. Both the foundation and platform were active at the international level in the Global Jubilee 2000 campaign. From a movement which had demanded debt alleviation, the Bolivian debt campaign was now calling for its total cancellation.

The sociopolitical conditions in Bolivia have not encouraged the development of a movement in favour of a CTT. Despite the existence of Attac Bolivia, social movements' programme of action has focused mainly on the issue of political transformation, which makes a movement for a CTT problematic in the Bolivian context. Without having strong roots in the trade unions, it is extremely difficult for such a campaign to take off in Bolivia. Furthermore, the CTT is also generally seen as a typically "first world" type of proposal.

Finally, Mayorga described the Bolivian anti-corruption movement. The issue of corruption is a very particular one when compared with the other international campaigns. The organizations combating corruption in Bolivia are often derived from very institutionalized initiatives rather than grassroots social struggles. Although their findings may be debated, various studies in Bolivia tend to indicate that the state in particular and society in general are affected by corruption (even within civil society). Moreover, the various organizations concerned with corruption define the issue differently. A closer look at the organizations in question reveals that they often receive funding from foreign countries. Red Anticorrupción Bolivia, for example, is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), la Movida Ciudadana Anticorrupción is funded by Swiss cooperation funds and the Ética y Democracia foundation is directly related to the Carter Center (United States). The restricted militant base of these organizations drastically limits their ability to mobilize the population around the incidence and effects of corruption.

### **The case of the Philippines**

Teresa S. Encarnación Tadem began by saying that the fall of Ferdinand Marcos's authoritarian government in the late 1980s opened the space in which social movements, including the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC), could demand sociopolitical reforms. And while this context was important, the participation

of academics has also been key to the success of the FDC, because it has produced analysis and politically feasible policy alternatives. The coalition has managed to attract a wide variety of activists, including militants from the Left who link the debt issue to their anti-imperialist beliefs. Furthermore, the FDC, through an important network of contacts within government circles, has pushed through a series of legislative bills and resolutions. After two decades of existence, however, the FDC has been faced with several challenges. First of all, it seems to have become a victim of its own success, trying to address issues other than debt. The FDC's enlarged agenda has led to competition with other local CSOs. Furthermore, with some political parties holding seats in the House of Representatives and also being members of the FDC, questions have arisen about the relationship between the parties and the FDC.

The issue of corruption, unlike the issue of debt, was not taken up within Leftist circles. It was perceived as too reformist, and the Left believed that corruption would end naturally once the dictatorship was overthrown. The Transparency Accountability Network (TAN), an anti-corruption network, emerged during the largely "anti-corruption" mobilizations against President Joseph Estrada in 2000. It was primarily supported by the middle and upper classes, both very active in the overthrow of Estrada. The network was formed to organize the disparate efforts of anti-corruption NGOs and strengthen their effectiveness in the fight against corruption. Unlike other social movement initiatives largely derived from struggles at the international level, TAN was formed because of efforts and occurrences at the local level, specifically the corruption that hounded the Estrada presidency. In the conduct of its campaigns, TAN was able to take advantage of openings in state processes, which it utilized to engage government. At the international level, the increased attention to the struggle against corruption during the 1990s led to an increase in funding from multilateral agencies to national anti-corruption campaigns, which TAN used to its advantage. The network is a member of the Global Transparency Initiative, which advocates for transparency in transactions involving international financial institutions and their assisted projects, as well as transparency at the national level.

Reconfiguration of the social movement landscape in the Philippines brought about a split within the Left. Some FDC members left the coalition. The fair trade movement also split, because certain factions of the Left saw it as too reformist. This had a direct impact on the movement, which could not count on the support of the middle or upper classes. Historically, the Philippines has boasted a variety of fair trade organizations (FTOs) formed under different sociopolitical contexts. The Philippine Fair Trade Forum (PFTF) has attempted to bring various organizations together to promote a collective agenda, including the common concern of market access. But in responding to this, the PFTF has yet to fulfil its role as the movement's advocacy arm in the country. However, strong individual relations with state and government bodies (the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of Science and Technology) show some promising signs. The major objective of the movement in the Philippines is to compete globally. The movement has served first and foremost as a source for new market opportunities and access for producers, distancing it from the more radical Leftist movements combating global trade.

These movements, which could be placed under the umbrella of initiatives to change international trade rules and barriers, were mainly united within the Stop the New Round Coalition (SNR), an event-based coalition whose primary objective was to prevent the launch of a new round of WTO negotiations. Although the negotiations were stalled, to say that the coalition was solely responsible would be an overstatement. There were many reasons for the collapse of the 2003 WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancun. Although SNR as a campaign drew its networks and resources from the indefatigable movement struggling for change in Philippine society, it attempted to carve its own niche, assume an independent identity as the national campaign against the WTO, and link its goals and objectives to transnational initiatives. This was evident in how it framed its mobilization. SNR did not couch its issues within the grand design of political and social transformation in the Philippines, but combined an internationalist message with domestic claims and demands (calls for transparency in negotiating positions) by adapting its demands to political developments at the domestic level. SNR broke up a month after Cancun, but the coalition

was revived in 2005 for the Sixth Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong. However, it did not mobilize as effectively as it did in 2003.

The final movement analysed by Tadem was the Philippine movement in favour of the CTT. She explained that in the Philippines, there were no social movements specifically focused on the issue of international taxation per se, but there were groups working on the issue. The Tobin tax remains relatively unknown to local social movements and the wider public. Its implications and relevance for ordinary citizens have yet to be effectively articulated by leaders of the movements. The three major local organizations that have shown support (while not directly campaigning on the issue) for the principles of the Tobin tax are Action for Economic Reforms, Focus on the Global South–Philippine Programme and the FDC.

### **The case of Senegal**

Ibrahima Tioub began his presentation on Senegal by saying that the country's political context was particularly marked by the March 2000 elections, which led to a peaceful transition of power. Senegal, part of the CFA zone, remains economically dependent on the French economy and on exporting cash crops to the North. Close articulation between the economic and the political has clear repercussions on social movement strategies and actions.

Traditional forms of mobilization (trade unions and students) have tremendous difficulties in exercising pressure on the state, and in integrating and gathering support from informal workers, women's movements and Senegalese youth. Furthermore, the research showed that being part of an external network with privileged links with government officials and other decision makers has been essential in order to exert pressure on the state.

Alliances between national and international NGOs working on fair trade are directly supported by the state. The team's research showed that the issue of fair trade has been discussed in Senegal for 300 years, although the demands are clearer and more systematically expressed today. Unfair trading methods already existed at the time of the slave trade. Senegal was at the heart of this: it was the place of departure

for a large number of slaves sent to the Americas. The context of the 1980s, with the massive implementation of structural adjustment programmes, made the situation even worse with regard to commercial exchanges between rich and poor countries. The dynamic behind the civil society movements (unions, NGOs, women's groups, youth, consumer groups) engaged in fair trade questions had been to coordinate around an issue which could be clearly linked to the wider issue of North-South commerce.

Organizations and individuals campaigning to change trade rules and barriers are often the same ones active on the issue of fair trade. The Senegalese small farmers' movement (notably the Conseil national de concertation et de coopération des ruraux/CNCR) is particularly active on this issue, and has been able to coordinate its actions with those of international networks such as Via Campesina. Faced with similar problems, farmers throughout Senegal increasingly work together to press for common demands. As part of an international farmers' network, the CNCR has transformed its mode of functioning, most importantly in terms of greater internal democracy and greater expertise on institutional, economic and political issues. These have been crucial for its ability to integrate international networks. There has also been a shift in the organization's demands. An increasing number relate directly to international institutions, trade negotiations and so on, sometimes to the detriment of more immediate concerns affecting the daily lives of the farmers the movement supposedly defends.

Participation in international networks is also evident in the Senegalese CTT movement. Attac Senegal has managed to bring together trade unionists, academics, journalists and NGOs. The debates taking place express a real desire to tackle the negative impacts of financial speculation, notably on the international prices of primary goods. But the debates have also brought to light a certain difference between Europeans and Africans on the issue of uncontrolled capital movements. The impact of speculation on the African population is felt with a greater deal of urgency than in Europe. Taking into account the considerations and general objectives of Attac, the Senegalese branch of the movement has added a series of complementary objectives such as the alleviation of debt, the

stabilization of agricultural product prices, the struggle against corruption and a halt to privatizations.

Tioub pointed out that up to the early 1990s, no CSOs were devoted to the struggle against corruption. It was only in 1999 that the Civil Forum (FC, set up in 1993), became a local branch of Transparency International (TI), thereby presenting itself as the key interlocutor on the question. Its approach to corruption, while basing itself on local studies and knowledge, followed the model promoted by TI. It has adopted TI's concept of "national integrity", distancing itself from former strategies that were mainly based on the denunciation of institutions. A desire to professionalize its local structures, combined with an increase in its militant base, have led FC to carry out these internal transformations. FC clearly followed TI in its adoption of a reformist line, aimed at changing institutions in a progressive manner. The case of FC is an interesting illustration of how transnational social movements (in this case, TI) have been able to impact local groups. For TI, the affiliation of FC to its organization has represented an opportunity to expand its presence in a geographic area in which it was underrepresented.

## Research Workshop

### The case of Turkey

The closed meeting on day two began with a presentation (by Murat Yilmaz) of the work on global civil society movements in Turkey carried out by Zafer Yenil and Biray Kirli of Bogaziçi University.

Yilmaz summarized the research activities, which focused mainly on the different groups, such as professional organizations, trade unions, political parties and small independent networks, actively taking part in the Turkish Global Justice Movement (GJM); and monitoring of the activities of the Turkish Social Forum. The researchers had focused on the rhetorical, strategic and organizational aspects of GJM mobilization in Turkey.

Yilmaz presented five interrelated research findings that emerged from the Turkish team's research.

- *The GJM in Turkey, dealing with issues related to global capital movements, debt issues, corruption, fair trade and*

*global trade regimes, is not strong.* This was particularly interesting since Turkey has been grappling with these issues since the introduction of neoliberal economic policies and the accompanying globalization process in the 1980s. Several factors could help to explain this state of affairs. One explanation was that these issues have never been on the agendas of mainstream political parties (which have not sought to establish causal links between the various financial crises, and the international financial and trade frameworks). Furthermore, the political environment is marked by culturalist and essentialist discourses that tend to occupy most of the political debate. Turkish political life is also marked by its focus on the national level, a trend that is also visible within the Turkish anti-globalization movement. On most occasions, the agenda is largely occupied by national political concerns and rarely by the relations between local problems and global processes.

- *Anti-globalization is mostly experienced through resistance to localized repercussions of global processes, such as rising income disparities, a shrinking formal employment sector and reductions in state welfare expenditures.* Parallel to this, anti-global positions and movements emerge in rather small and marginal organizations or appear on the political agendas of popularly backed organizations and groups in a rather sporadic fashion. They do not occupy a significant place in the current political field. The professional organizations that actively take part in the Turkish GJM are the Turkish Association for Engineers and Architects (TMMOB), certain labour unions such as Revolutionary Workers Union Confederation (DISK), Turkish Workers Union Confederation (TURK-IS), Glass Workers Union (Kristal-Is), Petrol-Is and the Public Sector Workers Union (KESK). Despite this relatively large support base, the economic context and evolutions in workers' rights (especially following the liberalization of the economy) have constrained their ability to influence policy decisions. With respect to NGOs, the current picture is also quite discouraging and the overwhelming concern with national and governmental issues complicates NGOs' ability to integrate international issues into their agendas and activities.

Independent platforms and forums have been the most active forces on the Turkish anti-globalization

scene. The Turkish Social Forum, the Anti-MAI [Multilateral Agreement on Investment]/Anti-Globalization Work Group, and the Global Peace and Justice Commission stand out as the leading platforms in terms of popularity and longevity. Despite their increasing ties with other international movements and organizations, they have not engaged seriously in fair trade, debt relief, anti-corruption, international trade rules and barriers, or CTT issues.

- *The Turkish GJM is characterized by an in-built hierarchy among participating organizations and platforms.* The financial and organizational powers of large-scale organizations, such as TMMOB or KESK, play an important role in the relative weight of these institutions in the decision-making mechanisms that characterize anti-globalization mobilizations in Turkey. Furthermore, by categorizing the ways in which various groups proceed and their ultimate goals, three different groups can be identified:

- those focusing their resistance on preserving or protecting national sovereignty in the face of neoliberal globalization;
- those opposing not only neoliberal globalization but capitalism in general, and opting for an alternative form of “bottom-up” globalization; and
- movements and organizations devoted entirely to local issues and problems and which do not necessarily establish organic links between their concerns, and national and international issues.

- *There is not only an absence of programmatic social transformation projects, but also an aversion toward them within the existing platforms and networks.* In many of the meetings and discussions attended by the Turkish research team, there appeared to be a deliberate attempt not to engage in debates regarding social transformation projects. For the researchers, this translated into a shared desire to keep a certain unity among organizations that sometimes stemmed from differing political and social realities. The main focus was therefore on sharing and transmitting experiences among the various groups.

- *Existing hierarchies largely stem from financial imbalances between movements and platforms.* Anti-globalization movements depend largely on voluntary activism as their main resource and do not seek private funding

to function, especially from large corporations. In practice, this has led to the formation of movements with often limited and fragile budgets. A considerable proportion of funds comes from leading trade unions and professional organizations. Another difficulty concerns the lack of reliable information about the management and use of the allocated funds.

### The funding question

A discussion followed on the funding of social movements. The Civil Society and Social Movements programme at UNRISD had already begun to explore this issue. In collaboration with the journal *Development*, it commissioned articles from various scholars for an issue entitled *Funding Social Change*.<sup>5</sup> The aim of this work was to introduce different perspectives on an issue that has not been a priority for social movement researchers.

The members of the research team discussed possible areas of further research on the funding question. Tadem described the difficulties she had encountered when discussing the issue with the various social movement activists while working for the project. She characterized it as an extremely sensitive subject for social movements and, although they acknowledged difficulties in finding sufficient funding, they were not willing to divulge information on their accounts or sources of funding. Most of the other researchers felt that the issue of access to information could complicate the collection of primary data on this question.

Manuel Mejido expressed his personal interest in the issue. In his research on the Chilean GJM, he found that the issue of finance was essential to understanding the movement’s capacity to act and be heard. He also stressed the fact that, behind the financial question, lay a number of fundamental questions relating to the relationship between social movements and money, and how this relationship was complicated by the fact that movements active in the GJM often combat international financial institutions and private corporations.

Following this discussion, Edouard Morena went through a few of the possible questions that could be deepened through future research (these ideas were based

<sup>5</sup> *Development*, Vol. 49, No. 2, June 2006, [www.sidint.org/development](http://www.sidint.org/development).

on his own experience and research on the French *altermondialiste*—alternative globalization—movement). While there are some research-based articles on the issue, the inquiry tends to concentrate on explaining the mechanisms, but not the politics of funding. The lack of information and the inherent difficulties surrounding the funding issue—complex mechanisms, the secrecy surrounding financial matters within the social movement sphere—tend to limit the research in terms of its scope and findings. Rather than question these difficulties and analyse them in relation to the wider literature on social movements, the movements themselves and the ideas that they defend, research has taken this lack of information for a dead end. Furthermore, the bias of academics toward their area of research (that is, social movements) could also limit their readiness to explore a sensitive topic for social movement actors who—at least in appearance—identify themselves in a shared rejection of all that has to do with money or finance.

Responding to the discussion, Morena felt that, without necessarily having to gather large amounts of “insider” information to “deconstruct” the various funding mechanisms that allow social movements to function, social movement research does have the necessary tools to integrate the funding question more systematically. Indeed, whether a development NGO working for better access to water in the global South or a radical grassroots organization calling for the overthrow of capitalism, money—in one form or another—represents a fundamental, albeit non-exclusive, means to an end. The question would be to see whether or not the funding question, and the ways social movements cope with it, has evolved over time. This implies not only tracing the evolution in the sources of funding, but also assessing the ways in which the funding issue is regarded by social movement actors themselves. In Morena’s view, the emergence of new forms of social contention combined with shifts in the forms of representation (the passage from a strictly representative democracy to an “opinion-based democracy” or *démocratie d’opinion*), and changes with regard to the availability and types of funding, have complicated the relation between activists and the funding question.

Shifts in funding mechanisms are undoubtedly transforming the ways in which social movement

organizations act. Indeed, the issue of fundraising seems to be taking on a new dimension within these organizations, with stronger and more varied competencies required to be able to effectively raise funds. The shifts in the types of funds available—from organizational to project funding—and cuts in public funds are having a “professionalizing” effect. From being strictly militant in form, social movement organizations are gradually becoming “professionalized militant groups” that need to “sell” their ideas to funders. Funds are increasingly destined to finance projects rather than the organizations themselves, and in order to be able to obtain financial support, organizations must comply with criteria that run the risk of influencing an organization’s core objectives.

According to Morena, another key question is whether or not the current strategy of certain social movements—which consists in either *not* openly addressing the issue of funding or addressing it by adapting themselves (through the acquisition of new competencies in project management and so on) to the increasingly narrow criteria that condition an attribution of funds—has gradually contributed to locking down contemporary social movements, transforming militants into professionalized project managers and restricting movements’ ability to effectively campaign for “another world”. If this is the case, the funding issue would be an interesting way of questioning whether the future of social movements as sources of social transformation lay in their ability to integrate the strengths of “traditional” movements by adapting their discourse and re-imagining new forms of mass mobilization capable of drawing genuine support from the ones who suffer the most from growing social disparities.

### **Other possible future research**

Following this presentation, Kléber Ghimire broadened the discussion to other possible areas of research. Various topics were mentioned during the discussion, but the two topics which appeared to be relevant to all of the researchers (in view of their geographical approaches) were the questions of youth engagement and the roles of intellectuals in relation to social movement activism. Regarding the question of youth, most of the researchers agreed that there were interesting issues to look into, especially in the broader cultural (sub- or counter-cultural) movements that are

attracting a growing number of young people. With regard to intellectuals, it was widely acknowledged that contemporary movements are often inspired by “engaged academics” who produce the “counter-expertise” that is essential for the legitimization of contemporary social movement struggles.

## Conclusion

International institutions like the United Nations frequently engage with civil society actors and, at times, work on common projects (such as humanitarian and human rights initiatives). Yet what are the criteria that determine whether or not a civil society group or social movement organization is representative of the constituency or ideas it is supposed to defend? Whereas *traditional* social movements (notably trade unions) were primarily defined by their membership, contemporary movements (like the Global Justice Movement) are far more difficult to identify and encapsulate. Factors such as complex funding mechanisms, loose organizational structures, the growing influence of the media and the Internet, have all contributed to complicating the ways in which the legitimacy and accountability of a given movement or organization are evaluated. While social movements and civil society groups play an increasingly important role, it has become much harder to measure and determine their relative capacity to speak for the

social group, or group of interests, they are supposed to defend.

Indeed, in a context of growing disenchantment with institutional politics and in an increasingly integrated and interconnected world, civil society groups and social movements can play an important role through their actions and interactions with states and other non-state actors. Yet many of these actors (usually the poorer, more radical and those less exposed to the media) frequently feel that there is a widening gap between themselves, their preoccupations and institutions such as the United Nations. Research that studies social movements and civil society groups for what they are—and not just for the ideas that they espouse—has the potential to contribute to bridging this gap and rebuilding trust in the UN system as a democratic source of social change. It can also offer insightful information to academia, the wider development community, and civil society organizations and movements themselves, especially in gauging the potential of interactions with development and political institutions. For these reasons, the UNRISD research team was pleasantly surprised to see the keen interest manifested by many participating individuals and groups at the World Social Forum in Nairobi, not only in the project’s research findings, but also in the potential for a UN research body to work closely with the civil society sector.

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### Monday, 22 January

#### PUBLIC MEETING (AT THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM)

9:00–9:15 Welcome remarks, Thandika Mkandawire  
9:15–9:35 Introduction to the project and key issues,  
Kléber Ghimire

#### 9:35–12:00 **First session**

Global Social Movements: Issues and Trends

Chairperson: Alejandro Bendaña

- *The Rise and Development of the Global Debt Movement: A North-South Dialogue*, Katarina Sehm Patomäki\*
- *Fair Trade as a Social Movement*, Murat Yilmaz\*
- *Global Tax Initiatives: The Movement for the Currency Transaction Tax*, Heikki Patomäki\*
- *Mobilization to Change International Trade Rules and Barriers: A Study of Four Civil Society Organizations*, Manuel Mejido\*
- Discussion

(\*Papers available at [www.unrisd.org/research/cssm](http://www.unrisd.org/research/cssm))

#### 15:00–18:00 **Second session**

Transnational Social Movements and  
National Linkages

Chairperson: Babacar Diop Buuba

- The Case of Argentina, Sebastián Pereyra
- The Case of Bolivia, Fernando Mayorga
- The Case of The Philippines, Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem
- The Case of Senegal, Ibrahima Tioub

### Tuesday, 23 January

#### RESEARCH WORKSHOP (AT THE UNITED KENYA CLUB)

9:30–11:30 The Case of Turkey, Murat Yilmaz

14:00–15:45 The Funding Question

- Introduction to the problematique, Kléber Ghimire
- International experience, Edouard Morena
- Comments on national experiences, Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem, Ibrahima Tioub, Fernando Mayorga and Sebastián Pereyra

15:45–16:45 Topics for further research and closing  
remarks

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS FROM THE PROJECT

(AVAILABLE AT [WWW.UNRISD.ORG/RESEARCH/CSSM](http://WWW.UNRISD.ORG/RESEARCH/CSSM))

*Transnational Civil Society Movements: The State of Anticorruption Efforts*, by Nelson J.V.B. Querijero and Ronnie V. Amorado

*The Social Bases of the Global Justice Movement: Some Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Evidence from the First European Social Forum*, by Donatella della Porta

*The Global Women's Rights Movement: Power Politics around the United Nations and the World Social Forum*, by Wendy Harcourt

*The Global Justice Movement: How Far Does the Classic Social Movement Agenda Go in Explaining Transnational Contention?*, by Marco Giugni, Marko Bandler and Nina Eggert

*The Contemporary Global Social Movements: Emergent Proposals, Connectivity and Development Implications*, by K.B. Ghimire

*NGOs and Social Movements: A North/South Divide?*, by Alejandro Bendaña

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