

The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Global Security

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Abstract

Non-governmental organisations have increasingly been influential in several issue areas worldwide. This article examines NGOs' contribution to global security which is currently considered to be among the chief international concerns. In order to thoroughly assess NGOs' role in global security, the study firstly goes through their features, activities, nature, operation, status and, categorization. Their role is equally scrutinised by dint of their focal presence in the UN heeding their counsel and also their efficient presence on a global scale. The article secondly focuses on NGOs contribution to global security through their functioning in policy making, global governance and democracy, and diplomacy. NGOs role is correspondingly assessed through some examples of international organisations within the framework of main issue-areas such as relief, human rights, the environment, and nuclear non-proliferation. The study displays the fact that NGOs are effective actors in nearly most of security areas; with the exception of global politics and the concern of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Bangladesh, a case in point, is illustrated as a country instance where NGOs have well-organized operation and contribution to the development of economic and social situation. As a final point, some hurdles in front of NGOs are tackled so as to have a comprehensive insight of the reasons behind their deficiencies. Respectively, some approaches are set as an attempt to further their influence and strengthen their status.

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Keywords: NGOs, global security, relief, human rights, environment, nuclear non-proliferation, policy making, global governance, democracy

Introduction

Non-governmental organisations are increasingly being a crucial theme of study for their escalating importance worldwide. They started to grow with, first and foremost, relief mission and human rights. After that, they began to develop their work into an exhaustive network including the environment and even nuclear non-proliferation of particularly weapons of mass destruction (WMD). For that reason, the UN has recognised these organisations' contribution to the welfare of mankind and attempted to join their efforts with them so as to have better achievements. NGOs, along these lines, have been influential in Global Security through their operation in nearly all issue-areas on a global scale especially by dint of policy making, global governance and democracy, and diplomacy. Some NGOs cases in point will be studied to fathom their core role in general. These illustrations will be a part of international NGOs so as to assure a better understanding of their activities. A country in case - Bangladesh - will be set as an example to demonstrate the efficiency of NGOs in building economy and contributing to social progress. Then, some impediments to the normal functioning of NGOs will be scrutinised especially NGOs legitimacy and their representativeness. Following this, some approaches will be discussed to promote NGOs status.

1. An Overview of NGOs

1.1. NGOs Definition

A Non-Governmental Organisation is neither a part of the government nor a conventional association for profit businesses and it is commonly set by ordinary citizens on a local, regional, national or international level. Such organisations are known variously as “private voluntary organisations” and “citizen associations.” Some political scientists usually describe NGOs as “pressure groups” or “lobby groups”, a concept rejected by many scholars as it blurs the real mission of these groups. In the 1980s, another concept “civil society”

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came into existence, but again this term seemed to be inchoate. The “NGOs” concept then emerged in the 1990s, an acronym for “non-governmental organisations,” and focused on the role of these organisations in society. Scholars in this field claimed that such organisations could get much sanction even more than national authorities.¹

The United Nations (UN), as an intergovernmental organisation, defined an NGO as any kind of a private organisation that is independent from government provided that it is not profit, non-criminal and not simply an opposition political party. Non-profit status means that they are not hindered by short term financial goals. Hence, they are committed to issues which come across long term spheres, such as non-proliferation. The UN then made it possible for certain approved specialized international non-state agencies or non-governmental organisations to be awarded observers at its assemblies and some of its meetings.²

NGOs budgets, when compared to those of governments and corporations, are really meagre. Just the large international NGOs may have budgets in the tens of millions of dollars. NGOs’ funding sources are several. Traditionally, the source used to be membership dues, but in this age they could be foundations, businesses, or the government - although some avoid formal funding. The government and international institutions provide grants and contracts, while private foundations, associations and rich individuals contribute to their funding. In addition, NGOs get fees for services and profits from sales of goods.³ For example, Oxfam, an international charity dedicated to

¹James A. Paul, “NGOs and Global Policy-Making,” June 2000, Global Policy Forum, (<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/177/31611.html>). Accessed 27 October 2018.

²“Non-Governmental Organization,” 9 March 2014, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OthaVoIeAaA>). Accessed 27 October 2018.

³James A. Paul, loc. cit.

providing poverty and disaster relief, receives large grants from governments' international assistance programs.

1.2. Role Description

It is evident that historically there were charitable and community organisations not operating from the state, but NGOs are a modern phenomenon. In many historical settings, people established such organisations as instruments to fulfil their community needs, obtain their citizenship rights, and enhance new policies - for example in Europe and the Americas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The anti-slavery movement, founded in the late 18th century, marked the inception of such associations by generating the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840 which attempted to bring together the efforts of citizen organisations on an international scale. In 1863, the International Committee for the Red Cross came into existence. Such independent associations continued to develop during the 19th century focusing on several issues including the reign of poverty, institutional reforms, and alcohol abuse. Thereafter, trade unions started to rise and gain crucial importance in the NGO development. Nowadays, these organisations are given modern judicial authority under new legal rules which, at the same time, strengthen their defences against state interference.

Their forms commonly differ according to the purpose. Some may mainly have charitable status, whereas others may solely be restricted to social goals. Their activities are essentially based on their orientation which might include human rights, environment, health, social programs, development work or women's rights and more. NGOs largely maintain a variety of services and humanitarian functions and operate fundamentally as a catalyst between the citizen and their government as they bring the former's concerns to the latter. They also advocate and supervise policies and incite political participation as they are considered to be a wellspring of information.

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Added to that, they hold a task of providing analysis and expertise and they also act as a warning system and both an observer and fulfiller of international agreements. They are accordingly supposed to be the voice of ordinary people in the international arena. For that reason, they often enjoy a high degree of public trust as revealed by public surveys. According to an opinion poll in Germany, for instance, the preponderance of people asserted that they trusted the NGO Greenpeace more than the German Federal government.

By and large, NGOs today are present on nearly every scale globally. They mostly operate at a national or local level although international NGOs activities have substantially grown. Their provisions are basically related to their concerns. There are those which are interested in legal assistance and chiefly provide services. Those, keen on chambers of commerce for example, have notably restricted themselves to limited concerns. Others' main arena involves neighbourhood associations; then, their objective is the promotion of their communities and municipal smarting. Yet, some are operating for social justice and human rights and they tend to campaign for values and ideals. Internationally, thousands of non-governmental organisations are operative. The international NGOs, nowadays, according to a survey, have reached 25.000 organisations (including programs and affiliates in some countries) only in 2000. For instance, Amnesty International, nonpartisan organization that works to promote and protect human rights throughout the world, has more than a million members. Its affiliates are present in over 90 countries and its staff of London-based International Secretariat is over 300.⁴

1.3. NGOs and the United Nations

Traditionally, the UN collaborated with NGOs for the most part as a co-worker in the implementation of particular programs, especially in matters pertaining to human rights, emergency response,

⁴Ibidem.

environmental negotiations, and election monitoring.⁵ Yet, until 1970, the UN principles of autonomy and non-intervention in domestic affairs inhibited its response to complaints about human rights abuses.⁶ NGOs, then, had not been able to influence the official UN deliberations; it had only utilised the UN as an international forum to draw attention to certain agendas up to the 1990s. Accreditation at international intergovernmental conferences was one of the NGOs chief aims in order to be able to promote government delegates, hold meetings, and attend plenary sessions. Starting from this decade, NGO environmental activities within UN processes have been strengthened. By dint of the process leading up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992, environmental NGOs started to strongly join capacity efforts so as to obtain high-level insights of the international policymaking process. Accordingly, at that time parallel NGO forums alongside UN conferences were deemed a novelty, yet now are usual intergovernmental deliberations. The UNCED was of crucial importance for NGOs as Agenda 21 proclaimed the need for new forms of participation:

*The United Nations system, including international finance and development agencies, and all intergovernmental organizations and forums should, in consultation with non-governmental organizations, take measures to ... enhance existing or where they do not exist, establish mechanisms and procedures within each agency to draw on the expertise and views of non-governmental organizations in policy and program design, implementation and evaluation.*⁷

⁵Barbara Gemmill and Abimbola Bamidele-Izu, "The Role of NGOs and Civil Society in Global Environmental Governance," p.5, (<https://environment.yale.edu/publication-series/documents/downloads/a-gemmill.pdf>). Accessed 28 October 2018.

⁶James A. Paul, loc. cit.

⁷Barbara Gemmill and Abimbola Bamidele-Izu, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

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Hence, the United Nations, as a leading actor in global security, has avowed and enhanced the need to cooperate with the non-governmental sector.

Currently, a range of government delegations to international conferences formally involve NGO representatives. A new article providing for NGOs to have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was added. At first, a small number of global trade union federations and commercial organisations were expected to take this up; however, there was a wide range of diverse groups. Nowadays, about 3.400 NGOs are acknowledged by the UN and they have numerous participation rights. They obtain all UN documents and acquaint government delegates with their accounts. They could organise their own briefings and also make their oral presentations in the beginning or the end of the diplomatic meetings. They even periodically submit their program elements and discuss them.

On the whole, NGOs “exercise far greater rights at the UN than they do at parliaments within individual countries.”⁸

Yet, NGOs have recognised that sustaining their issue areas by means of UN resolutions and setting up legal commitments through treaties are not sufficient. Governments could fail to implement these commitments due to strong opposition, overloaded schedule, lack of resources or the dearth of expertise. Appropriately, in such context, their role could be monitoring. The UN, then, has provided NGOs with three monitoring systems. First, NGOs could be academic assistants to the UN secretariats while preparing their annual reports on progress. Second, they are to support governments in producing

⁸Peter Willets, “The Role of NGOs in Global Governance,” 27 September 2011, Global Policy Forum, (<https://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/introduction/general-analysis-of-the-role-of-ngos/50787-the-role-of-ngos-in-global-governance.html>) Accessed 20 October 2018.

their own reports on progress required by UN review conferences. Third, they assist governments in the review process held annually by the UN specialist committees⁹. According to former Secretary General Boutros Ghali, NGOs “are an indispensable part of the legitimacy” of the United Nations, and his successor Kofi Annan asserted that they are “the conscience of humanity.”¹⁰

2. NGOs and Global Security

2.1. Definition of Global Security

So as to be able to understand the role of NGOs in ‘Global Security’, it is necessary to cognise both the identification and sphere of this concept. Samuel Makinda defines security as “the preservation of the norms, rules, institutions, and values of societies” which means that all institutions, principles, and structures associated with society, including its people, are to be protected from “military and non-military threats.” UN Office for the Cooperation of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) claims that human security is of a wider dimension beyond military protection. It identifies human security within a scope of seven areas focusing on socio-economic and political circles, human rights, and the environment. First, security should be assured economically such as the insurance against unemployment and the creation of measures to fight poverty. Second, it should prevail in case of famine and hunger. Third, security ought to be guaranteed in health concerns like disease and global pandemic threat, lack of access to basic health care, unsafe food, and malnutrition. The fourth point is the environment where measures against environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, and pollution should be assuredly taken. Next area of interest is the personal security especially against physical violence, crime, child labour, terrorism, and domestic violence. The ensuing point deals with security of the community

⁹Ibidem.

¹⁰ James A. Paul, loc. cit.

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against inter-ethnic, religious, and other identity tensions. The last one is political security against political repression and human rights abuses.¹¹ This part will scrutinise NGOs contribution to Global Security through its position in pillars of this concept; policy making, diplomacy, and global governance and democracy.

2.2. NGOs and Pillars of Global Security

- **Policy Making**

In international relations, NGOs are referred to as “non-state actors” including transnational corporations. Increasing globalisation and the pressure of common citizens to manage the world mechanism beyond the boundaries of the nation state have stimulated NGOs to work for the well-being of all categories of disabled people, the indigent, abused children and promote their rights. They have also contributed to the improvement of women’s rights. They have markedly attempted to enhance new environmental agreements and have been able to win important arms control and disarmament measure. All of these concerted efforts, though much of them have no formal trait when dealing with international decision-making, have gained NGOs prestige in this arena, unlike the past where only states had leverage. An illustration to the NGOs global effectiveness is NGO work on the environment which engendered the adoption of the Montreal Protocol on Substances Depleting the Ozone Layer in 1987. Another example, the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines played a crucial role in the Mine Ban Treaty of 1997. The adoption of the 1998 Treaty of Rome necessitated the Coalition for an International Criminal Court. In the late 1990s, the interlocutor of the UN’s most puissant body appeared to be the NGO working Group on the Security Council. A powerful international NGO campaign

¹¹ “National Security versus Global Security,” UN Chronicle, The Magazine of the United Nations, April 2013, (<http://unchronicle.un.org/article/national-security-versus-global-security/>). Accessed 21 October 2018.

insisted on more just economic policies from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organisation. “These recent NGO victories have often been due to effective use of the internet, enabling rapid mobilisation of global constituencies.”¹² Their applied methods also vary according to their targets. While some tend to arrange manifestations and strikes, others adopt soft diplomacy. Some attack those in power and vilify their abuse of citizen rights; whereas others join their efforts with the authorities.

NGO work could be perceived according to three levels: micro-policy, macro-policy and norm-setting. Some could combine all the three. To cite an instance, a watershed case on the legality of nuclear weapons was brought to the World Court in 1996 by an affiliation of NGOs opposing nuclear weapons called the World Court Project. The micro-policy was fulfilled when the Court accepted the case. Still, the macro-policy would be procured if NGOs could be able to alter governments’ dependence on nuclear weapons. Concerning norm-setting level, NGOs have to be successful in convincing the public of the iniquities and dangers of nuclear weapons to global security.

NGOs started to have a weighty role in political life as they are more concerned in standing for citizens’ affairs and needs than governments do. They act as a reflection of the social status-quo. Many scholars deem this a democratic emblem and a contributor to pluralism. For that reason, some authorities have moved to hobble their increasing potential by either outlawing the independent NGOs or putting irritating pressure and administrative impediments. Under this framework, some of NGOs are apt to build a coalition with others and act together to broaden their scope of operation and overwhelm hurdles that encumber their activities. For example, numerous

¹² James A. Paul, loc. cit.

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humanitarian NGOs operating within the U.S. manage to have interactive partnerships. Still, NGOs are being submissive to control even by the most democratic governments. They pass through surveillance in registration and also through a review process to assure their legitimacy. NGOs on a common scale are not accused of corruption, transgression of the law, downfall, or any other critical abuses.

- **NGOs and Global Governance**

Before the 1990s, there was the concept of international regimes and intergovernmental relations. Today, a new terminology of 'global governance' emerged. Accordingly, this corresponds to the centrality of NGOs in global politics. Peter Willets, Emeritus Professor of Global Politics at City University in London, stated that concerted efforts of NGOs to have participation rights in the UN and for the construction of the Internet as a global network for public communications have brought about the transformation of the world diplomacy. NGOs role in global politics was underlined in World Politics Review report. It focused on NGOs ability to reconcile individuals and international institutions since the 1990s. Accordingly, governments tend usually to circumscribe their rights and activities and deny their advocacy as some of them are admitted to UN meetings and their relations with UN officials are characterized by amity.¹³

As globalisation has generated both transnational matters and communities for NGOs to cope with and as national governments are not able to undertake the task, NGOs started to gain a crucial status in global decision-making.

Globalization has considerably weakened traditional governance processes. Increasing global economic integration has reduced the power of national governments while granting

¹³Peter Willets, loc. cit.

other economic and political actors access to the world stage. The 1990s witnessed a dramatic increase in the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in global governance (Charnovitz, 1997).¹⁴

NGOs make a contribution to global democracy in two ways. First, they promote the flow of information in global governance. They provide an image of domestic political affairs to the whole world and equally they draw an image of global politics to their nation through reporting information. Second, NGOs give opportunities to the citizenry to voice their opinions for the diplomatic debate to exhaustively deal with nearly all issue-areas so that the subsequent policies would be thoroughly effective.¹⁵

- **Diplomatic Role**

It is evident that NGOs have acted on a global scale; however, they could not be entitled to official diplomatic role until the aftermath of World War II. It was only during the wartime negotiations (1943-45) that NGOs were gained their right to a voice at the United Nations through intense lobbying. Article 71 of the UN Charter secured their rights and ensuing determinations upgraded their position. By 2000, approximately 2.500 NGOs had advisory status with the UN and thousands had official actions with other bodies in the UN system and other intergovernmental organs.¹⁶ Considerable NGO presence in world conferences was firstly conceived in the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 when 17.000 NGO representatives joined the NGO parallel forum and 1.400 were engaged in the intergovernmental negotiations. Moreover, in September 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women amazingly drew 35.000 NGO representatives to the parallel

¹⁴ Barbara Gemmill and Abimbola Bamidele-Izu, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁵ Peter Willets, loc. cit.

¹⁶ James A. Paul, loc. cit.

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forum in Beijing and 2.600 to the intergovernmental negotiations. As a result, NGOs sphere of influence has been broadened. NGOs and governments also started to cooperate easily on particularly both environment and women's issues having full legitimacy as a component of the political system. For instance, NGOs are considered to be members of the "GEF family" in the Global Environment Facility. Yet, in other issue areas, like disarmament, NGOs are nearly excluded.¹⁷

2.3. Case in point

In order to be able to draw a thorough study of NGOs operation and role in the contribution to Global Security, this part will deal with some cases in point in different four main issue-areas; relief, human rights, the environment, and nuclear non-proliferation. First, CARE and Oxfam will be the illustrations for relief which is the most important among NGOs concerns. Second, for human rights Amnesty International will be the case. Third, Greenpeace will be an instance for the environmental issues. The last one will deal with Nuclear Age Peace Foundation as case for nuclear non-proliferation organisations. Then, a case in point of a country where NGOs have greatly contributed to its construction - Bangladesh - will be studied.

- **Relief: CARE**

It was with relief aim in the aftermath of World War II that NGOs were born. Yet, officially it was the Resolution 43/131, "Humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and similar emergency situations," passed by the UN General Assembly on 8 December 1988, allowed intergovernmental organisations and NGOs to interfere when humanitarian aid is needed.¹⁸ When a disaster occurs,

¹⁷ Peter Willets, loc. cit.

¹⁸ Nuri Albala, "We the peoples, Not the States," September 2005, Le Monde Diplomatique, Global Policy Forum,

NGOs have usually been the first to provide charity, help the sick, lend a hand to the injured, house the homeless, nurture the hungry, and sustain them with affectionate care.

CARE International, a case in point, is a global confederation of 14 member and 4 candidate/affiliate organisations working together to end poverty. CARE – originally stood for Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe – is well-known for its package (CARE package) as it delivered a box of military surplus victuals to the war refugees during the devastation of Europe. After that, CARE also provided a package of seeds and tools to the poor countries all over the world as a response to fund-raising appeals. About 100 million CARE packages were delivered during two decades.¹⁹

CARE's mission is to “serve individuals and families in the poorest communities in the world.”²⁰ It engages in disaster preparedness and ‘preparing for the Worst’. Every year, CARE responds to approximately 30 disasters that affect the lives of 11-12 million people around the world. With emergency-response experts on the ground in 69 countries - 95 percent of them citizens of those areas - CARE provides emergency food, relief supplies, water and sanitation and shelter to survivors.²¹ In 2017, CARE worked in 93 countries around the world, implementing 950 poverty-fighting humanitarian aid and development projects. The organisation reached

(<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/176/32077.html>).

Accessed 20 October 2018.

¹⁹ Micheal Hill, “The NGO Phenomenon,” 9 January 2005, Baltimore Sun, Global Policy Forum,

(<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/177/31633.html>).

Accessed 20 October 2018.

²⁰ “Our Mission,” (<http://www.care.org/about>). Accessed 13 November 2018.

²¹ “Disaster Preparedness,” (<http://www.care.org/emergencies/disaster-preparedness>). Accessed 13 November 2018.

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more than 62 million people directly and 216 million people indirectly.²²

NGOs functions may not be confined only to relief. It could convert relief into sustainable development which, in return, can back up the distraught people to prosper once again. NGOs which are committed to relief for a long term, not those considering disasters a fund-raising opportunity, could play a leading role in securing the convalescence of the people, building the community, and helping the reintegration process. For example, a group of NGOs relief actors could pressurize international trade organisations to aid the process of economic development in countries devastatingly damaged by natural disasters.

- **Human Rights: Amnesty International**

Amnesty International, originally born in 1961, is a nonpartisan organization and a global movement comprising more than 7 million supporters, members and activists in over 150 countries and territories who campaign to fight against grave abuses of human rights throughout the world.²³The group works for the release of all prisoners of conscience — “people imprisoned because of their race, ethnicity, sex, economic status, religion, or national origin, or for peacefully expressing their political beliefs”. The organization also attempts to assure fair trials without delay for political prisoners; advocates to put an end to torture, harsh treatment, and death penalty; scrutinizes the sudden absence of political activists and secret executions and; counters abuses committed by anti-government groups, such as taking hostages and killing prisoners.²⁴It aims at

²²(<https://www.care-international.org/>). Accessed 8 December 2018.

²³“Who We Are,” Amnesty International, (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/who-we-are>) Accessed 9 December 2018.

²⁴“Amnesty International.” Encyclopaedia Encarta. Microsoft® Student 2008 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2007.

enabling every person enjoys all the rights protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights.

One of the ground-breaking achievements of Amnesty International is putting an end to the “sovereignty barrier” by bringing about the agreement for a Convention against Torture in 1984. This convention gained its members the right to put on trial and incarcerate torturers, heedless of their nationality and the country where the torture had happened, as long as the victims were their citizens.²⁵

- **Environment: Greenpeace**

Greenpeace, an international environmental non-governmental organisation, is dedicated to preserve the earth’s natural resources and protect its biota. It also campaigns against nuclear weapons testing, environmental pollution, and devastating practices in logging, fishing, and other industry matters.

It was founded in 1971 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, by members of a small group originally called Don’t Make a Wave Committee who contested nuclear weapons testing by the United States military in Alaska. The group renamed itself Greenpeace so as to imply its objective of maintaining a verdant and placid world. It has about 3 million dues-paying members and offices in more than 40 countries.

Greenpeace has been famous for its media attraction to environmental issues. Greenpeace members in rubber rafts usually disturb whaling expeditions by positioning themselves between the whales and hunters’ harpoons. They attempt parallel approaches to demur the clubbing of baby seals, whose soft white fur is highly valued by clothing manufacturers.

²⁵ Peter Willets, loc. cit.

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Greenpeace dares even to be vulnerable to detriment and also conflict with corporations, local authorities, and national governments. In 1985, the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior*, on a journey to protest French nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific, sank in a New Zealand port and the crew photographer, Fernando Pereira, drowned. The results of the investigations proved that the ship had been disrupted on purpose through explosives planted by undercover agents of the French military. This scandal shook the highest level of the French government, resulting in the resignation of Defence Minister Charles Hernu and the dismissal of director of the French Secret Service, Admiral Pierre Lacoste.²⁶

- **Nuclear Non-Proliferation: Nuclear Age Peace Foundation**

Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF), founded in 1982, is an international non-governmental organisation whose mission is to educate and advocate for peace and a world free of nuclear weapons, and to empower peace leaders. Its vision is a just and peaceful world, free of nuclear weapons. It has consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and it is deemed by the UN as a 'Peace Messenger'. It comprises over 60,000 individuals and groups worldwide who realise the imperative for peace in the Nuclear Age.²⁷

NAPF engages in advocacy and education programs. Its educational projects include the Sunflower e-newsletter, which is monthly newsletter providing educational information on nuclear weapons abolition and other issues relating to global security.²⁸ NAPF members believe that nuclear weapons are created to destroy life on

²⁶“The Bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior*”, Greenpeace, 2006, (<http://www.greenpeace.org/seasia/ph/About-us/History/the-bombing-of-the-rainbow-war/>) Accessed 10 November 2018.

²⁷Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, (<http://www.wagingpeace.org/about/>). Accessed 8 November 2018.

²⁸“Sunflower E-Newsletter,” (<http://www.wagingpeace.org/resources/sunflower/>). Accessed 8 November 2018.

earth. They admit that never before has humanity faced such a dire existential threat of its own making. The atomic bomb Hiroshima of the Second World War is a very typical illustration. In order to avoid a parallel catastrophe, they claim that people must shift their thinking from reliance on military force to reliance on cooperation and diplomacy. They work to eliminate weapons for mass destruction (WMD) before they could eliminate mankind as they argue. They are strong antagonists to nuclear deterrence theory.²⁹

*The strategic concept of deterrence aims to prevent war. It is the justification virtually every nuclear state uses for maintaining nuclear arsenals. The concept of nuclear deterrence follows the rationale of the 'first user' principle: states reserve the right to use nuclear weapons in self-defence against an armed attack threatening their vital security interests.*³⁰

NAPF deems that nuclear deterrence is “discriminatory, anti-democratic and unsustainable”. It also asserts that the benefits of this doctrine are “illusory” and concludes that nuclear proliferation would indubitably lead to nuclear terrorism. NAPF appeals for the discrediting of this theory and proposes its replacement with an urgent commitment to achieve global nuclear disarmament through a petition called Santa Barbara Declaration. This petition demands the leaders of the nuclear weapon states and their allies to override nuclear deterrence and consent to the prompt negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention for the “phased, verifiable, irreversible and

²⁹“Nuclear Weapons and the Human Future,” by Nuclear Age Peace, 2 October 2007, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_CutgNL59DQ) Accessed 7 November 2018.

³⁰Nick Harvey, “Nuclear Deterrence,” March 2012, (<http://www.politics.co.uk/reference/nuclear-deterrence>). Accessed 8 November 2018.

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transparent elimination of all nuclear weapons.”³¹ Yet, it is apparent that this petition is still inefficient since NAPF has not been able to collect the needed number of 50.000 signatures since 2011.

- **Bangladesh as an Example for NGOs Success**

An illustration for a country where NGOs played the leading role in rescuing economy and spreading welfare is Bangladesh. This country came into being in warfare conditions in 1971 when Pakistan attempted to keep control of its eastern province on the other side of India. As famine reigned, international NGOs arrived to Bangladesh and ushered in economic development. Bangladeshis mutually started to make their own organisations focusing on especially education, industry and sustainable development. BRAC, which is now deemed to be the largest NGO all over the world, has been the first contributor in this program.

Tariq Karim, former ambassador of Bangladesh to the United States, asserted that NGOs “went into empty spaces that the government could not cover.” He affirmed their great contribution to economic progress and democratic stability, handling control of population growth, and raising issues of famine and floods. Karim here promotes the role of NGOs and states the difference when international NGOs are excluded. He sets the example of Pakistan which marginalised these organisations and subsequently fundamentalist Islamic schools started to grow and nurture extremism, the base of terrorism. Some international observers on the Bangladesh experience with NGOs claim that the Bangladesh example echoed in several other territories. Nations thwarted by governmental corruption and unproductive economy founded NGOs so as to build up and

³¹“Reject Nuclear Deterrence: An Urgent Call to Action,” Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, (http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/6357/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=5786). Accessed 8 November 2018.

develop their countries. This de rigueur reliance on NGOs are depicted as a “global association revolution” wide in dimension and even transnational in character. They are also considered to be “vehicles in which people take the initiatives and change the lives of their countries.”³²

3. Hurdles in Front of NGOs and Approaches for Better Operation

3.1. Hurdles in Front of NGOs

- **Legitimacy and Political Power**

The political power of NGOs is weak. They cannot permanently influence policy outcomes. NGOs are struggling to have a grip on political affairs so as to be effective in policy-making and to have legitimacy to have a voice in decision-making, too. Yet, NGOs still need legal existence to prove their validity to the constituencies suspicious of both their nature and work. Since they have various descriptions and diverse types, they could be then vulnerable to eccentricity. Accordingly, their activities too could be perceived as arbitrary, a fact which may debilitate their authenticity.

NGOs have faced hostility among a minority of delegates to the UN arguing that NGOs are “arrogant” and “unrepresentative.” They base their stance on the argument that NGOs have no legitimacy when compared to governments; hence, they rely on their supporters’ voice in their advocacy campaigns. Other delegates from authoritarian regimes, believing diplomacy to be the most important among perks of the sovereign states, assert that NGOs have no legitimacy to take a part in global policymaking.

It is evident that international NGOs have a quasi-legitimate status worldwide; however not all NGOs are global in trait. For that

³²Micheal Hill, loc. cit.

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reason, NGOs cannot be commonly generalised. This could predominantly result in absence of truthfulness which may in its return cause a confidence crisis. Public trust, which is the main staple of NGOs, must not then be weakened. Hence, for NGOs to guarantee an exhaustive acceptability, they should work on the confirmation of their genuine status and effectiveness. Critics maintain that NGOs have various conflicting attitudes, a fact which may fray the fibres of political action especially when they compete in the same policy field.

- **Representativeness**

Some NGO activists believe that NGOs are the “voice of the people” and sustain the idea of creating a “People’s Assembly” alongside the UN General Assembly so as to extend democracy to global governance. However, holding elections for a global parliamentary assembly seems to be unattainable. On one hand, a wide range of NGOs are small and, then, are representatives of few people. On the other hand, several highly respected NGOs have no mechanism for domestic democracy. Greenpeace and Oxfam could be a typical illustration as they are not formal members and their proponents have no direct voice in the organisations’ policies.

Democracy is not a common concern between NGOs. For example, faith-based organisations perceive their legitimacy on the basis of their moral authority, not of democratic claim. The same is for the scientific, technical, and professional NGOs which are composed of an elite class with high-level expertise and qualifications having no interest in democracy. Despite the evidence that other NGOs, such as Amnesty International and trade unions, hold democratic assemblies with mass members, they are again and again unrepresentative of the whole population. They represent, then, just minorities and cannot have influential voice along these lines. Accordingly, it appears that a representative policymaking or counselling body cannot be created by NGOs.

Giving NGOs a decision-making role, according to some critics, would be “elitist” and “anti-democratic.” This would require their organisation in large constituencies holding a spokesperson for the group. As a matter of fact, such regulation occurs particularly in global environment politics, where NGOs are arranged into nine Major Groups for stakeholder dialogues. Yet, the consequences of this channel of communication have demonstrated that it is difficult for representative equilibrium to be achieved. Their structural alignment consists of children and youth, women, indigenous people, local authorities, business, trade unions, farmers, and communities concerned with science, technology, and industry. This list, for many critics, is both odd and “illogical.” It involves young people and excludes the elderly, for instance. It is the same for the participation of unions, while professional associations are absent. Subsequently, such grouping is depicted as an anti-democratic corporatism.

Some ultra-nationalist regimes identify NGOs as the “agents of a Northern neo-imperialism.” This allegation portraying NGOs as “Northern” is perceived by some critics as atypical. Those who maintain this idea base their attitude on the fact that the headquarters of most international NGOs are found in Europe. Yet, many of these organisations, such as those in London, Brussels, Paris or Geneva could be depicted as “Southern” on a similar account that the preponderance of their members belongs to developing countries. By this means, Southern NGOs are considered to be more numerous than the Northern ones and they are actively committed to nearly all global issue-areas. The only disparity to be deemed is the availability of resources to act independently at the global level. The lack of resources has entailed Southern NGOs acting through their membership of an international NGO or a transnational network. Some governments, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Russia, and Zimbabwe, describe NGOs as “meddling foreigners” and they aim at

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hobbling the activities of local NGOs and local offices of international NGOs.³³

3.2. Approaches for Better Operation

- **NGOs Need Clarity**

Generalisations about NGOs are quite impossible although they are equally praiseworthy. Besides to the big organisations coping with human rights, humanitarian aid and environmental protection, there are NGOs running other concerns like industry associations on chemicals, religious organisations, and promoters of recondite causes such as Esperanto³⁴ and settlement in space. On top of that, some of NGOs totally act independently, whereas others are depicted as the instruments of the governments and businesses. Furthermore, while some have hundreds of thousands of members operating at a global scale, others consist only of a few people. Moreover, being a synonym with non-profits, NGOs nature could be blurred. Non-profits involve a wide range of organisations, such as museums, hospitals, and universities, which provide services, not engage in advocacy like non-governmental organisations.³⁵

On top of that, there is a more or less an erroneous perception when associating non-governmental organisations with non-state actors. Some people perceive the two identifications as one. As a matter of fact, there is a blurred line between them. NGOs are classified with charitable concerns; promotion of the well-being of mankind; sustainable developments; enhancement of democracy; cooperation to put an end to all issue-areas impeding personal and community evolution; activities to provide health care at all levels;

³³ Peter Willets, loc. cit.

³⁴ Esperanto is “an invented language which consists of parts of several European languages, and which was designed to help people from different countries communicate with each other.” (Collins Cobuild Dictionary)

³⁵ James Paul, loc. cit.

work for relief and humanitarian aid; efforts to save fauna and flora; and protection of the ecological system and the environment as a whole. Conversely, non-state actors are considered to be

*a broad political category that includes everything from ordinary citizens – in social movements, non-governmental organizations, and networks of various kinds – to economic actors like multinational corporations and labor unions to criminal and terrorist networks.*³⁶

Therefore, they could be associated with violence and powerful armed groups. Here, these actors are recognized to be as non-state which means, accordingly, taking actions different, and may be conflicting, to those of the state. In this context, they could possibly be described as terrorist as they have no legitimacy.

- **NGOs Need Coalition**

NGOs have proved more effective while operating together in coalitions. A quasi amalgamation and coordinating their actions have helped their promotion internationally. A significant web of NGOs acting on the environment and on global economic policy has paved the way for NGOs to join their efforts in different territories and especially at global networks like international conferences and negotiations. Among the international NGOs networks, there is Third World Network which is found in Malaysia and represents a good illustration as it undertakes a wide range of policy issues. There are also national networks such as the German NGO Network on Environment and Development and Philippine-based Freedom from Debt Coalition, together with regional networks like ARENA, the

³⁶Kathryn Hochstetler, “PSci 685(4) Non-State Actors in Global Governance,” University of Waterloo and Balsillie School of International Affairs, winter 2010, p.1. (<https://uwaterloo.ca/political-science/sites/ca.political-science/files/uploads/files/PS685-4-1101.pdf>). Accessed 20 October 2018.

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Asian Regional Exchange for New Initiatives, or the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas, or AFRODAD, the African Debt and Development Network. In 1995, a meeting of NGO networks inferred that:

*In the long run, we have to invent the infrastructure so citizens can participate effectively in the democratic management of the global system. Over the next decade, NGOs and their networks are one of the important precursors of an accountable global civil society.*³⁷

For them, it is a “responsibility” to work together to speed up progress in the achievement of their objectives. Collaboration is needed because most of NGOs sectors are deeply connected to each other especially environment, health care, human rights, and migration.

Conclusion

On the whole, this study attempted to represent non-governmental organisations. It examined their features, activities, nature, operation, status and, categorization. Their role was scrutinised by dint of their focal presence in the UN heeding their counsel and also their presence on a global scale in general. This study also focused on NGOs contribution to Global Security through their functioning in policy making, global governance and democracy, and diplomacy. NGOs role was assessed through some examples of international organisations focusing on main issue-areas; relief, human rights, the environment, and nuclear non-proliferation. It has been marked that NGOs are considered to be successful and efficient actors on nearly most of security areas; however, they are still weak in politics and their authority on disarmament and non-proliferation of

³⁷Stephan Hale, “NGOs Must Form Creative Alliances to Tackle Global Poverty and Injustice,” 14 March 2011, (<https://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/introduction/49955.html?ItemId=745>). Accessed 20 October 2018.

weapons of mass destruction is notably abortive. Bangladesh case was set as an instance for NGOs well-organised operation and contribution to the development of economic and social situation. Some hurdles in front of NGOs have been tackled in order to have a comprehensive insight of the reasons behind their deficiencies. So as to be able to further their achievements and successes, some approaches have been set.

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