

# Civil society movements and campaigns for international democracy

Nicola Vallinoto

Unfortunately, we have no world government, accountable to the people of every country, to oversee the globalization process in a fashion comparable to the way national governments guided the nationalization process.

(Joseph Stiglitz 2002, 21)

## 1 Introduction

Part VI provides a chapter on the role of global civil society movements in the democratization of international organizations. It gives a general perspective of the globalization process and shows the creation and the growth of transnational networks with a main objective to foster international democracy. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first presents a brief introduction to the concepts of democracy and globalization. It presents the role of the civil society movements to globalize democracy and gives a successful example of how an alliance between civil society and progressive governments brought about the establishment of a new institution that is considered an important step in reinforcing international democracy. Special attention will be given to Europe, considered the most advanced experiment of international democracy, with some important campaigns with the aim of the democratization of European institutions. The second part focuses on the 21st century and describes the global civil society movements building another possible world starting from the protests of Seattle (1999), Nice (2000) and Genoa (2001), and moving to the projects for international democracy produced in the wake of that world-wide process that originated in Porto Alegre with the World Social Forum. This chapter should be considered a preamble of what will be developed, in a detailed and comprehensive way, in the second report of International Democracy Watch. The next report will be devoted to the study of civil society movements and campaigns in the field of democratizing international organizations at the universal, inter-regional and regional levels.

## 2 The role of civil society movements in the globalization of democracy

### 2.1 *Demos and kratos at the 'glocal' level*

Democracy is the union of the words 'people' and 'government', *demos* and *kratos*, neither of which—as Tommaso Padoa Schioppa said in a speech in 2009—must be subjected to the other (Padoa Schioppa 2009). *Kratos* is a Greek word translated as 'authority, strength, power', which includes the prerogatives a government needs. Globalization has revealed a problem that is difficult to solve: on the one hand, we have a world of people that moves and operates at the global level; on the other hand, we have democracy that remains at the national level. The discrepancy between the needs of *demos* and the functioning of *kratos*, today constitutes one of the main dangers for the survival of democracy as a form of government founded on the principles of responsibility, autonomy and equality. To overcome this gap, we need to work simultaneously on different levels of government: local, regional, national, macro-regional and global. Each of us is part of a multi-dimensional system of interdependences: we share the use of the elevator and roof protection with other residents; the garbage collection and public gardens with the citizens of the town; the local public transport with the inhabitants of the region; the administration of justice and the welfare system with the national community; the common currency, the parliamentary assembly and the common market with the continental or subregional union; the greenhouse effect and the rules of

aviation and the seas with the entire world. Each of us is a member of many, gradually broader, human societies, each defined by common interests and mutual dependencies and each requiring forms of government and democracy. For every individual, we can count at least five spheres of membership from the local to the global level: city, region, country, macro-region (continent) and world. The word 'government' must therefore be declined in the plural, not only along the horizontal scale of their juxtaposition on the Earth's surface, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, along the vertical inclusion of the wider and wider circles of human beings to which each of us simultaneously belongs.

### 2.2 *Globalization and democracy*

The new scientific revolution is the first essential factor that determines a change in the nature of international relations in the contemporary world. It alters the dimensions of our daily life with new technologies (Castells 2000). Globalization can be viewed as a process of integration of our planet. It is a global process that creates a growing network of economic and social relations. In view of this transformation, a large number of scholars underline the crisis of the nation-state and of the paradigms based on the centrality of sovereign states in the international system. One of the main consequences of the globalization process is the erosion of state sovereignty as states progressively lose control of the major problems affecting them.

While states are progressively losing the role of exclusive protagonists of international relations, international politics is being conditioned by emerging new actors such as multinational banks and corporations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They have acquired an unprecedented autonomous power of action. International terrorism is threatening the monopoly of force, which until now has belonged to the states. Hence, globalization is not only or exclusively an economic fact, but a more complex phenomenon that also has a social dimension: the birth of a global civil society (Levi 2005). The globalization process has caused a movement of the boundaries between civil society and the state. While civil society has become global, organizing events and campaigns at the world level, states have remained national; consequently, politics is no longer able to carry out its task of organizing and addressing civil society and producing those mechanisms of inter-mediation that guarantee the common good. The globalization process has multiplied the activities of civil society addressing global issues and problems across state borders, and by making demands and organizing demonstrations all over the world the emerging global civil society has challenged political and economic powers. According to Pianta and Zolo (2007), global civil society can be defined as the sphere of the relations and of the activities driven by collective actors—civil society organizations, networks and social movements—that are independent of governments and private enterprises, that operate outside politics and economy, and that cross state borders. Transnational movements represent one of the most original and relevant elements of our present political life. We are speaking of several associations and institutions, with different and very often opposing aims, the most important and visible examples of which are the World Economic Forum and World Social Forum, religious and secular movements, peace movements,

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ethnic and minority groups, trade unions, global justice and environmental movements.

### 2.3 The rise of global civil society

As observed by Archibugi (2008, 76), 'multinational corporations, global movements, and international organizations themselves are all cross-border actors and satisfy criteria of legitimacy, obedience, and fidelity that do not coincide with state dynamics. These new actors are actually challenging the legitimacy of the dominant intergovernmental oligarchism'.

The Earth Summit on environment and development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was the first great diplomatic conference with the participation of almost all the governments of the planet, and was clear evidence of this trend (Levi 2005, 303). At the same time as the conference of governments, a counter-summit of environmentalist organizations was also being held. This counter-summit approved an Earth Charter, which had the ambition of setting the solution proposed by environmentalist organizations against those proposed by governments. Global civil society movements flourished in that period, those that determined the failure of the Millennium Round in Seattle on December 1999 being an expression of this trend. They are part of a common cause. They share the idea that the global problems with which they are concerned (e.g. peace, development, justice, environment and human rights) arise from the process of globalization, which causes power and wealth to be concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people. This global movement expresses the demand of the more active and conscious part of world citizens to reclaim their lives and destiny, vindicating the right to participate in the solution of global problems. A banner shown by demonstrators in Seattle in 1999 stated 'no globalization without representation'. Another banner paraded during the G8 counter-summit in Genoa in 2001 demanded 'a World Parliament for the globalization of rights'. Some participants wore t-shirts with 'You G8, we 6 billion' written on them. These slogans represent an obvious grievance against the lack of democracy and legitimacy of national governments and international organizations. The division of the world into national states is driving us to an unavoidable crisis. The globalization of the economy and society has not been followed by a globalization of democracy. We have a global market, but we do not have a global democratic and representative government yet. The process of globalization intensifies the inter-relations and the interdependence of world problems and their challenges. As a result, what happens on a global scale has a decisive influence that affects the lives of every citizen of the world on a local level. Moreover, the globalization process is leading to a weakening of political authority: while markets are becoming increasingly global, the influence of political institutions required for their democratic, equitable and efficient functioning is decreasing every day. A growing gap exists between those who decide on the global economy and those who suffer the consequences of these decisions (Pianta 2001, 72). This is exactly the opposite of what one should expect from democracy, which is based on the principle that the *demos*, the people, are to participate in the decisions concerning them. In a period when democracy is increasingly asserting itself as the only legitimate form of government within the state, it is a paradox that there is no democratic form of power management outside the state. So as to confront the power of state summits and those of the international institutions, civil society organizations have invented the counter-summits, events that challenge the legitimacy of government leaders and counter the activities of official delegates, thus giving visibility to global civil society and proposing alternative solutions to global problems. At the beginning of the 1980s, counter-summits represented a model for mobilizing global civil society and hence a way to contest the legitimacy of official summits of the international institutions. Today, however, the scene is dominated by independent events that have been nourished by the experiences that developed from the first World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (conceived of as a counter-summit of the World Economic Forum) and that represent an important part of the initiatives of global civil society. Another form of mobilization that has been spreading in recent years is the call for global days of action, with millions of participants engaged in demonstrations and meetings in hundreds of cities all over the world.

### 2.4 The European Union, the most advanced example of international democracy: campaigns to democratize Europe

As we have seen in the Introduction to this report, 'the processes of European unification and globalization belong to two different historical epochs and to two different phases in the evolution of the mode of production: the second phase of the industrial mode of production and the scientific mode of production, respectively'. The European integration process can also be viewed as a political answer to the crisis of the national state, creating a new form of government and new institutions at all levels from the global to the local. At the beginning of the third millennium, the unification of Europe (if and when completed) will be one of the key defining factors of our new world (Castells 2003, 373). This is the principal reason for our focus on Europe, leaving comprehensive and detailed research on the campaigns and movements to globalize democracy in all regions of the world to the next report.

The transnational networks have played a fundamental role in the process of democratizing international organizations starting from the European continent, where the movements for European unity began to promote popular campaigns and transnational actions after the Second World War. According to Sergio Pistone (1992, 12), these movements have been characterized by the constant presence of two fundamental strands: a moderate one, which while also sharing the final aim of the European federation, has always considered the role of the movements for European unity as critical support for European policies of governments; and a radical one, which has always considered the demand for a democratic constituent process as the only way to achieve a European federation, instead of European initiatives and the policies of governments. The latter has worked continuously for the creation of a European federalist political force, independent of governments and national parties and capable of mobilizing public opinion to press governments to overcome the confederal and sectional limits of their European policies. The ability of these movements (particularly that of the radical current) to influence the European policies of governments reached one of its highest moments between 1951 and 1954. After the rejection of the European Defence Community (EDC) this ability had a long eclipse, and finally came back in a consistent way at the time of the direct election of the European Parliament and of its constituent initiative. In the unfavourable historical context that characterized the period from 1954 to 1969, the movements for European unity played a very important role, keeping alive the demand for the European federation and the popular participation in its construction. Some of the principal campaigns and initiatives for European unity in that period will be briefly described in the following paragraphs.

#### Box 38.1 The Congress of Europe, 1948

The congress of Europe met at The Hague 7–10 May 1948. It was attended by some 750 people from almost every European nationality and 250 journalists representing the international press. Those present included well-known statesmen, members of parliament of all shades of democratic opinion; bishops and prominent churchmen of all denominations; industrialists and trade unionists; lawyers, economists, university professors, scientists, artists, poets and authors; and members of a wide variety of women's, youth and other organizations. The plenary meetings of the Congress were held in the Netherlands parliament building. The opening session on the afternoon of 7 May was addressed by Winston Churchill and leading members of the principal organizations campaigning for European unity.<sup>1</sup> During the days that followed, discussions were conducted in three different committees: political, economic and social, and cultural. Many amendments were moved during 8–9 May. On the afternoon of Sunday 9 May a mass meeting, attended by some 10,000 people, was held in the main square of Amsterdam. Leading figures from the Congress and from Dutch public life addressed the gathering on the subject of European unity. Three resolutions were adopted by the Congress, which concluded with a short session wherein plans for the future campaign were outlined. In the political resolution it was affirmed that: the time has come when the European nations must transfer and merge some portion of their sovereign rights ... any Union or Federation of Europe should be designed to protect the security of its constituent peoples, should be free from outside control, and should not be directed against any other nation ... assigning to a United Europe the immediate task of progressively establishing a democratic

social system, the aim of which shall be to free men from all types of slavery and economic insecurity, just as political democracy aims at protecting them against the exercise of arbitrary power.

The Congress demanded 'the convening of a European Assembly chosen by Parliaments of the participating nations and designed: (a) to stimulate and give expression to European public opinion; (b) to advise upon immediate practical measures to bring about the necessary economic and political union of Europe; (c) to examine the juridical and constitutional implications arising out of the creation of such a Union or Federation and their economic and social consequences; (d) and to prepare the necessary plans for the above purposes'. Finally, the Congress declared that 'the creation of a United Europe is an essential element in the creation of a united world'.

#### Note

- 1 The International Committee of the Movements for European Unity was composed of representatives of the following organizations: Conseil Français pour l'Europe Unie, Ligue Indépendante de Coopération Européenne, Nouvelles Equipes Internationales, Union Européenne des Fédéralistes, Union Parlementaire Européenne, United Europe Movement.

#### Box 38.2 The campaign for a European federal pact, 1950

The Campaign consisted of an attempt to transform the Advisory Assembly of the Council of Europe (the origins of which were in the Hague Congress) into the Constituent Assembly of the European Federation. The fundamental tool was a petition that asked the Advisory Assembly to draw up a text for a federal pact, and recommend its ratification to the member states of the Council of Europe. They would have to commit to implementing it as soon as it was ratified by a number of states comprising a total population of at least 100m. inhabitants. During the course of 1950, the petition was signed by more than 500,000 Italian citizens, by one-third of 30,000 French mayors, and was adhered to in Germany by the vast majority of the population on the occasion of a series of referendums organized in collaboration with the municipal administrations of Breisach, Castrop-Rauxel, Munich, Bad-Reichenall and Traunstein (Pistone 2007). The campaign fostered the attribution of a constituent mandate to the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, which approved in 1953 the European Political Community (EPC) draft treaty. The idea of the EPC was abandoned in 1954, however, when it became clear that the European Defence Community would not be ratified by the French national assembly.

#### Box 38.3 The Congress of European People, 1957–62

After the signing of the institutive treaties of the European Community for Atomic Energy (Euratom) and the European Economic Community (EEC) in Rome on 25 March 1957, the federalist movements were divided. On the one hand, the vast majority of German and Dutch federalists, as well as the French 'La Fédération' movement, maintained that it was necessary to exploit the dynamics set in motion by the new communities, particularly the EEC. The federalists had to accept a gradual realization of their vision, and therefore had to support economic integration actively and commit themselves to strengthening the existing embryonic federal principles in the community system. The objective of the constituent assembly had to be pursued in a more advanced phase of the European integration to which the Treaties of Rome would lead. On the other hand, Altiero Spinelli, the founder of Movimento Federalista Europeo (who was sustained by the majority of Italian, French and Belgian federalists), was convinced that the European Communities were incapable of making significant progress towards European integration. Consequently, those federalists proposed a massive public awareness-raising campaign aimed at electing a Congress of the European People (CEP) in as many European towns and cities as possible (inspired by the Congress of the Indian People led by Gandhi). They renewed calls for a European federation, saying that the constituent would be the only means of achieving it. Since the 'unite or perish' dilemma

represented an existential danger for the nation-states, these federalist claims would be able to impose themselves as soon as the inadequacy of the community system became evident. Moreover, calls for federation and the constituent assembly would disappear from the political agenda if the federalists did not carry out consistent action at the grassroots level and if they limited themselves simply to supporting government initiatives. This divergence that did not regard fundamental principles but rather the strategic approach led to the break-up of the Union of European Federalists (UEF) and the formation of two organizations that would go their own separate ways until 1973. The supporters of the Brugmans-Friedländer line founded the 'Action Européenne Fédéraliste' (AEF) in 1956, which was a co-ordination structure grouping together the German Europa Union, the Dutch Federalist Movement, the Fédération, the British Federal Union and other small federalist groups in Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark and Italy. The Spinelli school of thought was translated, on a political and organizational level, into the transformation of the UEF into the 'Mouvement Fédéraliste Européen supranational' (MFEs—the Supranational European Federalist Movement) in 1959. This organization had a strongly centralized structure composed of regional sections that directly elected the European bodies, while there were only co-ordination commissions on a national level. The MFEs operated mainly in Italy, France and Belgium, although they were also present in Germany and were associated with federalist groups from Switzerland, Austria and Luxembourg. Between 1957 and 1962, the fundamental activity of Spinellian federalists consisted of gathering the vote of around 640,000 citizens for the Congress of the European People, and hence for the European constituent (Pistone 2007). It all began with the Stresa convention of July 1956, where for three weeks political and organizational training sessions were held for the militants involved in organizing the first primary elections and where the fundamental documents that were to constitute the basis of the operation were approved. As well as a political declaration that summarized the crucial theses of the new direction, an action plan was approved that foresaw (particularly by the study groups formed by social and local groups attracted by the federalist campaign) the drafting of 'documents of protest and reclamation' of the Europeans to be presented to the CEP. The organization of the elections of the CEP delegates began in the autumn of 1957, starting with Turin, Ivrea, Galliate, Tre-cate, Pinerolo, Milan, Como, Strasbourg (and about 50 small boroughs in Alsace), Lyon, Antwerpen, Düsseldorf, Maastricht and Geneva. The electoral operations—carried out according to procedures that prevented double voting and that guaranteed the secrecy of the vote—were periodically repeated until 1962, thus increasing the number of towns and cities involved. In total, 638,114 votes were collected in seven countries—Germany, Austria (where the elections continued until 1964), Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland—of which 455,214 came from Italy. Along with the political evolution to which we will return later, the poor results outside Italy were a fundamental reason for the ultimate failure of the campaign.

The delegates elected by the people of Europe (611 in all considering rotations) gathered in five CEP sessions: in Turin 4–6 December 1957; in Lyon 23–25 January 1959; in Darmstadt 4–6 December 1959; in Oostende 7–9 December 1960; and finally together with the MFE, in Lyon 9–11 February 1962. During these five sessions, there was an examination of the documents of protest and reclamation presented by the delegates. When the sessions were over, a summary of all these documents was compiled. It shed light on the extensive and methodical work of mobilizing public opinion around the concrete problems that made a European federation necessary and also contained a general framework of expectations of public opinion and of the debate on various aspects of European unification at that time. Naturally, the fundamental political commitment of the CEP concentrated on the objective of the European constituent. The project was presented by CEP delegations to the President of the EP Robert Schuman (14 May 1959) and to the six parliaments of the EEC (1959). A petition was presented on 19 January 1960 to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, with the aim of committing the Italian government to start negotiations with the other governments to summon the constituent. Similar initiatives were undertaken in France, where an interrogation on the constituent was presented to the national assembly (June 1961) by the member of parliament elected in Nancy, Pierre Weber; in Germany, where a similar attempt was made by Schöndube, leader of the German Commission on the MFEs; and in Switzerland and in Austria, but again with no consequence.

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The period between 1970 and 1986 presents two different phases: the first led to the direct election of the European Parliament in 1979; the second started from that date and with the Single European Act laid the foundations of a new period in the construction of European unity. In the 1970s a period of serious turbulence began (the oil crisis and the suspension of the convertibility of the dollar into gold) and economic integration reached a stalemate. The attempt to move from economic to political integration was unsuccessful and the liberalization of trade took a step backwards, too. Starting from the unresolved contradictions of the European Community, the initiative of federalist movements acquired new strength and contributed decisively to an important success: the direct election of the European Parliament.

#### Box 38.4 The campaign for the direct election of the European Parliament, 1968–76

The European election, which was foreseen by the community treaties, attempted to meet a clear need to involve the European citizens in an integration process that proceeded in a technocratic manner, and therefore called into question the principle of democratic legitimacy. Direct election was not linked to an automatic strengthening of the powers of the European Parliament, but would give rise to an extremely strong dynamic in that direction that was linked to the formation of a European political party system and the need to respect the commitments made in the European election campaign. In essence, the European election was expected to pave the way for federal developments through the assumption of a permanently constituent role on the part of the European Parliament.

The campaign for the European election was conducted by the federalist movements in close collaboration with the European Movement, the president of which between 1968 and 1972 was Walter Hallstein, former president of the EEC Commission. The campaign was carried out uninterruptedly with the undertaking of various initiatives aimed at mobilizing public opinion. The most notable of these include: the 'Frontier' action, promoted by the German federalists; the European Democratic Front, promoted by the French federalists; the proposed bill of popular initiative (with 65,000 authenticated signatures) for the direct election of Italian representatives in the European Parliament and presented to the Senate in 1969 by the Italian European federalist movement (MFE) led by Mario Albertini; the counter-summit demonstrations of thousands of people that were organized jointly with the Young European Federalists (JEF) in Rome in June 1967, in The Hague in December 1969 and in Paris in October 1972. The latter took place in conjunction with the conferences of heads of state and governments of the community

countries being held in those cities. In the struggle for the direct election of counter-summits, the European Parliament provided the backdrop for the reconstruction of the Union of European Federalists (UEF), which was announced at the Congress of Brussels between 13 and 15 April 1973 (Pistone 2007). The Paris European Summit (December, 1974) had decided to have the European Parliament direct election and asked the Belgian Prime Minister, Leo Tindemans, to write a report on the European Union before the end of 1975. On 8 July 1975 a delegation of the UEF handed European Parliament President Georges Spénale a petition in favour of direct election of the European Parliament. It was signed by 150,000 citizens. On 1 December 1975, during the Rome European Council meeting, a demonstration was organized that involved 4,000 participants. It started in the Campidoglio, where an appeal was approved, and finished at Palazzo Barberini, the seat of the summit. In order to support the counter-summit demands for direct election of the European Parliament, an appeal to the heads of state and government was published in *Le Monde* and in 10 Italian newspapers. On 12 June 1976 the European Council in Brussels finally decided on the number and allocation of the seats of the European Parliament that should be elected by universal suffrage. During the summit a demonstration with 2,000 people was organized and a delegation of federalists was received by the president of the European Council (Morelli 2000). After many years of wrangling and mobilizations, the federalist movements achieved the first great success for European democracy.

The campaign for the direct election of the European Parliament paved the way for launching the European integration process again and this led to the Single European Act and to the Maastricht Treaty. Under the leadership of Altiero Spinelli, the European Parliament promoted extremely important initiatives for the process of community building, which became the focus of a possible convergence between governments and movements. The institutions, however, remained the critical point, continuing to lack the power to act in a proper and efficient way and remaining without democratic legitimation. The action of Spinelli and the movements for European unity provided an answer to the problem of democratically transforming the Community. The Spinelli project, which was adopted by the European Parliament on 14 February 1984, was the stimulus for an intergovernmental initiative that started from the European Council of Fontainebleau, which appointed the Dooge Committee with a view to making proposals to improve the institutional framework of the Community based on the Spinelli Constitutional Treaty project adopted by the European Parliament. In



Figure 38.1 Genoa, 19 July 2001. Genoa Social Forum demonstration during G8 counter-summit. The banner on the left says 'A World Parliament for the globalization of rights'.

Source: Photo by Silvestro Reimondo

its report, the Dooge Committee proposed to call an intergovernmental conference with the task of drafting a treaty project of European Union inspired by the European Parliament plan. In June 1985, during the European Council of Milan, the biggest popular demonstration in favour of a federal Europe took place with the participation of tens of thousands of Italian and European citizens.

### **Box 38.5 The Milan demonstration for Europe, 1985: first step of European people**

On 29–30 June 1985 a demonstration in favour of Europe was organized by the federalist movements. On Friday a procession of 100 trucks took place on the Milan ring road and 500 young people demonstrated in front of Sforzesco Castle at the arrival of the heads of state and government. Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi received a delegation of Young European Federalists, who presented him with a document with a strong commitment to establishing the European Union. On Saturday the demonstration involved the participation of some tens of thousands of people from various parts of Italy and Europe, including local authorities, national and European parliamentarians, representatives of trade unions, partisan organizations, professional categories, groups of farmers, political parties and several other organizations, as well as ordinary citizens. Two processions of demonstrators crossed the city centre and arrived in Piazza Duomo under the banner 'We demand Europe'. The speakers included Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago, vice-president of the European Parliament, Mauro Ferri, representative of the Italian prime minister in the Dooge Committee, Mario Albertini, president of MFE, and John Pinder, president of UEF. The event was covered by European radio and television stations. Local, national and European newspapers (*L'Avenir*, *Tribune*, *El País*, *Le Monde*, *The Economist*, *The Times*, *La Repubblica*, *La Stampa*, *Le Matin*, *Le Soir*, etc.) devoted many pages to the demonstration, most of them reporting the same number of participants: 100,000.<sup>1</sup> For the first time, a large demonstration demanding political unity for Europe had taken place with the participation of all pro-European forces, trade unions, intellectuals, citizens, etc. It can be considered the first supranational mass demonstration and can be viewed as the first appearance of the European people (Vercelli 2000).

During the Milan European Council, the heads of state and of government decided to call a conference of the representatives of the governments of the European Community to make proposals for improving the Community Treaties to achieve an internal market and integrate the political co-operation of the Community activities. The European Parliament was not allowed to participate or collaborate in the work of the governments. In December 1985, the European Council of Luxembourg adopted the Single European Act, which Altiero Spinelli considered a true joke because of its modest results, stating 'the mountain gave birth to a mouse'. To fill the gap of democracy in the European project, a consultative referendum on the constituent role of the European Parliament was requested by the Italian federalist organizations and the radical party by means of a bill of popular initiative (with 120,000 authenticated signatures). The referendum was held in Italy in conjunction with the European elections of 18 June 1989. There was 82% turnout, with 88% of the people voting 'yes'. Important steps in the European integration process followed:

- The Treaty of the European Union was signed in Maastricht on 7 February 1992. The year before, on 8 December 1991, several initiatives were organized by the UEF and JEF before the European Council was held in Maastricht on 9–10 December. The first was the 'Convention on Democracy for Europe'. President of the European Commission Jacques Delors attended the meeting and explained his views on federalism<sup>2</sup> and his expectations about the results of the summit. At the end of the Convention, more than 1,000 protesters gathered in the Maastricht railway station square and moved through the streets of the historical centre of the city. In the afternoon, representatives of the different national sections of the JEF organized a counter-summit in which they personified the respective heads of state and government to show how they should behave the next day, i.e. taking the decision to issue a constituent mandate to the European Parliament. In the evening, there was a spectacular torchlight procession through the streets of the city centre. The chief result of the summit was the agreement between the heads of state or government on the

draft treaty establishing the European Union. It set clear rules for the future single currency, as well as for foreign and security policy and closer co-operation in justice and home affairs. Under this treaty, the name 'European Community' was officially replaced by 'European Union'.

- The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union was signed and proclaimed in Nice on 7 December 2000.
- The Treaty of Lisbon, which amended the previous treaties, was signed by the 27 EU countries on 13 December 2007. After a long process that started with the Laeken Declaration in 2001, the Treaty of Lisbon came into force on 1 December 2009. In Box 38.6 and Box 38.7, a short presentation is given about two campaigns, concerning the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Constitution.

### **Box 38.6 The European Citizens' Charter, 1996–2000**

The Permanent Forum of Civil Society, a network of NGOs and trade union organizations was founded in 1995 within the framework of the International European Movement. On the initiative of its Secretary-General Pier Virgilio Dastoli, the Forum asked the governments to revise the Maastricht Treaty and to put the citizens at the heart of the Union, thus contributing to the development of a carrying-meaning society (Dastoli 2000). To realize this project, the Forum proposed that European building should be inspired by federal logic and by the following priority requirements: solidarity and tolerance, also regarding what is outside the Union; development of real common politics; participatory democracy; and respect for Community Law by the member states. According to the Forum, citizenship was destined to have political, moral and educational importance in the new Treaty. In a Europe where the manifestations of intolerance concern ever greater layers of society, the affirmation of the equality of civil rights for every human being living in the Union's territory would make a strong and clear response to those manifestations possible. In October 1996, in the face of the mediocrity of the intergovernmental negotiation, the Forum decided to launch a campaign of discussion, elaboration and mobilization with the fundamental goal of writing a Citizens' Charter (as a first step in the direction of a European Constitution) that will be presented to the European Parliament, to the Commission and to the national governments before the end of the IGC promoted to revise the Maastricht Treaty.<sup>3</sup> The draft project was discussed among four working groups that met during the Civil Society Convention in Brussels on 26 November 1996. After four months of discussions, the 'Charter of European Citizens' was adopted by the Civil Society Convention held on 23 March 1997 at the Campidoglio in Rome. The Charter was presented on the 40th anniversary of the Rome Treaty and, according to the Forum, is the founding pact of a Community of Peoples and States reflecting the humanism of European civilization. It confirms the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of the citizens of the Union. It also defines their duties.

The Forum presented an appeal to the European Council in November 1997 and a petition to the European Parliament, but with no positive reaction. After that, and following a meeting between the Forum and the German coalition (Social Democratic Party and Gruenen), the European Council of Cologne (3–4 June 1999) decided that the fundamental rights applicable at the Union level should be consolidated in a Charter. This decision, based on the important preparatory work carried out, among others, by the Permanent Forum of Civil Society with the European Citizens' Charter, was welcomed by European civil society. During the European Council of Nice (7 December 2000) the presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission signed and proclaimed the Charter on behalf of their institutions. The Charter is the end result of a special procedure that was unprecedented in the history of the European Union. The draft was written by a Convention made up of representatives of the heads of state and government, the national parliaments, the European Parliament and the Commission. The Convention held its first meeting in December 1999 and accepted the contribution<sup>4</sup> of NGOs, the participation of which was co-ordinated, *inter alia*, by the Forum. The Convention adopted the draft on 2 October 2000 after heated discussions with NGO organizations on some of the essential elements of the draft. The Charter was proclaimed on December 2000. During the Nice European Council the Forum promoted the Civil Society Symposium. The Charter has been incorporated in the Lisbon Treaty.

### **Box 38.7 The campaign for the European Constitution, 1997–2007**

The Federal European Constitution and the European constituent (Pistone 2007) have always been the guiding principles of the federalist struggle. Beginning with the Congress of Vienna of the Union of European Federalists (UEF), held between 18 and 20 April 1997, they became the subjects of a specific campaign that constitutes the thread linking the actions carried out in this phase and which are still ongoing today. The choice was based on the conviction that the European Union (EU) was facing existential challenges due to the level of integration achieved and the problems that had emerged from the post-bipolar world. The construction of a European federation, indicated in the Schuman Declaration, and therefore the promotion of a democratic constituent procedure, were the essential conditions for avoiding a slide towards a divided and impotent Europe. Fundamentally, the existential challenges were: the urgent need to integrate the monetary union with the supranational social and economic government; expansion (which was destined to stall and ultimately fail without intensifying activities for creating effective solidarity between the more and the less advanced countries); the need for the EU to be able to act effectively on an international level (which implies complete federalization of security, defence and foreign policies) to make a significant contribution to the creation of a fairer and more peaceful world. On the basis of this perception, the Campaign for the Federal European Constitution enjoyed a moment of particular strength with the demonstration of 7 December in Nice (in conjunction with the European Council), which saw the participation of 10,000 people, including hundreds of local administrators. The governments responded to the requests of the federalists and of the European Parliament by summoning a European Convention, chaired by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. Certain aspects of the democratic constituent model were acknowledged: the participation of both national and European members of parliament (already tested with the formulation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights passed in Nice); the transparency of meetings; and the consideration of the views of civil society. The principle of unanimous, final decision making on the part of the governments and of unanimous ratification was maintained. The federalists made every effort to encourage the approval of a constitution project that was as advanced as possible. They deemed the final proposal to be less than satisfactory, but felt that it nevertheless contained important steps forward towards federalism and democratic participation, and as such was a milestone from which to immediately move forward. They expressed themselves strongly in favour of its ratification and even though it was obtained from a majority of member states and a majority of the population of the EU, it was prevented from being ratified due to the negative result of referendums in France and the Netherlands. After the 2005 referendums the action of the UEF found itself faced with the problem of how to launch the constituent process again. Since it is the principle of unanimous decision making, or rather the right to national veto, that was preventing the progress so urgently needed, it was decided to concentrate on solving this crucial conundrum. The Constitution project was rewritten and improved, taking into account the results of the French and Dutch referendums. The strategic objective of the campaign at this stage was to have it subjected to a European consultative referendum to be held on the same day as the 2009 European elections, and that it should come into force, in the ratifying countries, if approved by the majority of both the member states and the population of the EU. On 20 June 2007 a delegation of Movimento Federalista Europeo (UEF Italy) presented to the Italian Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema a petition with 10,000 signatures supporting a pan-European referendum as a final result of the European constitutional process to be held in the 2009 European elections. The demand of the UEF went unfulfilled, however, and the constitutional process that started with the Laeken Declaration (2001) concluded with the approval of the Treaty of Lisbon (2009), without any direct consultation of the European people as a whole.

### **2.5 How to build new institutions for international democracy: the case of establishing the International Criminal Court**

In this section we give a brief description of how the alliance between civil society and progressive governments achieved the establishment of

the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is considered an important step in reinforcing international democracy. The ICC is a permanent, independent judicial body exercising jurisdiction over the most serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law when national courts are unable or unwilling to do so. These violations are grouped within the categories of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The ICC has jurisdiction in civil conflicts and international engagements, as well as in cases of genocide.

According to Kristie Barrow, the creation and implementation of the ICC can be seen as a success for NGOs working to bring about normative changes in relation to human rights and international law (Barrow 2004). Through a process of complementary and parallel diplomacy, NGOs were able to push human rights issues into the international security agenda, and have actively participated in all stages of the Court's development. NGOs have taken part in the ICC process in a variety of ways. These can be broadly grouped into three areas: a) international agenda setting; b) facilitating the ratification process and bringing organizational expertise; and c) ongoing development and support of the Court. In the late 1980s and early 1990s only a small group of NGOs were active in supporting the establishment of an ICC; even fewer were monitoring the deliberations at the United Nations (UN). In February 1995 about 25 of these groups met in New York, formed the NGO Coalition for an International Criminal Court (CICC) and established an informal steering committee that was originally formed by the following NGOs: Amnesty International, Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos, European Law Students Association, Fédération Internationale des Liges des Droits de l'Homme, Human Rights First, Human Rights Watch, International Commission of Jurists, No Peace Without Justice, Parliamentarians for Global Action, Rights and Democracy, Women's Caucus for Gender Justice, and the World Federalist Movement.<sup>5</sup> This was significant as it brought together diverse NGOs with different goals and areas of focus, enabling them to act in a cohesive manner to achieve specific ends, and created a network to observe the ICC process, which involved NGOs from the outset. On 17 July 1998 the most significant step towards ending impunity for perpetrators of war crimes came with the adoption of the Rome Statute for the ICC. The Statute set out the Court's jurisdiction, structure and functions, and essentially represents the blueprint for what the ICC hopes to achieve. For the NGOs involved, the statute was the culmination of three and a half years of intense advocacy and unprecedented levels of co-operation among the NGOs themselves, as well as between the NGOs and the UN Secretariat. After several years of preliminary negotiations, 160 countries participated in the 'United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court' to develop and finalize the Statute.<sup>6</sup> Most significantly, however, it was not just governments that came to the negotiating table, but also numerous NGOs acting in support, educational, lobbying and advocacy roles. The CICC grew to 800 members, and 235 NGOs were accredited by the UN General Assembly to participate in the Rome Conference. William R. Pace, as the convener of the CICC and executive director for the World Federalist Movement,<sup>7</sup> estimates that 450 representatives of these 235 NGOs attended the Rome Conference. Some of the larger NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch sent larger delegations than most countries, with the World Federalist Movement's delegation of 60 experts exceeding even the largest government delegation. Despite this sheer size, Pace noted that in all his experience, he had never seen NGOs co-operate and co-ordinate their activities more effectively and cohesively than at the Rome Conference. So Pace commented, 'time and time again the NGO coalition demonstrated that it was not only the largest delegation at the ICC Statute Conference, but also one of the most important' (Pace and Thieroff 1999, 393). It is remarkable that given the diverse backgrounds of the many NGO participants, cohesion rather than discord was the dominant theme of their activities, but most significantly, it was not just governments that came to the negotiating table, but also numerous NGOs acting in support, educational, lobbying and advocacy roles. Six years after the Rome Conference the Statute entered into force on 1 July 2002, 60 days after 60 states ratified or acceded to it. The 60th instrument of ratification was deposited with the secretary-general on 11 April 2002, when 10 countries simultaneously deposited their instruments of ratification.

As Marlies Glasius underlined, the Statute can be considered a small revolution in international law and in the conduct of international relations for two reasons. First, the ICC is an important step in the ongoing transition towards an international legal order that is based less on state sovereignty and aimed more towards protecting all citizens of

the world from the abuse of power. Second, the input of global civil society in the process that led to the adoption of this Statute was almost unprecedented in international treaty negotiations, rivalled only by its contribution to the Land-mines Ban Treaty concluded six months earlier. These two features are, of course, inter-related: the development of a more people-empowering international rule of law, and the emergence of a global civil society capable of contributing to such a rule of law, influence and stimulate one another reciprocally (Glasius 2002).

As we have seen, the establishment of the ICC can be considered a real success of global civil society's action at the international level. The participation of NGOs throughout the ICC's development demonstrates their increasing significance in international politics and ability to initiate and to create new institutions to increase international democracy.

### 3 The 21st-century global movement building another world: the long road to international democracy

During the last decade, non-state actors have made their voices heard in several summits of the United Nations, and in those of other agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Their main demand has been that international organizations should become more representative and accountable to global public opinion. Non-governmental organizations do not have the power to decide, for the moment, but their role has been twofold: on the one hand they support and sustain global governance, and on the other they denounce and protest against the actions of nation-states. Nevertheless, a level of governance beyond the national level is progressively emerging. The United Nations and other international organizations, notwithstanding their intergovernmental nature, have started to open the doors to non-governmental actors: if these doors continue to remain open to global civil society, a first and partial form of accountability could be established. According to Daniele Archibugi, it could be one of the first steps to achieving a more advanced form of democratic management of the global issues (Archibugi 2011).

One of the main demands of the global movement for justice and democracy is to have a say in the world decisions affecting them. The more direct way to reach this aim is to create a world parliamentary assembly like the European Parliament. This institution could be the most natural and efficient way to unite all the people of the Earth, allowing them to discuss and decide on common issues. This new institution would be complementary to the UN General Assembly and could work in close connection with it. In global issues it could give representation to the individuals and to the groups that have been deprived until now: ethnic minorities, stateless groups, immigrants, refugees and, above all, people who still live in authoritarian systems of government and who therefore do not feel properly represented by them. This assembly would also be useful to individuals living in democratic states because they would have the opportunity to add a new level of government and representation (Falk and Strauss 2003). In this chapter, we present a recent world campaign that supports the idea of a world parliamentary assembly.



**Figure 38.2** Milan, 29 June 1985. 100,000 citizens in Duomo Place demonstrated in favour of the European Union  
Source: 'A Milano grande manifestazione dei federalisti tra gli applausi della gente. In 100 mila chiedono l'Europa'. La Stampa, 30 June 1985

Towards the end of the 1990s, the movements of global civil society started to cross national borders and meet with each other to facilitate mutual understanding, share a common language, disseminate information about their activities, integrate the agendas of different campaigns and decide on common priorities. The result of this development can be found in Seattle, USA, at the end of 1999. On 30 November the opening of the WTO conference was blocked by a day-long demonstration. Sit-ins organized by civil disobedience groups, actions of protest and a large march of trade unions brought 60,000 people to Seattle. Divided into 700 groups, they included environmental, student and solidarity organizations, trade unions and other grassroots organizations.

The key demands of the critical opponents of the WTO were listed in the platform 'Stop Millennium Round'. The example of Seattle led to a rapid proliferation of actions that combined alternative proposals on global problems and street protests against the international powers, thus launching a radical challenge to the neoliberal globalization project. In January 2000 a few weeks after Seattle, the political leaders and businessmen who had been invited to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, were addressed by a counter-summit with an alternative conference and new events. In May New York hosted a major event of the UN: the Millennium Forum of NGOs. The Forum opened the door to the views of civil society on international issues and UN activities, and had the participation of 1,350 people from more than 1,000 civil society organizations in over 100 countries. The result was a very detailed statement in which the representatives of civil society addressed their governments about their own vision of a world that is genuinely democratic and centred on people, where all human beings are full participants and determine their own destinies. Globalization should be directed to the good of all: to eradicate poverty and hunger, to secure peace, to ensure the protection of human rights and to raise the social standards of global jobs. This can only happen if global corporations, international financial institutions and business and governments are subject to effective democratic control of the people. A strengthened and democratized UN and an active civil society can be seen as guarantors of this accountability. To this end, the Forum urged the United Nations: a) to reform and democratize all levels of the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, and to fully integrate these institutions into the UN system, making them accountable to the Economic and Social Council; b) to make the Security Council more representative of the world; c) to limit and pursue the elimination of the power of veto; and d) to consider establishing a parliamentary consultation linked to the General Assembly. At the European level, the main demand of civil society also concerned building an alternative Europe based on democracy. On 6–7 December 2000 (one year after Seattle), during the Nice European Council that proclaimed the Charter of Fundamental Rights, different counter-demonstrations were held to demand a European Constitution, a social Europe and a no-fortress Europe. The demonstrations were organized by federalist movements, trade unions and globalization protesters.

#### 3.1 The World Social Forum process: from protests to projects

In 2001, to coincide with the World Economic Forum in Davos, the first World Social Forum (WSF) was organized in Porto Alegre (Brazil); 20,000 activists took part. The WSF had its roots in what was originally an alliance between the Brazilian progressive organizations (the Porto Alegre local authority, the workers' party, the trade unions and the Sem Terra movement) and ATTAC, a network based in France (with organizations in dozens of countries) that calls for the introduction of a Tobin tax on financial transactions. The choice to organize a WSF, a place of meeting and exchange of experiences among people from around the world, was the only possible answer to the irrepensible need to put into contact thousands of international associations, social movements, networks and forums struggling to gain a space of democracy and social equity like the global actors such as the multinational corporations and international organizations (WTO, IMF and World Bank (WB), etc.). In June 2001 a coalition of more than 700 organizations, the Genoa Social Forum, organized a counter-summit during the G8 summit in Genoa. The forum included dozens of alternative conferences and demonstrations with hundreds of thousands of participants from all over Europe. The demonstrations against G8 voiced a strong demand for political participation in problems for which political parties were no longer able to provide an answer. The protest also expressed strong criticism of the contemporary evolution of representative democracy. Genoa was the peak of the fight between global



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movements and governments. The strategy pursued by governments, by international institutions and by the media aimed to reduce the space of dissent, thus de-legitimizing the protest against the summits and transforming a fundamental matter of democracy into a problem of public order. After Genoa, the participation of activists for another possible world in the meetings of WSF and continental ones, the assemblies of UN peoples and in general all counter-summits without summits grew exponentially. A sort of globalization from the bottom up began to grow in opposition to a top-down globalization driven by multinational corporations and undemocratic global institutions. After the terrorist attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001, globalization entered a phase of doubts and crisis, with war returning as an instrument for regulating the new global contradictions and a way to rule the world. The alter-global movement raised awareness and became more powerful. It began to pose questions about legitimacy and democracy to governments and international institutions, and opposed concrete resistance, proposing an alternative to the neo-liberal globalization process.

The second edition of the WSF took place in Porto Alegre again, in February 2002, and saw an explosion of participation: more than 70,000 activists from more than 100 countries. One of the more popular issues under discussion in Porto Alegre was the following: 'the globalisation process is based on a non-democratic and non-inclusive logic; international institutions like the WTO, WB and IMF are not representative, not democratic, not transparent, and act in the interest of great powers and corporations. Citizens are not taken into account and are not able to express, either directly or through representatives, an opinion about decisions that affect them'. In the final document of the assembly of social movements of Porto Alegre WSF 2002, harsh criticism was levelled at global institutions:

The IMF, WB, WTO and NATO aim to build a structure of transnational power, overlooking the rights of persons, peoples and nations. We do not recognize their legitimacy and demand the end of their interferences in national policies. We fight instead for the establishment of democratic international institutions, whose legitimacy must reside not only in the hands of governments, but should also be based on the active participation of society.

(Vallinoto 2002, 109–10)

Globalization has been studied mainly as an economic process and its political dimension has been neglected. The contradiction between a global market and governments that remain national highlights a new fact: the erosion of the sovereignty of states. They are no longer the sole actors in the international arena. In the twilight of the states in world politics new players are emerging: large trusts and financial corporations and global civil society. International mobility allows capital to escape taxation by governments. The lack of fiscal control on the profits of large multinational groups causes a weakening of the welfare state. Moreover, the decline of sovereign states in the international arena also involves the decline of democracy: where there are democratic institutions, as at the national level, no more momentous decisions for the future of peoples are taken. Instead, where such decisions are made, as at the international level, there are no democratic institutions, but rather centres of political power (the USA) or economic power (multinational corporations) that are not accountable to the citizens of the world. Consequently, there is a deficit of democracy where decisions are taken at a global level (Levi 2005). Against these Goliaths, the only viable strategy for building international democracy step by step is to connect all those people across continents and countries, who, despite their differences, are working for the same goals, defined Costello and Brecher by as the 'Lilliput Strategy' (Brecher *et al.* 2000).

The most accepted explanation seems to be the one that interprets the protest as the need for conscious participation in making decisions that concern all of us. The common problem raised by the alter-global movement activists is the lack of democracy in the international structure of government, but also the need to conceive of a new way of political participation based on direct democracy, consensual decision-making models, and full consciousness of the problems.

The WSF launched a challenge to redefine a new geopolitical structure that wants to combine local and global, universal and particular, co-operation and conflict. Federalism, subsidiarity, participation, democracy and cosmopolitanism have become the main issues to be resolved, but what may be the irreversible crisis of national states is still the biggest one to deal with. According to a definition by Daniel Bell,

those states are too big to solve small problems, but also too small to solve big problems. A new inclusive, multi-polar and multilevel *polis* should be established starting from our neighbourhoods and reaching the entire planet. A place that allows a synthesis between representative and participatory democracy, it should be a kind of 'glocal' democracy, able to protect the cultural differences, respect the local needs and, at the same time, offer a global place for solving world conflicts peacefully and democratically managing the common good of humanity (Vallinoto 2002, 135).

### 3.2 The global demos

Some scholars say that international democracy cannot be achieved because we do not have a global *demos*. It is true that today a global *demos* cannot be compared with the *demos* existing at the national level, but it is also true that the idea of identity is now segmented along a vertical line, starting from the local level through the national and regional levels and on to the global level. It also follows a horizontal line: the solidarity ties needed to ensure the survival of a community are no longer focused exclusively on a territorial state. The building of a global *demos* is based on the assumption that it is possible to develop the citizens' sense of responsibility not only of the world, but also for the world (Archibugi 2008, 144). On 15 February 2003 demonstrations against the Iraq war took place in more than 800 cities on five continents, with millions of people demanding peace in public squares all over the planet. They were important because of the appearance, for the first time, of the so-called 'world people', a unified group not directly linked to political parties, religious beliefs and nationalist forces or to a particular class. It was the astonishing proof of the existence of humanity coming together and actively facing the main problems of our time: peace, ecology and poverty. It was people above nations and ideologies. Peace is the logic and natural destination of a path leading to a declaration of belonging to the same and single humanity, not to an anthropological humanity, but to a political humanity (Zarifian 1999, 23). *The New York Times* called it the second superpower after the USA. A cosmopolitan and post-national citizenship is taking the first steps towards the building of supranational and democratic institutions that can provide representation to the world people by demanding peace, global justice and international democracy.

Europeans have experienced the costs of a divided Europe but this did not prevent a foolish and dangerous war for the future stability of the Middle East and the entire world (EU foreign ministers divided on Iraqi war), nor did it succeed in giving a voice to its citizens, the majority of whom opposed the war. In Europe it is actually possible to overcome the division of the continent into nation-states through the expansion of democracy at European level and the creation of a federal government accountable to the European Parliament.

### 3.3 Reclaim our UN

An international seminar, 'Reclaim our UN', took place in Padua (Italy), on 19–20 November 2004. It saw the participation of over 600 people representing 25 international networks, 50 national organizations and 284 Italian associations. A document was proposed during the seminar that provided the basis for discussions in the following WSF, which took place in Porto Alegre from 26 to 30 January 2005. During the fifth WSF, an appeal was discussed and adopted by the 140 organizations that attended the 'Reclaim our UN' seminar on 28 January 2005 in Porto Alegre. The result was a call to organize a Global Day of Mobilization for a New World Order Against Poverty, War and Unilateralism, for Economic and Social Justice, Peace and Democracy, on 10 September 2005 (on the eve of the meeting of heads of states at the UN). The promoters stated: 'The UN that we want is a UN of peoples, not a UN of States. Only a comprehensive, radical and transparent reform of the UN will enable this system to fulfill its historical role for peace, development and international democratisation'. The Perugia-to-Assisi March for Justice and Peace held on 11 September 2005 was one of the most important and heavily attended events of the Global Day of Mobilization. In the appeal 'Let's ban war and war. Let's reclaim the UN', launched by Peace Roundtable for the march, the democratization of the UN system was a central point:

[(a)]

'Save, democratise and revitalise the UN, giving it back the central position it must occupy in the multilateral system, advocating a Universal Convention on the UN's future, opening its doors to organized civil society in all its different manifestations, to Local





**Figure 38.3** Nice, 7 December 2000. 10,000 citizens demonstrated in favour of a federal European constitution during the European Council meeting

Source: Photo by Luigi Giussani

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authorities and Parliaments and guaranteeing it the powers and the resources necessary to: prevent wars and find peaceful solutions to existing conflicts; defend and bolster the full range of human rights for all and make international criminal justice work; intervene adequately regarding environmental problems, the world economy (global public goods, finance, trade, debt, etc.) and push for more just, democratic and transparent rules and international institutions; support general disarmament and the banning of all weapons of mass destruction.'

[(b)]

'Promote radical changes in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation and other associated institutions and their insertion into the United Nations system so as to guarantee respect for human rights, international law and the principles and aims of the UN.'

The following UN meeting of all the international heads of states was held on 14–16 September 2005. The leaders were called to decide on the reform of the UN and to reaffirm and implement their commitments to eradicate poverty and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, but they ignored all the above demands made by the Peace Roundtable.

### 3.4 The Porto Alegre Manifesto at the World Social Forum 2005

On 29 January 2005, at a crowded press conference during the Porto Alegre Social Forum, a group of 19 intellectuals of world-wide fame, some of them members of the International Council of the WSF, presented a Manifesto with 12 proposals.<sup>9</sup> In its introduction they declare:

Since the first World Social Forum took place on January 2001, the social forum phenomenon has extended itself to all continents, at both national and local levels. It has resulted in the emergence of a worldwide public space for citizenship and strife, and permitted the elaboration of political proposals as alternatives to the tyranny of neoliberal globalisation by financial markets and transnational corporations with the imperialistic, military power of the United States as its armed exponent.

Thanks to the diversity and solidarity of its actors, and the social movements of which it is composed, the alternative global movement has become a force to be reckoned with globally. Many of the innumerable proposals that have been put forward on the forums have been supported by many social movements worldwide. We, the signers of the Porto Alegre Manifesto, by no means claim to speak in the name of the entire World Social Forum, but rather on a strictly personal basis. We have identified twelve such proposals, which we believe, together, give sense and direction to the construction of another, different world. If they were to be implemented, it would allow citizens to take back their own future. We therefore want to submit these fundamental points to the scrutiny of actors and social movements of all countries. They will be the ones, at all levels—worldwide, continentally, nationally and locally—who will move forward and fight for these proposals to become a reality. Indeed, we have no illusions about the real commitment of governments and international institutions to spontaneously implement any of these proposals, even though they might claim to do so out of opportunism. Another different world must respect the rights for all human beings to live, by implementing new economic measures.

(Sen *et al.* 2007, 92–94)

The last proposal concerns the democratization of international institutions. They demand to:

Reform and profoundly democratize international institutions by making sure human, economic, social and cultural rights prevail, as stipulated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This implies incorporating the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation into the decision-making mechanism and systems of the United Nations. In case of persistent violation of international law by the USA, we demand the transfer the United Nations headquarters outside New York, to another country, preferably southern.

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After this presentation, a full discussion followed. Some people criticized the contents and the method of writing the manifesto. On the subject of the last proposal, Patrick Bond affirmed that:

This position is quite destructive for the growing campaigns—such as IFIs-Out!, hosted by Jubilee South—which do not support incorporating the Bretton Woods Institutions and other neoliberal agencies into the already mainly neoliberal UN. Given the global-scale power relations that will prevail for the immediate future, probably into our children's and grandchildren's generation, does it make sense to empower global-scale institutions? What about the danger that a UN process will give legitimacy to the ongoing malevolent roles of global-scale actors, as occurred with the UN's recognition of the US occupation and of the puppet Iraqi regime?

(Sen *et al.* 2007, 97–98)

At the same time, the manifesto's proposal was in line with an increasingly widespread attitude of social movements towards a radical reform of international institutions, including those established at Bretton Woods. An example of this trend is the 'World Campaign for In-depth Reform of the System of International Institutions' led by the World Forum of Civil Society Networks (UBUNTU), the aim of which is 'to establish a consistent, transparent, responsible and effective global system of democratic governance, based on developing international legislation whose democratic value and legitimacy is widely accepted'<sup>10</sup> and the call for action for the democratization of the United Nations system of the United Nations Peoples' Assembly co-ordinated by Peace Roundtable and organized every two years in Perugia.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), the UBUNTU network launched the World Campaign for In-depth Reform of the System of International Institutions. The core request was for a stronger, more democratic UN, with effective control over all its bodies and agencies and over global multilateral organizations. More specifically, the campaign underlined the need to democratize the composition and decision-making procedures of UN bodies and agencies to ensure that they are effective and democratic, and to reform and integrate, within the UN, all other global multilateral organizations (IMF, WB, WTO, etc.).

As the United Nations celebrated its 50th year in 1995, an unconventional parallel summit was held in Perugia, Italy, with the first meeting of the Assembly of the United Nations' Peoples, a conference with civil society representatives from more than 100 countries, each invited by a local authority. The Assembly heard testimonies of world problems and called for the reform and democratization of the United Nations. Organized by Peace Roundtable, co-ordinating 500 Italian local and national groups and 350 local authorities, the Assembly has since then been convened every two years with the same format. In 1997 it focused on economic justice, in 1999 on the role of global civil society and of local authorities in building peace and international democracy—arguing that 'a different world is possible'—and in 2001 on globalization from below. Before each Assembly, delegates visit hundreds of local authorities in an experiment to link global issues and local education, and dozens of conferences and workshops are organized all over Italy on specific issues. A major event at the conclusion of every session of the Assembly is the 15-mile march from Perugia to Assisi, an historic route of the peace movement that has 50,000 people on average attending. An extraordinary march by 100,000 people was held in May 1999 against Serbian repression and NATO bombing in Kosovo (Lotti and Giandomenico 1996; Pianta 2001; Lotti *et al.* 1999).

In the final call for the 1999 Assembly edition it was stated:

The journey towards democracy has only just begun in a large part of the world, while the rapid globalisation process should demand the establishment of the rapid development of international democracy. In particular, we should give impetus to the development and relative democratisation of the United Nations by reforming the Security Council in a representative and democratic way; promoting the check of legitimacy of the Security Council's acts; establishing the Parliamentary Assembly of the United Nations as subsidiary organ of the General Assembly; promoting the democratisation of regional organisations, such as the European Union, giving greater powers to the European Parliament.

(Pianta 2001, 154)

At the United Nations Peoples' Assembly in Perugia on 13 October 2001, the central theme was 'globalization from below: the role of global civil society and Europe'. The final document of the fourth United Nations Peoples' Assembly, which was attended by hundreds of NGO representatives from around the world, reported that:

to build an international democracy, global civil society calls on the supranational institutions to boost development and democratisation of the United Nations; to begin reforming the Security Council in a representative and democratic way, eliminating the right of veto; and to promote the role of regional institutions starting from their democratisation. In particular, the European Union is summoned to complete the process of integration and expansion, by creating a political union based on a federal constitution. The creation of a European federation, having its own foreign and security policy and aimed at conflict prevention and European civilian service, will contribute to building a new democratic international order and promote the reform and democratisation of international economic and financial institutions (WB, IMF and WTO), bringing them back under the political control and effective coordination of the United Nations.

(VV.AA. 2002, 220–21)

This experience has resulted from the need of global civil society to meet, exchange knowledge, share a common language and worldview, disseminate information on ongoing activities, integrate the various agendas of single-issue campaigns, and deliberate on common priorities. More initiatives of this sort are emerging. Some are self-organized or developed around institutional events such as the Millennium Forum of NGOs at the United Nations; others are loosely related to official summits such as the WSF in Porto Alegre. These increasingly large conferences are likely to become a permanent aspect of the world's social and institutional landscape, asserting the existence and autonomy of global civil society.

### 3.5 Towards a world parliament

The idea of a world parliament representing all the citizens and all the countries of our planet was not really supported in the first editions of the WSF. During the second WSF (Porto Alegre, 2002), for example, all the speakers of the plenary session entitled 'international organizations and architecture of global power' expressed a negative attitude towards the idea. Walden Bello, for example, said, 'it's not the right time to speak of global democracy because social, economic and political conditions are lacking. There are many other battles to do at the local level before speaking of a world government'. Peter Wall stated that 'a world government is a negative utopia that requires a high level of undesirable uniformity all around the world'. Roberto Bissio declared that 'in a world where only a small percentage of people control 80% of the resources it makes no sense to speak of a world government until the structural injustices of undeveloped countries are resolved'. Susan George declared that 'no structure of imposed, top-down government can work effectively. It's better to concentrate on actions we can develop more easily at the local level' (Vallinoto 2002, 112–13). This opposition to the idea of a world parliament changed a couple of years later, as shown by the Mumbai WSF edition. For five days during the 2004 WSF, more than 100,000 delegates from 132 countries crammed into the vast, dusty exhibition grounds on the outskirts of Mumbai, united in the dream that 'another world is possible'. Compared with the previous editions of WSF, an increasing number of events concerned global democracy, international institutions, democratic reforms and world parliament issues. Many movements held self-organized events on these themes. Activist George Monbiot addressed the plenary session entitled 'globalization and its alternatives', telling delegates that 'without global democracy there could never be national democracy'. Monbiot gave the example of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the Brazilian President, who won presidential elections (2003) mainly on a promise of delivering basic services to the poorer sections of the society and implementing policies that would close the gap between the rich and the poor. George Monbiot argued that it is not enough to have good local policies and intentions while the current global system is skewed in favour of policies aimed at enriching developed countries and the rich sections of many countries. He called for more organized global action that would enable the establishment of a 'new world order'. 'It is not enough to think globally and act locally. We also have to act globally,' said Monbiot, who also called for the dismantling of the IMF

and the WB and the transformation of the United Nations. In his book *The Age of Consent: A Manifesto for New World Order*, which was widely circulated at the forum, Monbiot said, 'there must be a World Parliament where representatives will be elected by citizens in all countries and held publicly accountable for the decisions that they take. This will replace the current United Nations'. On the last day of the forum, all the global democracy activists decided to organize a common event for the purpose of finding the way to co-operate in building a coalition for a world parliament. Mumbai WSF can be remembered for two main aspects: the first is that most of the global democracy organizations and initiatives started to work together under the umbrella of the Coalition for a World Parliament. The second is that even though the global democracy activists were a minority group inside the alter-global movement, the idea of a world parliament was becoming increasingly popular thanks in part to Monbiot's support. Many Indian newspapers, such as *The Hindu*, *The Times of India* and *The Tribune*, published articles about the world parliament during the WSF (Vallinoto 2004).

As noted by Archibugi (2008, 172):

the dream of an elected World Parliament directly representing the peoples of the world rather than their governments is as old as it is ambitious. Electing a WP is an idea that has been championed for decades by the federalist movements, and has received widespread support from NGO's and even from the European and Canadian parliaments and this idea has come back into fashion in recent years. It is supported by many NGOs and several parliamentary assemblies, including the European Parliament. A world parliamentary assembly would solve the problems of representativeness and legitimacy encountered by any global democracy project, as it would again place decision-making power directly in the hands of a body representing all the inhabitants of the Earth.

In the next section a recent campaign for the establishment of a UN parliamentary assembly will be presented.

### 3.6 The campaign to establish a UN parliamentary assembly

Previous attempts to build a coalition for international democracy finally culminated in April 2007 with the launching of the international Campaign to establish a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) (Bummel 2007). The core document of the Campaign, a public appeal to the UN and its member states for a UNPA, has been endorsed by several thousand individuals from over 150 countries by now, including hundreds of political leaders, civil society activists, scholars and other distinguished individuals. In particular, the appeal has been supported by over 1,000 members of parliament, some 800 of whom are currently still in office, various national government ministers, several Nobel laureates and more than 300 professors. The appeal, which is supported across party lines and world regions, argues that the UN needs to be strengthened in order to cope successfully with major global challenges and that this requires better democratic inclusion of citizens, something that could best be achieved through a UNPA. One of the prime backers of the Campaign is former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali from Egypt. In a statement to the Campaign participants, for example, he stressed the importance of a UNPA in promoting the democratization of globalization. The Campaign is a joint international effort of parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations. Its co-ordinating committee initially was composed of the Committee for a Democratic UN, the Secretariat of UBUNTU World Forum of Civil Society Networks, the Society for Threatened Peoples International, the World Federalist Movement and 2020\* Vision Ltd. The Committee for a Democratic UN is based in Berlin and serves as the international secretariat for the Campaign. Taking the eventual success of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court as an example, the purpose of the Campaign is to serve as an informal platform to exchange information, advance research, develop joint policies and co-ordinate members' actions and strategies regarding the establishment of a UNPA. Four international meetings had taken place at time of writing: in 2007 in the Palais des Nations in Geneva under the patronage of Boutros-Ghali; in 2008 in the European Parliament; in 2009 in New York; and in 2010 in the Senate of Argentina in Buenos Aires. Regional and local partners of the Campaign regularly organize additional events. The aim of the Campaign is to broaden political support within civil society and among parliaments so as to convince

governments to put the creation of a UNPA onto the international agenda.<sup>11</sup> Since the Campaign was first launched, creating a UN parliamentary assembly has been supported by the Canadian House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee (2007), the Pan-African Parliament (2007), the Latin American Parliament (2008), the Senate of Argentina (2008), the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina (2009), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2009), the National Assembly of the Seychelles (2009), the European Parliament (2011) and the Parliament of MERCOSUR (2011).

### 3.7 The Occupy movement for global democracy, 15 October 2011

During 2011 the Occupy and Real Democracy movements became a presence in more than 1,000 cities world-wide, proving that there is a large-scale grassroots interest in a 'just and democratic global system'. One of the manifestos that came out of the Occupy movement was 'United for Global Democracy', which was produced in a four-month process of discussions by people's assemblies, groups and individual activists in Asia, Australia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, North Africa and North America. The manifesto has been endorsed by many of the groups and assemblies involved in the tent-cities movements, as well as by prominent voices of the Global Justice Movement such as Arundhati Roy, Eduardo Galeano, Michael Hardt, Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Vandana Shiva. In the appeal launched on 15 October 2011, you can read:

we demand global democracy: global governance by the people, for the people. Inspired by our sisters and brothers in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Bahrain, Palestine-Israel, Spain and Greece, we too call for a regime change: a global regime change. In the words of Vandana Shiva, the Indian activist, today we demand replacing the G8 with the whole of humanity—the G 7,000,000,000. Undemocratic international institutions such as the IMF, the WTO, global markets, multinational banks, the G8, the G20, the European Central Bank and the UN Security Council are our global Mubarak, our global Assad, our global Gaddafi. These institutions must not be allowed to run people's lives without their consent. We are all born equal, rich or poor, man or woman. Every African and Asian is equal to every European and American. Our global institutions must reflect this or be overturned.

(Suarez and Zameret 2011)

## 4 Conclusions

The increasing functional autonomy of civil society—economic actors, intermediate social bodies, associations and so on—is under the scrutiny of everyone, and many of us are experiencing and practising it every day in our work, professions, political or cultural activities, volunteer work. Civil society movements are increasingly capable of negotiating their role and normative domain with the states, giving themselves a potentially global scope. They ignore frontiers and move across them, create transnational networks and link together the 'local' and the 'global' far more than national governments can do. A meaningful example is the world-wide presence of NGOs, which according to a UN estimate now number 44,000. Globalization and the scientific and technological revolution foster the growth of a global civil society, and develop a global public opinion with which the states must increasingly come to terms (Bordino 2007).

As we have seen in this chapter, civil society movements have gained a space of action at the global level that neither political parties nor trade unions had ever achieved in the past. Those movements with an international structure have developed important expertise about the major problems affecting the world and have contributed decisively to raising the awareness of global public opinion. The movements of global civil society have acquired the role of recognized partners of governments within international organizations and diplomatic conferences. Although they only have deliberative powers, they nevertheless exert a real influence on world politics, as shown by the role of the peace movement in the decision to dismantle Euro-missiles, the human rights movement in the establishment of the ICC (Levi 2005), and the pro-European movements in the path towards the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

As was stated in the Foreword to this report, at the European level the European Parliament, the first directly elected supranational Parliament in history, has become the world vanguard of the experiment of international democracy. In order to take further steps towards a genuine European democracy, the support of European civil society is fundamental (as we have already seen in the Campaign for direct election of the European Parliament and in the European referendum held in France and the Netherlands). However, to reduce the gap of democracy, European citizens must participate more in European elections and generally in European political life. For this purpose, the European Citizens Initiative (ECI) could be used to match the needs of European citizenship with the decisions taken at the European level. Thanks to the ECI, a novelty introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon, the mobilization of European civil society on single issues will grow year by year. Different themes will emerge and be supported, including peace, which although not declared in the Treaty of Lisbon is a fundamental value of the Union; citizenship based on residence; basic income; European common goods like water; the European civilian service; environmental protection; the European sustainable development plan, and so on. Individual European actions can be successful if they share the common goal of reinforcing European democracy by demanding the federal reform of the institutional framework of the Union through a new and participated constituent process. After the constitutional referendum held in France and in the Netherlands in 2004, it is clear that no further advancement in the European integration process will be possible without the active and conscious participation of the citizens.

As we have emphasized in this chapter, there is a stronger demand for international democracy, i.e. for the globalization of democracy. Following the evolution of global civil society movements in the first years of the 21st century, we can say that we have reached the final phase of a three-phase period: that of the project.

The protest phase started with the Seattle demonstration in 1999 and concluded with the one in Genoa in July 2001. In this period of time, global demonstrations showed a resistance to and refusal of the policies carried out by international organizations like the WTO, G8, WB and IMF. In terms of social movement resistance and police repression, the peak was reached in Genoa (2001) with the G8 summit; the era of magnificent summits came to an end. The following meetings of international economics institutions took place in locations that were very difficult for the civil society movements to reach. This was considered a clear refusal by the governments of richer states to engage in dialogue and an implicit admission of the inability to provide answers to the global issues raised by the countless debates during the counter-summit's forum.

The proposal phase started from the counter-summit in Genoa and extended through 2002. In this period there was a growth and development of the networks of movements and organizations that had been created in the previous phase. In the meantime, concrete alternatives to the neo-liberal globalization based on common goods and democracy became stronger. The alter-global movement was able to assert that 'there are many alternatives' (TAMA)<sup>12</sup> in opposition to 'there is no alternative' (TINA) to the market, the famous statement made by UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the early 1980s. In this second phase, meetings of civil society not linked to any summit of international organization grew rapidly in number and in participation: the United Nations Peoples' Assembly (Perugia, 2001), the WSF (Porto Alegre, 2002), the European Social Forum (Florence, 2002), etc.

The project phase started with the third WSF (Porto Alegre, 2003), the United Nations Peoples' Assembly (Perugia, 2003 and 2005)—dedicated to reforming the UN—and the ESF (Paris 2003, London 2004, Athens 2006), working on a political manifesto for another Europe. This phase could last many years. Moreover, it is the most difficult one because it is crucial to find a political project that can collect all the various demands coming from below. During the WSF 2005, in the Porto Alegre Manifesto, a group of 19 intellectuals tried to summarize the 12 proposals that appeared to have had broad agreement among the social movements. As shown in this chapter, the document aroused bitter controversy among the participants of the forum, but the fact remains that the bet for another possible world was made. There is a real risk of wasting and dissipating the energy and the ideal spur that came out of the global meetings if civil society is not able to identify definite goals and a strategy to pursue them.

As we have seen, the road to building real alternatives and to establishing international democracy at the regional and the world level is no easy task. On the one hand, the crisis of sovereign debts (originated in the USA) is clearly showing the need for a United States of Europe. However, it is obviously difficult to overcome national sovereignty in favour of a shared and common sovereignty. Furthermore, the various

efforts to reform the United Nations clearly show that there is strong resistance to changing the rules and the decision-making process at the world level. As an example, just think about the anachronistic composition of the Security Council and the permanent members' right of veto. On the other hand, the successful examples of civil society campaigns such as the CICC show us that some significant advancements can be achieved in international democracy. What we can learn from these experiences is that if global civil society movements are able to choose the right institutional targets, they can become the main actors for reinforcing and democratizing the international organizations at the regional and the world levels.<sup>13</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Milan, 29 June 1985, 100,000 citizens in Duomo Place demonstrated in favour of the European Union during the European Council summit. See 'A Milano grande manifestazione dei federalisti tra gli applausi della gente. In 100mila chiedono l'Europa', *La Stampa*, 30 June 1985.
- 2 Jacques Delors said that federalism is not a pornographic word.
- 3 The documents of the Permanent Forum of Civil Society can be found in the website [www.forum-civil-society.org](http://www.forum-civil-society.org).
- 4 NGO contributions to the Convention can be found in EU website: [www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/civil/civil0\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/civil/civil0_en.htm).
- 5 See CICC website: [www.coalitionfortheicc.org](http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org).
- 6 In the end, 120 states voted in favour of the adoption of the Rome Statute, seven voted against it and 21 states abstained.
- 7 The role of the Coalition Secretariat is to co-ordinate, facilitate and support the work of its global membership. This is done through regional co-ordinators around the world, with staff posted in New York and The Hague, including information services co-ordinators for English, French and Spanish, a media liaison, a legal team, technical staff and others. See [www.coalitionfortheicc.org](http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org).
- 8 From [www.reclaimourun.org/anotherun/Appeal11September.htm](http://www.reclaimourun.org/anotherun/Appeal11September.htm).
- 9 The manifesto was signed by Aminata Traoré, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Eduardo Galeano, José Saramago, François Houtart, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Armand Mattelart, Roberto Savio, Riccardo Petrella, Ignacio Ramonet, Bernard Cassen, Samir Amin, Atilio Boron, Samuel Ruiz Garcia, Tariq Ali, Frei Betto, Emir Sader, Walden Bello, and Immanuel Wallerstein.
- 10 See 'A World Citizen Initiative for Reforming International Institutions', *The Federalist Debate* 17(1): 16.
- 11 More information is available at [www.unpacampaign.org](http://www.unpacampaign.org).
- 12 Further details about TINA vs. TAMA alternatives can be found in de Angelis (2007).
- 13 Special thanks to Francesca Lacaita who collaborated in the editing of this chapter.

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