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Articles

Cartography of Governance: An Introduction

Lakshman D. Guruswamy*

I. INTRODUCTION

This Symposium issue of the *Colorado Journal of International Environmental Law and Policy* goes to print just three months after a non-state organization called al Qaeda, under the leadership of Osama bin Laden, successfully carried out the most horrendous and deadly attack on the world's only superpower. The United States responded to this attack by declaring war against terrorism and its nongovernmental practitioners such as al Qaeda and bin Laden. The declaration of war on a nonstate entity recognizes the enormous national and international power exercised by nongovernmental actors.

This introduction will briefly sketch the conceptual rationale for the Symposium entitled *A Cartography of Governance: Exploring the Province of Environmental NGOs*, a scholarly interdisciplinary conference held in April 2001 in Boulder, Colorado. Additionally, this introduction

* Lakshman Guruswamy is a Professor of International and Environmental Law at the University of Colorado School of Law. He serves as the faculty advisor of the *Colorado Journal of International Environmental Law and Policy* and was the director of the symposium, *A Cartography of Governance: Exploring the Province of Environmental NGOs*. He is the co-author of *INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND WORLD ORDER* (2d. ed. 1999), *INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN A NUTSHELL* (1997) and over fifty articles in law reviews and peer reviewed scientific journals. Professor Guruswamy was born in Sri Lanka where he received his education and practiced as a government attorney. He obtained his Ph.D. in law from the University of Durham, where he taught for ten years.

will clarify the terminology used, discuss the organizational framework, and place the discussion of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) within a rudimentary international environmental law context.

II. CONCEPTUAL RATIONALE

The first objective of the Symposium was to understand and explore the growing importance of nongovernmental actors, and delineate the manner in which they have changed the cartography of national and international governance. The importance of this objective was demonstrated by the carnage of September 11, 2001. The recent terrorist attacks also demonstrated the extent to which we are inhabitants of a global village. This Symposium attempted to understand the manner in which two nonterrorist, nongovernmental entities have become increasingly important actors in this global village. It reviewed the manner in which corporations and NGOs are changing the geo-political and socio-economic boundaries of national and international governance.

The second objective brings special focus to bear on environmental NGOs. The second objective seeks answers to the questions: Have not-for-profits or NGOs, gone too far in diminishing the role of the public sector and the nation-state? Is the prevailing faith in the increasingly important role played by NGOs misplaced?

Unlike terrorists, environmental NGOs operate openly in the public square in their role as not-for-profit public interest groups. A cogent case for supporting them may be made on grounds of civic virtue. A segment of the public see NGOs as courageous groups that fight to hold governments and corporations accountable for environmentally damaging actions. Such supporters of NGOs perceive them as the vanguard in the ongoing fight for environmental values. Consequently, supporters feel NGOs should be strengthened and encouraged as an integral part of civil society.

On the other hand, critics of NGOs question the deference given to these partisan interest groups and see no difference between NGOs and other interest groups in society that pursue their narrow adversarial policies and their own well being, at the expense of the public good. The terms "governance" and "civil society" require a brief explanation. "Governance" refers to that national and international domain in which decision-making power and authority is influenced or exercised. Governance applies not only to government-created laws and policy but extends also to those private decisions affecting a plethora of socio-economic issues that have public impact. Governance, therefore, is not the exclusive

preserve of those legal and political institutions by which a nation is governed, called governments. Instead, governance traverses the interaction between these formal institutions of government and civil society.

What about “civil society”? The concept of civil society has a long political genealogy. It originated in the works of Thomas Paine and George Hegel in the late eighteenth century. After lying dormant for almost 200 years, the Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci resuscitated the concept in the post World War II era.¹ In essence, civil society is a domain parallel to, but separate from, the state in which citizen actors associate and coalesce according to their own interests and needs. It encompasses political parties and interest groups that include both for-profit as well as not-for-profit groups. Civil society thus encompasses labor unions, professional associations, chambers of commerce, ethical and religious groups, and terrorist organizations such as al Qaeda and other NGOs.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

After establishing the importance of nongovernmental actors in national and international governance, the Symposium sought to ascertain whether not-for-profits or NGOs have gone too far in diminishing the role of the public sector and the nation-state. It also addressed the corollary issue of whether the prevailing faith in the increasingly important roles played by NGOs is misplaced.

The Symposium identified four case studies in an attempt to shed light on these questions and to acknowledge the functions that each sector is best suited to perform. Specifically, the Symposium employed the prism of environmental policy, science, and law to examine the roles played by NGOs in addressing: (1) GMOs; (2) dams; (3) wildlife and species; and (4) indigenous peoples. What follows in the rest of this section is a brief road map to the main presentations made at the Symposium, summarizing additional points brought out in the speakers' papers in this edition.

United Nations Association President Timothy Wirth, who delivered the Symposium's opening address, points out in his paper that world actors are changing from state actors to others, such as NGOs, businesses, and other nongovernmental entities.² The 1648 Treaty of West-

1. Thomas Carothers, *Civil Society*, FOREIGN POL'Y, Winter 1999–2000, at 18, 18–19.

2. Timothy Wirth, *Disinfectants, Nudes, and Other Adventures*, 13 COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y 15 (2002).

phalia ushered in the nation-state, which then became the sole subject of international law and policy. Wirth now perceives a return to a pre-Westphalian world, where the Church, guilds, landowners, and other independent groups ruled within their own spheres of influence. People are beginning to realize that centralized nation-states do not handle everything perfectly.

Wirth offers examples about how NGOs impact domestic and international "soft law," as well as "the nether side of what governments want to do." Domestically and internationally, NGOs work at gaining considerable expertise on a topic, then urge governments and businesses to act on the basis of their findings and conclusions. Their efforts sometimes result in "soft law" as opposed to treaties and agreements. For example, Bobby Massey of the Global Reporting Initiative got seventy-five major global corporations to voluntarily report information to his organization. Massey then used this information to measure their environmental impact and moderate the actions of the corporations.

On the "nether side," the environmental NGOs and community are "learning in a very aggressive sense to keep governments accountable" through protest and debate. On the positive side, this has forced the World Trade Organization (WTO) to be more accountable to the little people. These benefits, however, have not come without costs, such as the destruction and violence that marked the protest in Seattle in December 1999. Wirth contends the benefits outweighed the violence.

The links between globalization, nation-states and NGOs are explored by Jayantha Dhanapala, Undersecretary-General for Disarmament in the United Nations.³ Dhanapala opines that NGOs will be affected by the "evolution of the complex process known as globalization, and this ever-changing structure known as the nation-state." He begins by underlining how treaties, conventions, or pacts between countries have been instrumental in advancing globalization. In signing and abiding by treaties, nation-states limit their freedom of action because they choose to abide by an authority above themselves.

Turning to globalization, he points out there is no universally agreed upon definition. Past usage associated globalization with "interdependence," a concept applying largely to economic and commercial processes. Economically, globalization was seen as a good thing, both for the companies and the beneficiaries of the products of the companies. Some thought that unfettered commerce would lead to global peace because the economic benefits of globalization would outweigh the cost of wars.

3. Jayantha Dhanapala, *Globalization and the Nation State*, 13 COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y 29 (2002).

However, this has not proven to be the case. Millions have been killed in armed conflicts since the end of the Cold War, and billions of dollars are still being spent on defense.

The downside to globalization as interdependence is that not everyone benefits. The multinational companies expand and prosper while the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. Also, corporations are allowed to export the negative externalities of their products, such as pollution, risks of international pandemics, narcotics, and industrial wastes.

Today, globalization is not confined to economics but has also embraced culture. Information, news, knowledge, and entertainment affect not only commerce, but also shape worldviews, family relations, and attitudes of citizens to the state. Dhanapala points out, however, that despite the hype surrounding it, globalization is not very global after all. Only five percent of the world is connected to the Internet. Half of humanity has not received or made a phone call. Almost half of humanity still lives on less than two dollars a day, and more than a billion people earn less than one dollar a day. Globalization has not reached everyone, he asserts, and has not improved the basic needs of many people, such as clean drinking water, sanitation, and education.

As for the nation-state, it is not just the political unit that deals with the administration of a nation. It is also a form of "collective social identity, one that is based on a common historical, linguistic, or cultural heritage." Dhanapala argues the nation-state has been damaging to the extent that it has engaged in total wars that have affected people, not just armies. It has engaged in unbridled nationalism, which has proven to be an obstacle to constructive international cooperation. However, the nation-state has also furthered many great causes, such as progressive reforms in social, economic, and environmental policies.

Dhanapala suggests that total war, instant global communications, and fast, cheap travel has almost made the nation-state an anachronism. Nevertheless, the nation-state is not yet dead. The nation-state does not need to be replaced, but it does need to be adapted to be "more responsive to human needs in new global conditions." These new contours were explored at the United Nations' Millennium Summit, which produced the Millennium Declaration, a list of common values and principles in important areas such as peace, security and disarmament, development and poverty eradication, protecting the environment, and human rights.

The Millennium Declaration preserved the power of the state but also expressed new global values. Particularly interesting to Dhanapala was the solid consensus behind the statement and "its brilliant synthesis and redefinition of ends and means in the millennium to come."

Realistically, there is still no guarantee that nation-states will embrace their global responsibilities. Global values cannot be imposed by outside forces without being embraced by states from within. The ends of the nation-states must be rehabilitated, and one-way is through good governance: "The essence of good governance is popular participation, transparency, and public accountability."

NGOs can be a catalyst of what is truly beneficial about globalization. They can play crucial roles in helping the state identify new goals, in educating the public of the need for action, and in providing political support for government leaders to enact new laws. Dhanapala concludes by saying that while nation-states are not disappearing, they need to change both the ends they are trying to achieve, and the means they have commonly used. NGOs can help nations accomplish such change.

Although he did not submit a paper for this issue, Bud Wonsiewicz, formerly Chief Technical Officer of MediaOne Group, now of Broadband Living Unlimited, made an illuminating presentation at the Symposium, addressing the topic of technology and governance under the beguiling title, *The Cyber Snake and the Digital Apple*. Wonsiewicz related the parable of a cyber snake that offered digital technology to humans. He concluded that whatever they think about the merits and demerits, humans, by their nature, will choose the digital apple and the knowledge of the wider world.

Wonsiewicz offered a number of reasons for his conclusion. First, digital technology is driving a worldwide revolution of unprecedented size, extent, and duration. Anyone can bite the digital apple and taste the knowledge—for good and for evil. Digital technology, he argued, was a great leveler that provided cheap and accessible information to the public in an unprecedented manner. His examples included satellite television, cell phones in developing countries, Internet cafes, fax, e-mail, and satellites. This access to information is power—when almost everyone can get CNN, how will a dictator control the flow of knowledge and power to his people? Meanwhile, across the globe, technology, finance, and information are becoming democratized, whereas previously, only major corporations and governments had access to the power of technology.

Consequently, anyone can innovate and compete. Low-cost technology has leveled the playing field. Power, information, and decision-making are becoming decentralized. Governments may no longer be able to create monopolies in technology or knowledge. Governance issues are becoming apparent as the power of technology and knowledge releases local cultures and economies from the hold of governments, empowering them in an unprecedented manner.

A number of other speakers addressed the subject of NGOs from their varying perspectives. Ambassador Hasmy Agam, Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the UN, takes a somewhat guarded view of NGOs.⁴ He argues that these organizations are powerful, influential and here to stay, thus necessitating the need to learn to “live with them.” According to Agam, NGOs play many roles. In a democracy, some NGOs act as watchdogs and the conscience of civil society against the excess of the powerful. Other NGOs who are more self-righteous stand outside but exercise their freedom to complain and disparage democratic governments. The latter kind of NGOs usually lack transparency and adopt a confrontational stance that triggers the government’s disfavor. Sometimes they closely align themselves with opposition parties, becoming political players themselves. These NGOs, Agam continues, are aware of their power and abuse it to realize their goals.

Despite the ways in which some NGOs choose to behave, many governments in developing countries are not opposed to NGOs. They “understand the work of NGOs and value their many contributions to civil society from which they spring.” The Malaysian government formed a partnership with NGOs, both national and international, during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) process. Smaller governments were overwhelmed by the number of complex issues pertaining to the environment and development and relied on NGOs to increase their knowledge and power in negotiating with Northern powers.

Problems arose. The NGOs felt the governments had not done enough to ensure their greater involvement in the negotiations. They did not appreciate being forced to take the backseat. The governments thought the NGOs took too much power, and were too inflexible, narrowly focused on their particular issue and their self-importance. In the end, the tensions balanced out, and the governments and the NGOs together accomplished a great deal. Fortunately, power-hungry and confrontational NGOs were the minority.

Agam concludes that, “[t]o be taken seriously, NGOs should ‘clean up their act.’ They should be better organized and led, and be imbued with a greater sense of responsibility and accountability, and operate within the ambit of the laws of the land.” Both governments and NGOs need to realize that neither has a monopoly on sustainable development, and they can learn from each other. NGOs should change their perceived image of arrogance, and governments should learn to take criticism.

4. Hasmy Agam, *Working with NGOs: A Developing World Perspective*, 13 *COLO. J. INT’L ENVTL. L. & POL’Y* 39 (2002).

Susan Daggett, Director of the Denver office of Earthjustice, unlike Ambassador Agam, takes a more positive view of NGOs. She writes about: *NGOs as Lawmakers, Watchdogs, Whistle-blowers, and Private Attorneys-General*.⁵ As an insider—a full time employee of an NGO—Daggett is particularly equipped to speak to her subject of how NGOs fit into the structure of environmental governance.

Daggett points out that although the government has directed environmental enforcement for decades, citizens' groups have made the real changes. She examines three aspects of the legal authority of NGO enforcement of environmental law: (1) police power of government agencies to enforce regulations; (2) NGO-initiated citizen lawsuits to force government to abide by its own rules; and (3) citizen-initiated lawsuits to enforce environmental law against third parties who are violating the laws.

NGOs act as lawmakers through NGO-led litigation, as well as their lobbying efforts. They also serve the role of watchdogs and whistle-blowers by crying foul when government agencies refuse to follow their own rules. NGOs can force third parties to comply with government regulations and help set agencies' agendas. Daggett concludes by saying that citizen enforcement is likely to become more important in the future, with NGOs continuing to play a role as instruments of the civic citizenry.

Ralph Peterson, President and Chief Executive Officer of CH2M Hill, one of the largest engineering companies in the world deals in his article with *Government, Private Sector, and NGO Roles: In the Next Generation of U.S. Environmental Policy*.⁶

According to Peterson, the most serious crisis we face—bigger even than the publicized mega problems of global warming, disappearing biodiversity, genetically modified organisms and nuclear power—stems from waning public confidence in governments and corporations to “do the right thing” about environmental issues. In turn, this lack of consensus and political will has created a kind of environmental policy gridlock. That gridlock has stalled the evolution of a much needed, next generation of environmental policies, laws, and science in the United States.

He sees this erosion of public confidence taking place in a global landscape being shaped by exploding world trade, democratization, information technology, and industry consolidation. These four forces cre-

5. Susan Daggett, *NGOs as Lawmakers, Watchdogs, Whistle-blowers and Private Attorneys-General*, 13 COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y 99 (2002).

6. Ralph Peterson, *Government, the Private Sector, and NGO Roles in the Next Generation of U.S. Environmental Policy*, 13 COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y 87 (2002).

ate a situation in which the role of national governments is not well defined. It is here that NGOs and private enterprise, especially profit-motivated multinational enterprises, carry more influence than ever. The power of these multinational companies in today's world is evidenced by the incredible size of their pocketbooks. The total revenues of the world's 500 largest companies last year was about US\$12.7 trillion, or roughly the equivalent of the combined gross national product of Japan, Germany, France, China, Italy, Brazil, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

There is, however, no global governance mechanism to cope with the multinational and transboundary nature of today's issues. Institutionally, intergovernmental organizations, such as the WTO, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank, have been given special mandates and do possess expertise, but they have not been vested with corresponding new powers of governance or organizational structures allowing them to implement their mandates. Civil society and NGOs have also become important players, but they similarly lack any administrative or managerial power of governance. Ironically, this absence of formal power resembles the situation of multinational corporations. Consequently, global issues and important actors abound but with no overarching governance mechanism.

This atmosphere prevents the needed progression to the next generation of environmental policies. Traditionally, a command-and-control regulatory system governs environmental issues. This system worked well to attack the gross pollution problems we faced during the early 1970s when the current era of environmental policy and regulation first took shape. For all its imperfections, that system produced tremendous benefits to the environment and the American people.

Compared to thirty years ago, the environmental problems of today and tomorrow are substantially different. The problems are more complex and interconnected than fish-killing effluent outfalls and smoke-spewing stacks. Consequently, while the old system might have worked when anti-environmentalists were clearly identifiable, it is not as successful when battle lines and issues are no longer black and white. In the United States and elsewhere, we are gradually adjusting to the reality that we have a different set of environmental issues and that we need new legal, regulatory, and policy tools to tackle them.

In fact, we are currently witnessing the evolution of the next generation of environmental policy and regulation. This new system is evolving alongside the adversarial command-and-control system it will eventually replace, but without the benefit of a clear legislative or regulatory mandate to guide its evolution. In spite of that, the new system *is* evolving. The new system will have more flexibility and accountability and

will be more collaborative and less adversarial, valuing results over process. But more importantly, this new system will seek to harness economic drivers and market forces to extract a maximum return on environmental investment.

Peterson argues that this erosion of trust in government and private enterprise underlies the gridlock stalling the emergence of an environmental policy and legal framework needed for the next generation of environmental progress. He argues that unless a reasonable level of trust can be restored, the effective democracy so sought and valued in the United States will be threatened.

He presents one promising avenue for addressing this governance challenge: the expanded use of structured "multi-stakeholder, collaborative decision-making processes." This approach was illustrated by a multi-stakeholder, collaborative decision-making process employed on a forestry issue in Washington. The protection of spotted owl habitat in old-growth forests in the Olympic Peninsula in Washington set timber industry and environmental interests on a collision course. The community turned to a collaborative process to seek a way out of this legal and jurisdictional quagmire. Under the auspices of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, a commission of thirty-three informed citizens was established, made up of representatives of conservation and wildlife NGOs, the timber industry, local communities, Indian tribes, as well as legislative leaders and experts in economics, forestry, and the law. Following an intense nine-month interactive and educational process, the commission came to a precedent-setting consensus on a set of recommendations.

Peterson concludes that this type of community consensus process has great promise for the future as a model for government, business, and NGO collaboration.

IV. GMOS & NGOS

One of the Symposium's four deliberative forums explored the role of NGOs in relation to GMOs. This impressive interdisciplinary session was co-chaired by William Friedman, Professor of Environmental, Population, and Organismic Biology, and Robert Sievers, Professor of Chemistry, and Director of the Environmental Program, both from the University of Colorado at Boulder. The articles by Professors Thomas DeGregori⁷ and Dale Oesterle,⁸ both of whom were panelists, along with

7. Thomas DeGregori, *NGOs, Transgenic Food, Globalization, and Conservation*, 13 COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y 116 (2002).

that of Julie Teel,⁹ the Rapporteur for this session, deal more fully with the issues and arguments raised in the session.

This deliberative forum sought to offer answers to two important questions. First, do GMOs or Living Modified Organisms have a role in sustainable development and/or sustainable agriculture? Second, to what extent do GMOs advance or impede sustainable development?

On the more specific issue of GMOs, the articles by DeGregori and Oesterle offer trenchant criticisms directed at the role of NGOs in dealing with GMOs. Rebecca Goldberg, Senior Scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund, explained at the Symposium why GMOs are a cause for concern. This introduction concludes by briefly placing that exchange of views within the context of international environmental law. To do so, it is necessary to briefly explain the concept of sustainable development.

The international community has accepted sustainable development as the *grundnorm*¹⁰ of international environmental law ever since it was proclaimed to be such at the Earth Summit of 1992.¹¹ Despite its exalted status, the concept of sustainable development maintains a chimerical

8. Dale Oesterle, *A Clear-Headed Look at NGOs*, 13 *COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y* 130 (2002).

9. Julie Teel, *Rapporteur's Summary of the Deliberative Forum: Have NGOs Distorted or Illuminated the Benefits and Hazards of Genetically Modified Organisms?*, 13 *COLO. J. INT'L ENVTL. L. & POL'Y* 137 (2002).

10. A *grundnorm*, translated in the United States as the basic norm, is the foundational premise or initial hypothesis conferring validity or legitimacy on all other norms of international environmental governance. As formulated by the Austrian jurist Hans Kelsen, "[it] is the postulated ultimate rule according to which the norms . . . are established and annulled, receive or lose their validity." HANS KELSEN, *GENERAL THEORY OF LAW* 113 (1946); *See also* HANS KELSEN, *PURE THEORY OF LAW* 194–195 (1967).

11. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development or Earth Summit was convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. The Earth Summit was the biggest and most important environmental conference in history. It sought to give expression to sustainable development and to fulfill its goals of addressing the dual problems of environmental protection and socio-economic development, by producing two treaties: the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Jan. 29, 2000, 39 *I.L.M.* 1027 [hereinafter *Biosafety Protocol*], and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, May 29, 1992, U.N. Doc. A/AC.237/18 (1992), *reprinted in* 31 *I.L.M.* 849 (1992); two instruments: the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of 1992, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.151/6/Rev.1 (1992), *reprinted in* 31 *I.L.M.* 874 (1992), and Agenda 21, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.151/4 (1992); together with a non-binding declaration on Forest Principles, U.N. Conf. on Env't & Dev., Non-Legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.151/6/Rev.1 (1992), *reprinted in* 31 *I.L.M.* 881 (1992).

character; it needs to be honed, refined, and more clearly defined. While the concept continues to evolve, a recent restatement of sustainable development, conceptualized by a group including a significant number of Nobel Laureates, is worthy of particular attention.¹²

This distinguished group defines sustainable development as the wise use of resources through social, economic, technological, and ecological policies governing natural and human engineered capital. According to this restatement, such policies should promote innovations that assure a higher degree of life support for the fulfillment of human needs while ensuring intergenerational equity.

It behooves us, therefore, to inquire into whether GMOs advance sustainable development. The attempt to answer this question is clouded by the fact that two relevant treaty regimes that purport to advance sustainable development by addressing GMOs within their respective legal domains are at odds. The Agreement Establishing the Multilateral Trade Organization (WTO),¹³ and its cognate Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement),¹⁴ on the one hand, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and its progeny the Biosafety Protocol,¹⁵ on the other, both purport to advance sustainable development but seek to achieve their objectives by different and potentially contradictory means.

WTO and the SPS are part of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade¹⁶ regime that seeks to generate development and prosperity through free trade. To the extent that a decision to ban GMOs obstructs free trade, the SPS requires that such decisions be justified on principles of scientific risk assessment. On the other hand, the Biosafety Protocol seeks environmental protection, not free trade. The Biosafety Protocol

12. Inspired in part by UNCED and subsequent conferences and events, a collection of noted scientists, scholars, and policy makers determined to create a comprehensive and authoritative body of knowledge incorporating a unified, interdisciplinary understanding of the interdependence of natural and human-created systems. To this end, these visionaries initiated the Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS), a project currently under development. See ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, at <http://www.eolss.com>. See also ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS (forthcoming May 2002).

13. Agreement Establishing the Multilateral Trade Organization [World Trade Organization], Dec. 15, 1993, 33 I.L.M. 13 (1994).

14. Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Apr. 15, 1994, Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, *reprinted in* 1994 WL 761483, at *90-120.

15. Biosafety Protocol, *supra* note 11.

16. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Apr. 15, 1994, Annex 1A to Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, 33 I.L.M. 1154, 108 Stat. 4809 (1994).

grants liberty to nations pursuing biosafety to ban GMOs, even in the absence of scientific proof, by using the precautionary principle.

The discussion in this Symposium's deliberative forum illuminates the broader issues raised at the Symposium. These issues are: Have not-for-profits or NGOs gone too far in diminishing the role of the public sector and the nation-state? Is the prevailing faith in the increasingly important role played by NGOs misplaced?

On the one hand, Timothy Wirth, Susan Daggett, Ralph Peterson, and even Jayanatha Dhanapala see NGOs as a valuable and virtuous force in civil society. These distinguished contributors who are drawn from the highest ranks of politics, diplomacy, and business, bring differing and divergent perspectives to bear on these issues. They offer a variety of reasons for welcoming the role of NGOs in civil society. On the other hand, Hasmy Agam is more guarded, skeptical, and even suspicious about some NGOs, though he concedes they are here to stay. Oesterle and DeGregori in particular are censorious about the role of NGOs. The panel on GMOs and NGOs was generally critical of how NGOs have dealt with GMOs.

These speakers and writers are all agreed about the importance of NGOs in today's national and international civil societies. Even those who think that NGOs do not embody unsullied civic virtue concede that they have been, and will continue to be, powerful political players in national and international governance. At the same time, we note how recent events have buttressed, not diminished, the importance of nation-states and the public sector. We are witnessing a renewal of faith in government and not its attenuation or demise.

While the massacre of September 11 pitched a nongovernmental terrorist group against a nation-state, the armed response of the United States and its allies has demonstrated the extent to which organized military power still remains the monopoly of states, not NGOs. We have also seen that NGOs, whether engaged in charity, relief, or human rights still function upon the bedrock of a government sponsored public sector.

The dynamic interaction of governments, the public and private sectors, NGOs, and civil society form the vortex of continuously developing political systems. These forces cannot be viewed in isolation, and must be seen as parts of a complex and dynamic political whole. The actions and developments within one sector impact others within this fluid system. This Symposium raised important questions to which there are no immutable answers. The answers will emerge and change even as the system continues to evolve.

