The 29th year of our periodical begins with a bold change to a new title « Transnational Associations » in harmony with the demanding relevance of the old title « International Associations ».

The transnational nature of nonprofit associations demands recognition and our informed readers will not be surprised that we want to give a good example of conceptual clarity. The purpose of « Transnational Associations » is to present significant contributions to understanding about the structure and function of international groups and organizations. The main concern is to focus attention on the roles and problems of the wide variety of transnational associations (NGOs: international nongovernmental, nonprofit organizations) in the international community. In this issue « Transnational Associations » is the periodical of transnational associations and those interested in them. It therefore includes news, views, studies, statistics, activity and meeting information, as well as articles. The articles range from descriptions of individual organizations to academic investigation of groups of organizations and their problems. The format of the selected articles is free on the substantive world problems on which they may act (which are extensively examined in other periodicals) and more on the present methods of international action and future alternatives which can usefully be envisaged and discussed. Related themes are taken up in articles on the development of international organizations, techniques of meeting organization, international information systems, multinational enterprises. The readership therefore includes: international association executives, intergovernmental organization executives, scholars of the sociology of international action, organizers of international meetings, commercial organizations offering services to international bodies, and others interested in the activities of the whole range of international organizations.

« Transnational Associations » is the organ of the nonprofit Union of International Associations, although the views expressed are not necessarily those of the UAI.

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Membre Fédération Internationa
There is considerable terminological confusion about the term « Non-Governmental Organization » (NGO). The primary aim of this report is not to lead a movement for linguistic regularization, which would be much more than simply a matter of words. That a need exists for such clarification is evidenced by the large literature and by a letter from the International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres who encouraged us to seek a more adequate definition of NGO «. This section argues that NGO is part of a private language of phrases and slogans which often have little meaning to the public and may even lose their meaning for us if we overuse them. (K. Wachteln, UN Secretary-General, 1976).

The term has an historical dimension. The United Nations, faced with the diversity of actors who, in modern attention and recognition, introduced a negative definition of « NGO » in Article 71 of the UN Charter (Judge Sjöblad 1977, 1974, p. 199). The actual compromise definition is « International organizations which is not established by intergovernmental agreement shall be considered as non-governmental organizations » (International Law Commission, 1975). The term is essentially one concerned with a relation; the relation between governmental, and everything other than governmental activity. The problem is used by UN agencies and more recently by other international bodies. The term is also perceived in various ways. 

In a 1979 report that « Each division and specialized agency of the United Nations maintains its own set of relationships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This ambiguity is related to use of the term « NGO » to describe organizations that are international in character and not attached to any formal governmental bodies. Recognized in the Charter itself, some organizations have played an increasingly important and vocal role in the work of the UN system. Moreover, the growing concern in the UN system with environmental and developmental problems has given rise to interest in the UN from groups not normally associated with it. (I.E.D., 1975, p. 13). Friends of the Earth refer to the NGOs as « A particularly inelegant and negative term for someone who is simply not an official ». (D. Garcher, 1976, p. 1).

Rosalind Harris, president of the UN Conference of NGOs states that NGOs « are generally international and of some recognized stature in their field... I think NGOs are simply people's associations for whatever reason they choose to get together. And there are all kinds because there are all kinds of people ». (R. Harris, Jervio Madrid Forum Newspapers, June 1976).

Political scientists have called attention to contacts, coalitions and interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments (Nye and Keesha, quoted in A. Lightall, 1974, p. 17). Some see themselves as NGOs on the basis of their freedom to criticize government openly and without fear of repression (conversation with Rangelam Kashiore Chimanda, Mauritanian Environment Council, 1979). Some positively assert that they are an NGO. Thus, the International Working Group on Solidar Culture » Management of Rules and Procedures « declares that « It is an International Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the name International Working Group on Solidar Culture, WOSG: » P. 1, Profile 0024).

Hannah Bear, adviser to UNEP Executive Director on NGOs has stated that « There is no NGO community as such. The NGO world is composed of many different elements... some are purely technically NGOs - they are composed of Comorosians, for instance, or specific parts of the community, and are therefore more governmental in some sense. Others are special scientific or professional organizations, others major popular organizations of different kinds with the environmental issue as a side line. One should therefore beware of speaking of NGOs opinion, NGOs possibilities as unified factors, they are as varied as humanity itself ». (H. Bear, 1976, p. 5).

Some organizations of great relevance to UNEP's work find the description difficult to understand, especially as applying to them. Some social scientists have arrived at a consensus as to what is meant by NGO. It is:

1) privately (rather than publicly) established
2) not-for-profit
3) voluntary membership participation.

The Union of International Associations Yearbook of International Organizations (UN, Brussels, 1974) has it that according to existing convention, an NGO must draw its aims, membership and finance from at least three countries. 

Excluded from the NGO category are: social clubs, secret societies, religious missions, schools and universities and profit-making bodies. Even the last criterion is problematic unless strictly defined as dividend-paying, for most organizations aim to realize an incremental surplus on investment in current activity. It is a fragile distinction. Functions « NGOs » are seen as functional in various ways. The Yearbook of International Organizations notes four types of NGOs which are very different in structure and function:

Type A: Groupings in which independent international NGOs collaborate to promote common interests

Type B: As for Type A, except that a major concern is with the relationship with an intergovernmental organization

Type C: NGOs whose membership is open to both national and international NGOs.

Type D: NGOs who function as a parent body for dependent regional or specialized NGOs. »
Another view of the types and roles of NGOs, identified by the United Nations is
(a) NGOs providing public information and public support
(b) NGOs playing an advisory role to governments on unitary needs that should be given higher priority
(c) National NGOs involved in group action for the social and economic advancement of their countries. For example, church groups, national social welfare organizations, teachers' associations, etc.
(d) National and international NGOs engaged directly in technical assistance and development work.

NGOs may exist because governments have delegated upon their responsibilities. As the concept and the social phenomena which led to the formulation of the term is culturally and historically Westem-bound, it has led to speculation that the existence or non-existence of NGOs is an indicator of social and economic development. Thus, Judge and Skjøtskow note that: One consequence of focusing on conventional organizations only is that functional equivalents, particularly in non-Western cultures, are excluded from the analysis. Thus introducing cultural bias and jeopardizing comparative studies. (A. Judge, K. Skjøtskow, 1974, p. 191).

and further that: "More or less successful imitations exist as functional equivalents in non-Western societies, but frequently with a strong governmental component making them 'mixed', or 'intersect' organizations." (660, 1974, p. 194).

Still others have made risky assertions, such as: "In Eastern Europe, it is questionable whether the concept of an activist nongovernmental organization is meaningful." (J. Stiel, 1975, p. 27).

To complete the confusion, Scofield and Waibel contrast much of the above by stating: "Being nongovernmental, all such organizations lack the sufficient monopoly of force over their own members - in matters such as taxation, criminal justice and military-national service - which conceptually distinguishes all governmental institutions. Even so, the term nongovernmental has multiple meanings - that is, the public versus private dichotomy is less than absolute. Nongovernmental groups, in fact, range from: (1) Those which have been created by government initiative - for example, via tax-exempt status in the case of religious, educational and charitable organizations - (2) Those which are encouraged by government - that is, those which are private and illegal - to (4) those which are private, secret and illegal - for example, the Múde- man, the post-1968 Weatherman or the Black Liberation Army. (J. M. Scofield, L.S. Waibel, 1974, p. 12).

Fundamental problems

Finally, we call UNEP's attention to the fact that there are three fundamental problems with the term which should lead to its demise. The first is a linguistic problem. In many cultures - non may mean something very close to - anti - which is plainly not UNEP's descriptive intent. That is, non-government translated connotes anti-government. (Union of International Associations, 1974, p. 555; A. Judge, 1974, p. 153).

The second is the following logical problem with the term. To not be something (e.g. non-governmental) can mean:

(1) A is not B, or they are different
(2) A is not B, or A lacks attributes of B, the implication being not only is it different but it is deficient in contrast to B (akin to defining Canada as non-United States).
(3) A is not B, and B as A cannot be conceived independently of B.

Out of these three logical implications as to what. A might be, only (2) permits

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Interactions using 10 actor typology</th>
<th>INGO</th>
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A to have unique and independent characterstics, reflecting the positive aspects of the reality of A.

The following question should be asked if non-governmental is not a logical absurdity: What if it is not the entire thing which is itself defined as not being something other than itself? That is, is it to be not be an NGO? Unless it can be answered with certitude to mean > to be government >, it cannot be ascertained what the term means. The third reason for progressing beyond the term NGO is that the distinction is based on an invalid dichotomy between government and society. It is based on corporatism, i.e. the conception of society in which government thinly delegates many of its functions, and much of its largesse, to private groups which enjoy both normative and functional legitimacy in the political system. In this appreciation, collective goals are usually seen as prior to those of any discrete individual or interest. Government is not regarded as some alien apparatus requiring surveillance by outsiders, but instead the usual expectation is that political elites will generally act in the larger community interest. (R. Preibusch, 1974, p. 44). This is the heart of the matter. From the point of view of international law, transnational > non-governmental > activity has no basis in international law. Its legitimacy (as argued below) relies on its relationship to values and goals which are numerous and conflicting. Thus Spiegel and Mitterer observe that > citizen participation can occur in partnership with a governmental unit as well as against it. Its nature can be cooperative and integrative or conflicting and oppositional >. (In J. Carrol, 1973, p. 219).

Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

The object of IUCN is to > encourage and facilitate cooperation between governments, national, and international organisations and persons concerned with and interested in the protection of nature and conservation of natural resources > (IUCN Statutes, 1972). IUCN describes itself as > a Union of members > sovereign states, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations. It is formed to promote the conservation of nature and natural resources throughout the world. The Union is committed to ensuring that conservation will be recognized as a vital ingredient in international and national development programmes as well as that it receives a much higher priority than hitherto. (IUCN, 1972, < Services available >, etc., p. 1).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member type</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>No. votes per member</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.1 States</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2 Agency extra to states</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.1 National NGO</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.2 International NGO</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| In total countries | 456 |                      | 456   | 100%

2. Each NGO under B. has one vote until its national strength reaches 10% of the total. B. is 10% of the Council of the NGO of that state that each receives an equal decision fraction which sums to 10% of the total votes. As there are 456 NGOs in total, the total votes is expected to be 456 x 10% = 456 votes. This leaves each US NGO with 0.01 of a vote.

3. The total does not include governmental agencies and international agencies subsumed under A. 1.

A New Conception

The new conception is based on recognizing the positive attributes of the diverse and uneven activity we have been discussing, but clearly not being beyond it. Goals and norms which are the substance of the NGO concept.

It is the transition from regarding non-governmental activity relative to considering the positive aspects of the various kinds of organized action (or organization in the sense of coordination, continuity, and effectiveness). That this has de facto occurred is evidenced by the fact that in a survey of NGOs we were requested to include individuals among them and by definition cannot be considered in organizations. They are unable to be induced in useful and organized action. All other in the larger scale there are organizations to which States and > non-governmental organizations > belong and enjoy equal status as members. An example is the International Cognisant of international political realities, IUCN's membership is based on national states and organizations, intergovernmental agencies. (Category A), non-governmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations (Category B). The present distribution of votes at IUCN General Assembly based on its membership figures is shown in table 1.

The IUCN Statutes admit that category A is > non-governmental >. But all that is said by way of definition of a national NGO is that they > be organizations, institutions and associations organized within a state and of NGOs that they > be organizations, institutions and associations organized internationally > (emphasis added) IUCN Statutes, 1972, Article 2).

It seems as difficult to subsume an organization like IUCN under the term NGO as it is the individual. > NGO > it seems, cannot accommodate reality. Once community environment action in all its manifestations is taken as the positively defined category, the way is clear for UNEP to remove a thorn in the UN-body-polic it has resulted in near paralysis of working relations elsewhere in the UN system. Organized environment action is the coherent functional integration of social units to realise legitimate values and to achieve defined goals. The guidelines to the Profile Survey Area Coordinators prefigured this by stating > We are concerned with NGOs as they exist in fact, and not as they are often narrowly defined. This point is most important. We are not seeking to set boundaries within which organisations are rigidly confined. We are trying to locate focus of environmental activities by all varieties of NGO. This includes some, like ad hoc campaigns,