

PANEL 1

The Transnational Dimension of Philippine Social Movements



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This discussion paper presents the preliminary findings of the five case studies done as part of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development research project on global civil-society movements. The case studies focus on Philippine civil-society organizations (CSOs)¹ whose advocacies include debt relief, corruption, changing international trade rules and barriers, fair trade, and global taxation. This paper aims to answer the following questions:

1. Why do civil-society organizations pursue transnational linkages?
2. How are these linkages formed?
3. How can these linkages be characterized?

¹Salomon et al. define CSOs as entities that are organized, private, not profit-distributing, self-governing, and voluntary (2003:9-10). This definition, they claim, "encompass[es] *informal* as well as *formal* organizations; *religious* as well as *secular* organizations; organizations with paid staff and those staffed entirely by volunteers; and organizations performing essentially expressive functions—such as advocacy, cultural expression, community organizing, environmental protection, human rights, religion, representation of interests, and political expression—as well as those performing essentially service functions—such as the provision of health, education, or welfare services" (2003:10).

Answering the questions will give a rough sketch of how Philippine civil-society organizations access, define, and reshape the transnational linkages that undergird the global civil-society movement.²

THE TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSION

The transnational dimension of Philippine civil society has been the subject of earlier studies that focused mostly on mapping out and making sense of its configuration (Silliman 1998; Constantino-David 1997, 1998). G. Sidney Silliman observed the transnational context of Philippine civil society:

It should be apparent . . . that the development of civil society in the Philippines is not a wholly domestic phenomenon. Transnational support was important to the citizen groups that confronted the Philippine state in the 1970s and early 1980s. Transnational interactions were also a factor in the dynamic growth of the NGO community after 1986. Civil society, however, is not simply the creation of external forces. Thus the future of civil society will reflect both the continuing interaction of Filipinos with the global community and the independent efforts of Filipino citizens to alter the inequalities of Philippine society. (1998, 71-72)

WHY DO PHILIPPINE CIVIL-SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGE IN TRANSNATIONAL EFFORTS?

From the case studies previously mentioned, the following reasons were drawn:

The inherent transnational nature of a CSO's advocacy

The advocacy or issue being carried by a civil-society organization is inherently transnational in nature, thus pursuing transnational linkages is in fact a necessity. Changing international trade rules as wielded by the World Trade Organization (WTO) cannot be effected by waging campaigns directed at the Philippine government alone. Making the Cancun ministerial collapse required the Stop the New Round Coalition (SNR) to show that it is part of a global collective that wants to prevent another unjust round of WTO agreements. Engaging the national government on monetary and fiscal issues is indispensable for the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC). However, to campaign for debt cancellation or the repudiation of odious debt requires engaging in coalitions that transcend national boundaries and are capable of exerting pressure on multilateral financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Without the "world shops" in Northern markets that serve as an outlet for products of small Southern producers, fair trade, even on

² This discussion paper makes a distinction between "transnational linkages" and "global civil-society movement." A transnational civil-society link goes beyond national boundary or interest. A civil-society organization's transnational linkages might be numerous and dense yet the issue or cause for advocacy is not carried in other regions of the globe, making the CSO's action at best a regional effort and not a global movement. To speak then of a "global" civil-society movement on debt, taxation, or any other cause, is to be able to show the pervasiveness of an advocacy in different locales and polity. "To belong to 'global' civil society requires the ability to build coalitions across religious, ethnic, and ideological boundaries" (Ezzat 2005:43-44).

a short-term basis, will not be a viable socioeconomic project. Though a global taxation movement has yet to take root in the Philippines—in particular, one that pushes for the Tobin tax—one can foresee that such advocacy will also entail transnational effort since the greatest challenge facing the execution of the Tobin tax is the opposition from international investors, financiers, and bankers. They maintain strong political influence in different countries, and most of them stand to gain from financial market volatility. Of the five case studies, only the campaign to curb corruption seems to be confined within the boundaries of the Philippine nation-state. The only thing that can be described as transnational in anti-corruption campaigns is the source of the initiative and the fund for the campaign. The evident rise in the number of anti-corruption campaigns from both the ranks of CSOs and government can be attributed to the donor agencies—like the United Nations Development Programme, IMF, World Bank, ADB, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and The Asia Foundation—being concerned about the hemorrhaging of meager government resources, which usually come from them, because of corruption. This indicates that advocacies which challenge the entrenched neoliberal order are the ones most likely to utilize the international/global arena as their field of action and advocacy. In waging a battle against neoliberalism, the solution to the advocacy or issue that a particular civil-society organization or movement engages in rests not only on a solitary national actor but also on multiple and multinational institutions.

Reaching out for resources

Even though an advocacy focuses on a distinct national concern, like debt or corruption, for example, the resources needed to start and sustain that campaign might be too large to be simply shouldered by a single national movement. Though largely construed as financial assistance—and in the case studies this is the most common cause for forging transnational linkages—resources here, however, are not limited to finances. Information and human resource are as much valued as financial help. Before the advent of the Internet, FDC, for example, made use of information provided by foreign allies to make a sustained critique of the country's foreign debt policy. In turn, the study made by FDC on the debt incurred for the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant became a classic example of odious debt, which was frequently cited by freedom-from-debt advocates outside of the Philippines. The Transparency and Accountability Network (TAN), the focus of the case study on the anti-corruption movement, is currently a member of the Access to Information Network (ATIN) in the Philippines, which has linkages with international organizations abroad. ATIN is a loose network of organizations concerned with the right to information. It has linkage, for example, with Article 19 (based on Article 19 of the UN Declaration on human rights and freedom of expression), which is based in London. Article 19 provides support to ATIN through the sharing of information about best practices in getting information from government, among others. ATIN also has linkages with some regional organizations, with which TAN shares information and experiences to strengthen its anti-corruption campaign. The geographic scope of a CSO's advocacy is a consideration for seeking transnational linkages. Pooling human, financial, and information resources made it possible for the Philippine-based Action for Economic Reforms (AER) to be instrumental in coming up with an advocacy agenda and relevant policy proposals regarding the regulation of short-term capital flows in the Southeast Asian region.

On 12-14 February 2001, AER, with the cooperation of the Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives (ARENA), organized a three-day international workshop entitled "Short-term Capital Flows: Arresting Speculation and Volatility." The workshop was a response to the effects of the financial crisis that "exposed the flaws of market-dominated economic and fiscal policies pursued by government and international financial institutions in the era of economic liberalization." The workshop was the first and last regionwide conference that discussed the issue. The Hong Kong meeting brought together forty concerned economists, activists, and scholars. Major organizations that participated include the Focus on the Global South (Thailand), the Development Alternatives with Women in a New Era, the Third World Network (Malaysia), the Freedom from Debt Coalition (Philippines), Koalisi Anti-Utang (Indonesia), and the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (Korea) (AER 2001). One major conclusion of the meeting is that the Asian financial crisis could have been avoided if there were established capital flow management structures and systems in the region to help the governments. For the campaign to change international trade rules, SNR instinctively appointed the Focus on the Global South (Focus) as interim secretariat in which a full-time coordinator was hired to facilitate and synchronize the implementation of the campaign. Focus's selection was based on three counts. The most important is its expertise on the WTO, having satellites of trade analysts scattered in Bangkok, India, and Geneva; its direct links with other national movements in the South; and its working relations with transnational advocacy networks steeped in the WTO negotiations. If these examples gave the impression that national movements were the ones consciously looking and moving outward, the case study on fair trade proved the opposite. As a concept, there is no dispute that it is driven by Northern advocates. The case of the Panay Fair Trade Center (PFTC) is one that had a northern fair trade alternative trading organization (ATO) introducing the concept and practice of fair trade to establish an alternative trading relationship with local organizations. PFTC, with the encouragement of a European ATO, was formed by the Kababaihan Bangon, Lakat para sa Katarungan (Women, Stand-up and Fight for Justice [KABALAKA]), a local organization representing the women sector in the people's movement in Panay. The ATO literally transported the concept of "fair trading" to Panay as it scouted for a Panay-based organization to undertake fair trade production prior to its acquaintance with KABALAKA.

HOW ARE TRANSNATIONAL LINKAGES FORMED?

As is clear in the previous discussion, transnational linkages are formed when civil-society organizations cross national borders to access or deliver funds, share information, and perform acts of solidarity (Silliman 1998:49-76).

Funds

Oxfam, 11.11.11, and Novib³ are some of the Northern-based CSOs that figure in at least three case studies as the usual sources of funds of Philippine campaigns on debt relief, changing international trade rules, and fair trade. This situation

³ In 1994, Novib became an affiliate of Oxfam, and for this reason the organization changed its name (as of 18 March 2006) to Oxfam Novib.

validates the observation of one scholar who said, "In most cases ... effective political alliances have been far stronger between local activists and international allies ... than they have with local officials. It is because class conflict in national settings suffering neoliberalism is far more likely than a momentary convergence of interests between radical grassroots organizations and local elites" (Bond 2001:10). However, dependence on foreign source of funds raises the question of the movement's viability in the long run and to what extent transnational actors influence the setting of agenda of Philippine social movements. The generous funding for anti-corruption campaigns in the Philippines by the World Bank, IMF, ADB, USAID and other donor agencies created the perception that the CSOs that were called on to wage anti-corruption campaigns are being used by these donor agencies to window-dress the ravages wrought by the multinational financial institutions on the Philippine society and economy. Some observers have pointed out that one solution to the dependence of Philippine CSOs on foreign funding is to turn themselves into party-list groups that would have the chance of accessing state resources if they won in the elections.

Information

Information should be qualified as consisting not only of statistical data or policy pronouncements but also of ways of understanding an issue. The flow of information and transnational linkages of the five movements under study varies. In debt, there is the particular assertion that much of the movement's understanding of the debt issue was rooted in the particular political and socioeconomic dynamics in the Philippines. The initial calls of FDC on the Philippine foreign debt—for example, debt cap, debt moratorium—and its position to disengage from tainted loans were brought about by FDC's own analysis. This situation is the opposite of how the fair trade movement started in the Philippines where both the concept and the logistics were brought in from the outside. And as proven by the effort to popularize the Tobin tax, not every idea coming from transnational linkages will have a ready and willing constituency in the Philippines. The case study on the global taxation movement concludes that "the Tobin tax movement in the country has yet to be conceived since there is not much public interest in the issue as manifested in the hibernation of the discourse after the 1997 Asian financial crisis. It has not been an urgent and priority agenda in the Philippine context because of the government's neoliberal economic policies. Further, the technical nature of the tax proposal renders it difficult for policymakers and civil-society actors to formulate a coherent agenda." The movement to change international trade rules and barriers, as seen in SNR, showed the advantages of an exchange of understanding, solutions, and tactics situated both in local and transnational experiences. As stated in the case study:

The Philippine movement to change international trade rules and barriers, as represented by SNR, grew from earlier national and transnational mobilizations against agreements on trade liberalization. More specifically, activism during the Philippine government's ratification of the GATT-UR in 1994, the Economic Leaders' Summit of APEC in Manila in 1996, and the Third WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle in 1999 shaped the repertoires of collective action of the movement opposed to a new round

of WTO negotiations. As such, the “political entrepreneurs” of SNR, whose understanding of the multilateral trading system, organizational strategies, and perceptiveness to opportunities had been conditioned by previous waves of mobilization and contentious episodes both domestically and globally, had a good reading of the national and international contexts and the possibilities they offered for a movement to be born.

Solidarity

One can argue that the sharing of funds, information, or human resources are also acts of solidarity. Yet in the case studies on debt and changing international trade rules and barriers, acts of solidarity range from the holding of simultaneous protest actions within and across countries to actually forming institutionalized networks, like the Jubilee South or the World Social Forum. These modes of conducting solidarity work seem to validate the observation that “increasingly, people will identify along sectoral or issue movements (labor, environment, women, indigenous people, etc.), and what will be key is the building of transnational sectoral alliances based on the common interests that sectors share, while respecting the differences in terms of experience. Also, the need to build South-South links so as to both learn from each other’s experiences and to develop common agendas for advocacy work will be critical” (FOPA Democracy Cluster Group 1993:175).

HOW CAN THESE TRANSNATIONAL LINKAGES BE CHARACTERIZED?

The transnational linkages pursued by Philippine social movements on debt relief, corruption, changing international trade rules and barriers, fair trade, and global taxation are best viewed not as a simple two-way street but as a power relation—in which finances, information, and human resources are being sought and deployed by the actors engaged in transnational advocacies to further their cause and where inequities are sometimes reproduced. However, this is not to say that CSOs are naive actors just waiting for dole-outs. As proven by the select Philippine social movements for this research project, even under limited circumstances, they can be strategic actors that both craft and reproduce particular campaigns aimed at providing social justice. Taken as a whole, the Philippine social movements on debt relief, corruption, changing international trade rules and barriers, fair trade, and global taxation are not mere implementers of some nebulous concept or project devised by some foreign organization that pretends to be a global civil society.

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Reactions



JOSEFA "GIGI" FRANCISCO (MEMBER, STEERING COMMITTEE, INTERNATIONAL GENDER AND TRADE NETWORK):

I think we should acknowledge that Mr. Ariate's paper has covered some of the key or strategic CSOs in the Philippines. But I do get the impression when I reached the last part, that there is in fact more than what the body of the summary actually contains. I would like to give my comments on three points. The first is to just engage you on what you mean by "transnational linkages" and perhaps to say that the concept needs further elaboration to distinguish it from the earlier international links that were also

referred to in the paper. This is very relevant particularly since at least one of the CSOs covered—the Freedom from Debt Coalition—had been established even before "transnational activism" became in vogue.

My second point that you may want to consider has to do with the characterization of Oxfam, Novib, and 11.11.11 as simply donors or funding agencies that support Philippines CSOs in the context of deepening transnational processes. Actually, these three groups had been transformed into advocacy and campaign organizations. It would be instructive, for instance, to find in your final paper some of the tensions and contestations around advocacy positions between these so-called donors and the CSOs that were accessing funds from them.

Finally, are these CSOs characterized as social movements—particularly what recent scholarship has pointed to “new social movements”—or just nongovernment organizations? I suspect that a lot of the organizations are actually in between. Philippine CSOs are a product of our contexts, but at the same time they are also quite responsive to new opportunities offered by information technology and global consciousness. Along transnational linkages, there may be certain characteristics that actually make CSOs hybrids.

What could add more texture to the analysis is to include an examination of the transformation that these CSOs have been experiencing as a result of their transnational linkages. New transnational spaces have been carved out, such as the World Social Forum, which a large number of Philippine CSOs have been actively engaged in.

MARIA TERESA DIOKNO-PASCUAL (FORMER PRESIDENT, FREEDOM FROM DEBT COALITION):

The beauty of being part of a global social movement is that it enriches one's perspective. The way we analyze our situation in the Philippines may not be the way our friends in other continents look at the same problem. That should help us enrich our own analysis and give us ideas on what issues to push for and what actions to take.

I think the framework that Mr. Ariate is using is still based on the old notion of how transnational spaces have evolved. I do not know much about Oxfam in terms of the way it conducts its work, but I know 11.11.11 is a movement based in Belgium. It has its own constituents and it invites partner organizations all over the world. There is some kind of exchange, a North-South kind of relationship.

Groups like Oxfam are working toward becoming a unified advocacy organization. This kind of situation could cause a clash of perspectives between the donor agency and the groups it works with. The problem of globalization, for instance, will be viewed differently by the donor agency in England and the organizations it supports financially here in the Philippines. On the other hand, recognizing and appreciating different voices within the transnational social movement could also develop a relationship that is mutually empowering. A North-South relationship is different from South-South linkage. It is not just the perspective that we focus on, but the strategy. I believe that such focus enriches experience. For instance, the people in Bolivia were able to kick out Bechtel, the water company; and the grassroots labor movement in Argentina successfully campaigned against debt payment and austerity programs to meet the requirements of the IMF.



Many of the problems we face involve transnational actors. Some of the movements that Mr. Ariate studied are creditor-driven, or possibly donor agency-driven—for the benefit of the general reader, it would be good to make a distinction between the two. These movements are the result of the way funding for NGOs is currently evolving internationally. Unfortunately, it is not easy to find local funding for advocacy because the inclination is toward economic policy. It is a very neoliberal approach. Interestingly, institutions like the World Bank are becoming major channels for these kinds of funds. It is necessary to engage in competition and bidding in order to get funding. FDC categorically said that it would not accept World Bank or international financial institution funding. This is a pressing problem that FDC has to confront. Our economy is not taking off, which makes it even less probable today than maybe twenty years ago to secure local funding. The local economy has been more or less decimated with funding and debt problems.

It is not clear to me what power relation is, as used in the paper. Does this refer to the relationship between the donor agencies in the North and the CSOs in the Philippines? Is it between the CSOs and the government, the technocrat vis-à-vis the international financial institutions, or the other institutions in the national bodies that determine and set the policies implemented by our government? It is hard for me to respond, given this ambiguity. Nevertheless, we cannot discount the fact that there is an emerging global movement. Many of the Philippine networks involved in all kinds of issues—human rights, trade, debt, anti-corruption, etc.—are likely to be part of global movements. The events from Seattle to Melbourne and the protests in Porto Alegre show that people are recognizing the need to link up globally. That does not mean, however, that local movements do less work at home. It actually adds another dimension to the work. The global cannot be prioritized—it is not an end. The local and the global dimensions have to be simultaneously worked on.

The other aspect that has not been mentioned in the paper is crucial to a lot of movements. Overseas Filipinos are part of the reason why we are able to link up overseas. As we know, our economy would have been trampled upon if not for the remittances [of overseas Filipino workers]—that is how crucial they are. Sometimes, I think it is almost a joke to call them “heroes.” In the past, it was the solidarity movement supporting the movement for change, but that has also evolved. Now you have Filipinos practically everywhere, even in Africa. I think the Filipino diaspora is important to factor in the study of social movements in the Philippines.

EDUARDO TADEM (FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASIAN REGIONAL EXCHANGE FOR NEW ALTERNATIVES):

It is a tough task to study social movements in the Philippines, particularly those with a transnational character. Mr. Ariate has given a concise distillation of the five case studies. Having said that, let me now go to my comments. The first point has to do with this current dilemma about organizations accessing funds from the IMF, ADB, World Bank, and USAID, among others. These are chief proponents or promoters of neoliberalism. I was wondering how some of these groups were able



to access funds from the main architects and implementers of the very ideology they are fighting against and use these to campaign against neoliberalism.

The second point has to do with the tensions and dynamics between Southern and Northern NGOs when they get together to do projects. One such case is the AlterTrade Project in Bacolod City. I remember being a participant in a conference several years back where a Japanese NGO and a local NGO from Negros were present. In the formal presentation, everything seemed fine, but in the discussion outside the conference, the local NGO actually expressed dissatisfaction over its partnership with the Japanese NGO.

The third and most important dimension is the transnational nature of social movements in the Philippines. I believe that this should be traced to the Left movement in the Philippines. Without the emergence of the Philippine Left, there would probably have been no social movement, much less a transnational one. I would like to emphasize this point because today there is an assault against the Left. The Left is being demonized as terrorists, identified with the purges, the killings, the revolutionary taxes—everything that is negative. I think this view has to be placed in its proper context. The Left should be given credit where it is due. Without the Left, the movement against martial law, against human-rights violations, against other transgressions to the human soul would probably not have happened.

I would like to comment on a point raised on whether the dependence on foreign sources of funds has an impact on the viability of social movements. I think this can be validated empirically. This is not just a rhetorical or a theoretical question because the experience of accessing funds from foreign sources has been going on for many years. This should be examined in its actual practice. It can be shown whether or not the viability of CSOs in the Philippines is dependent on the long-term availability of these foreign funds.

My fifth comment has to do with issues on the Tobin tax movement and the social safety net proposals that have not taken off. From the perspective of the more radical Left, the Tobin tax formula, just like the social safety-net proposals, is unacceptable because it is a reformist proposal or part of the reformist agenda that did not fit very well in the radical agenda to transform Philippine society. The Tobin tax is perceived to simply place more money in the hands of the corrupt government.

The next comment is on international solidarity among countries from different sectors advocating various agenda and advocacies. My own experience has shown that it actually tends to be problematic. While groups do come together on certain matters, there is a really broad basis for unity. Difficulties arise among the different groups, particularly when one has multi-issue campaigns as illustrated by the

Manila People's Forum on APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) or the World Summit on Social Development. What I have observed though is that sectoral groups tend to come to this gathering and bring their specific agenda. Some groups fail to appreciate the bigger picture. They do not really appreciate nor see the international character of the activity.

There is another point that I hope Mr. Ariate and the five case studies would look into. This is the examination of the level of mass mobilization and popularization of the issues that have been achieved by Philippine CSOs. In other words, have they really been able to galvanize people for whom they speak? That is one issue that has been raised as far as NGOs and CSOs are concerned. Who do they really represent? Most of them are really small in membership so it seems doubtful whether they really are able to feed the imagination of the masses. When one has to speak of social change, one has to speak in terms of mass movements and mass mobilizations. If that is not being achieved, then a lot probably still needs to be done.

Finally, I will comment on the power relations which Ms. Diokno also pointed out—between Northern NGOs and Southern NGOs, between funding agencies and recipients or partners from the Third World. I think that, to a limited extent, there is a valid characterization because the relationship between such groups involves power since funds are involved. At the same time, it must also be recognized that the funding agencies and Northern NGOs need to legitimize their own advocacy and justify their own funding sources in their own country.

To conclude, the paper should also stress the need to strike a proper balance between national and international concerns, the assertion of autonomy by local groups, and the specificity of the local condition vis-à-vis the international dimension of a particular advocacy at a particular time. One or the other should take precedence, but this should be based on the requirements of the existing situation.

Open Forum

TERESITA BALTAZAR (PHILIPPINE ANTI-GRAFT COMMISSION):

Can you elaborate further on your analysis of the funding for anti-corruption NGOs?

JOEL ARIATE JR.:

Anti-neoliberal activists argue that it is not corruption per se that cripples the government. The policy being imposed on it by the financial institutions is one that encourages corruption. So it is rather ironic that the very same institution that feeds the corruption in the government will be the one that would take the initiative in funding civil



society's anti-corruption drives. Perhaps the case study writer on the anti-corruption movement would like to add to that.

GLENDALopez-WUI (THIRD WORLD STUDIES CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES [UP]-DILIMAN):

My case study focused on TAN, and in my discussion I mentioned that the funding for TAN came from the Asia Foundation and the USAID, but TAN does not accept funding from the World Bank or the IMF. Some anti-corruption projects from government come from the IMF. What I said about the issue of debt and the role of the World Bank and the IMF is more related to the issue of anti-corruption.

TERESITA BALTAZAR:

Corruption really is a systemic problem. I do not see any IFI policy that is causing it. I should be enlightened on how IFI policy really causes the system problems. I do not see how the international financial institutions are contributing to the problem.

MARIA TERESA DIOKNO-PASCUAL:

The ADB and the IMF pushed the Philippine government for a law to implement the electric power industry for a law. IMF even wrote to the head of the Committee on Energy at the House of Representatives. Representatives Rene Magtubo and Etta Rosales revealed to the public that on the night of the voting of the bill, *payola* (grease money) was given to the minority leader, who belongs to the opposition. The deal was that if you voted against the bill you get a payola of half a million pesos; if you attend every day, you get a hundred thousand.

This case was disclosed to the ADB, but did the ADB investigate it? ADB personnel said they did not know that it happened, and that is the irony. They know they are dealing with a corrupt leader almost every day. The Commission on Audit audits the Department of Education's invisible acquisitions that also went through the ADB procurement system.

TINA PIMENTEL (PROCUREMENT WATCH):

Let me explain our relationship with our donor institutions. First of all, we have certain objectives and goals internal to the NGO. If we see that there are institutions whose objectives match ours, then we work with them. If there are certain issues that they support that we do not believe in, we do not engage them. That some NGOs are very much dependent on donor funds is a problem. That is why NGOs, like Procurement Watch, are looking for other ways to generate funds internally, rather than being dependent on external sources. Procurement Watch has some projects that are not supported or do not attract the interest of other institutions. Procurement Watch passed a law on behalf of many NGOs without the benefit of so-called window dressing. We have invited other NGOs to bid for funding to see if there are irregularities.

EVELYN SERRANO (PHILIPPINE COALITION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT/ASIAN FORUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT):

One of the significant points that was not addressed by the paper is on how the government compel or drive national-level movements to link up transnationally or internationally. I think it is also a good angle to pursue as part of the research. For instance, the issue of extrajudicial killings of activists is not only happening in the Philippines but also in other countries. Perhaps it would be good to consider the dynamics between the government and civil-society movements, which propel many of the other elements that you have mentioned in your

research, such as the motivation to go international. The focus of many advocacies on political and civil rights is partly informed by history, the highlight of which was the Marcos dictatorship.

I would also like to point out that the paper may also benefit from exploring the lessons learned by the national movements in the process of moving their advocacies to the international level. The civil-rights movement learned to incorporate economic, social, and cultural rights from linking up with international organizations, thereby expanding its framework.



ANGELITO MANALILI (COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, UP-DILIMAN):

I appreciate the discussion of social movements thus far, as it places emphasis on the historical context. It is clear that the history of social movements is necessarily tied to the history of country. However, what seems absent in our discussion is the discourse on poverty. Where is the poor peasant farmer in our discussion, for instance? We hardly touched on the fact that the peasant movement in the countryside is becoming a force to contend with. The peasant movement has also moved to the international level, linking up with peasant movements in other countries. This development has significantly affected its struggle for genuine agrarian reform. In looking at the transnational dimension of civil-society groups, we should also note the factors that may be considered as impediments to the movement, such as mercenary NGOs. Perhaps that is also why we are having problems defining the concept of social movement as it works here in the Philippines.

JOSEFA FRANCISCO:

In India, activists are clear when it comes to the different connotations of mass movement, social movement, people's movement, and NGOs. Furthermore, NGOs

do not mix analytically, and in terms of political action, the views of the different groups are hard to negotiate. This is exacerbated by the fact that Indian progressives do not trust NGOs because of their links with the Ford Foundation. During the Mumbai Social Forum, the International Council alleged that some NGOs took money from the Ford Foundation. It became a national issue.

My point is that we should clearly define the terms “social movement,” “mass movement,” “NGOs,” terms that we tend to interchange. Part of defining the terms would perhaps be to identify the issue focus of the organizations involved. Some NGOs or networks may have broader issues. For example, if the focus of the issue is women, it involves other related subtopics—security, human rights, governance, etc.

In looking at social-movement linkages in the transnational sphere, we might also want to examine the political consensus. Not all national social movements are able to expand internationally; some choose to expand locally. One will find that consensus is hard to achieve, given the political experiences that movements bring in the process of linking transnationally with other social movements. Linkages are not exactly equal, but may in fact give rise to inequities and hierarchal power relationships. This kind of analysis is pertinent, especially since we are now riding the crest of neoliberal globalization.

EDUARDO TADEM:

I have observed that NGOs tend to hold forums in time with state-organized activities, for example the APEC conference, the UN Conference on Women, and the World Summit on Social Development. The relationship between such NGO forums and the state-organized forums is more confrontational than collaborative.

The founding congress of La Via Campesina, probably the most significant global alliance of peasant organizations today, was held parallel to an NGO forum in 1996. Why was La Via Campesina held parallel to an NGO forum? The peasant organization did not want the NGO to be part of the main conference of peasants. They wanted the NGOs to plan and form their own forums, discuss their own issues (implying a distinction between the issues of NGOs and the peasant or mass movements). Second, there was also an element of distrust on the part of the peasant organization vis-à-vis NGOs. Yet these NGOs, mostly left-wing, are also against neoliberalism and corporate-led globalization.

MARIA TERESA DIOKNO-PASCUAL:

I think in the Philippines there is not much confusion over the terms “social movement” and “NGO.” We do tend to interchange them. In the spectrum of peasant movements, one could at least identify several political ideologies. Even though movements do not put so much emphasis on theory, a lot can be learned from practice.

An observation was raised earlier that when the people’s movement is strong, the NGO movement is weak, and when the NGO movement gains strength, the people’s movement weakens. Perhaps that is the dynamics between the two, a dialectical relationship of sorts. Conducting research and lobbying are usually attributed to academic technocrats. Waging a struggle at the community level

requires a different kind of momentum, a different kind of logic, and maybe a different kind of organization.

I was part of the stakeholders' discussion on FDC. We never entered into that discussion because FDC was described as a coalition. But one thing we did recognize in FDC is the way the evolving Left movement and politics figure in the organization's development.

I think that many of the key NGOs today had their beginnings at the time of severe repression under the Marcos dictatorship. That provided democratic faith needed to go and establish transnational links. It was empowering for all of us.



LILIAN MERCADO-CARREON (OXFAM-GB MANILA):

I would like to comment on the characterization of the term "transnational." It is very appropriate to frame power relations by identifying the sources of power. However, the relationship is not based solely on power. NGOs are also looking at the evolving nature of the transnational, and the overall effect of such to the national. Take the case of Oxfam, which is an international coalition of several offices and partners all over the world. Oxfam Britain is not only very much affected by international dynamics but also by its relationship with its partners. In the case of Oxfam International, which is involved in several

partnerships, there are actions to be taken independently, outside of those partnerships.

Perhaps the paper can be broadened in its appreciation of the links between donor agencies such as Oxfam and 11.11.11, the relationship involved in terms of developing a stronger international dimension. There is a possibility that the relationship suffers because of the reiteration of policy of international NGOs and the traffic of information that comes out from that policy.

RAUL ANGELES (BOARD OF INVESTMENTS, DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY):

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) engages civil society in providing inputs to international trade agreements that affect national interest. DTI has assisted groups such as the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA) in providing information based on the economic study on the WTO. The next step is to form a position on the international trade issue.

What is lacking here is a discussion of the projects of NGOs or civil-society groups that link to international trade issues. These kinds of initiatives may enable the groups to serve as negotiators who will carry the Philippine position in the international arena. Following the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, DTI has

been working with FTA, Tambuyog Development Center, and other civil-society groups to come up with the Philippine position.

ROMEO ROYANDOYAN (CENTRO SAKA INC.):

How do you compare the foreign-based organizations that are pretending to do social-movement work here in the Philippines using foreign funds? Second, in response to our colleague from DTI, I think there is a basic problem in that the DTI collects data regardless of source. NGOs and the academe should investigate the data lapses from government agencies and disseminate their findings. Trade is a very complicated system. Stakeholders need a lot of information.

JOSEPHINE C. DIONISIO (THIRD WORLD STUDIES CENTER, UP-DILIMAN):

I would like to make a clarification based on the suggestion to frame the paper with a discussion on the historical development of the movement. Attention should be given not to the campaign alone but, more important, to how the movement evolved. For your information, the time period we are focusing on is from the 1980s up to the present.

We should also pay attention to the premise that puts into perspective the earlier discussion on how the corruption issue can be handled, as well as all other issues included in the study. For example, the number of the anti-corruption organizations vis-à-vis the anti-corruption activities that have been implemented since the 1990s onward is related to the emergence of the discourse on good governance at the international level. The good-governance perspective refocuses our attention away from the problems of the development paradigm imposed on Third World or undeveloped countries. Anti-corruption activities are important in themselves. That is why I mentioned earlier that we wanted to look at how they framed the issues of corruption.

This project not only intends to address what the government is doing. In a way, it also tries to keep track of what movement actors have been doing. After all, the role of the academe is to help theorize the practice of movement participants. It is the modest intention of the project to provide the tool that would make some sense of the experience of the movements.

I would also like to clarify the term "civil society." The UNRISD expects us to come up with a mini-discussion to define civil society. That is why we are grateful for the sharing that is happening now. Indeed, the term has philosophical and intellectual connotations, but this may not be applicable in actual practice. As mentioned earlier, civil society is not necessarily nongovernment organization or people's organization. That will be part of the documentation of our research.

RUTH LUSTERIO-RICO (DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PHILOSOPHY, UP-DILIMAN):

I would like to enumerate the major points raised that would help the research team in the final analysis of the case studies. Mr. Ariate's paper emphasized three main points: the transnational efforts of CSOs, the international nature of their advocacy, and how they generate resources. Transnational linkages are formed



when CSOs cross borders and share information with other actors. Transnational linkages are characterized as comprising a set of power relations.

From our panel of reactors, several comments and suggestions were made to further improve the analysis of the paper: the clarification of the definition of the terms “transnational linkages,” “civil society,” and “social movements”; the need to further characterize the role of donor agencies that run their own campaigns; the politics of funding; the transformation of transnational relations of CSOs; and the contemporary modes of and reasons for transnational activism. Another important comment that was raised is to clarify the concept of power

relations among various actors at different levels. The role of overseas Filipino workers in the transnational work of CSOs must also be explored.