
شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية
Arab NGO Network for Development

Annual Report
2004



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Contents

Introduction	7
Networking and Information Exchange	11
Development Program	15
Globalization and Trade Program	25
Democracy Program	39
Solidarity Campaigns	44

ANNEXES

Annex 1	Minutes of the ANND Board of Directors Meeting - Rabat, 30 July 2004	46
Annex 2	Regional MDGs Campaign in the Arab Countries - Strategic Planning Workshop	55
Annex 3	Arab-Palestinian Civil Society Partnership - Recommendations	61
Annex 4	Workshop on Arab-Palestinian Civil Society Partnership	67
Annex 5	Arab Prepcom for the WSIS – Towards a More Just Information Society	75
Annex 6	Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting: “Towards a More Just Information Society”	81
Annex 7	The Arab Seminar in parallel to the World Economic Forum - Jordan	83
Annex 8	Mainstreaming Youth Issues in the MDGs Campaign - Recommendations	88

Introduction

For ANND, 2004 was a critical year for re-evaluating its programs and goals. At the end of 2003, ANND organized a strategic planning workshop, where the majority of the board of directors participated along with several members. The workshop covered the future strategic plans that will be implemented by the network. ANND's team synthesized the results of the discussions into programs and activities that make up ANND's work plan for the next 3 years.

The strategy of the network can be summarized in one headline: advocacy and lobbying on public policy in 3 sectors:

1. **Development**; focusing on two axes:

a. Working on the **Millennium Development Goals** and the Millennium Declaration adopted by 191 countries including the Arab governments, and that should be achieved by 2015. The goals are a synopsis of all decisions of UN international summits in the final decade of last millennium, especially the Copenhagen and Beijing Summits.

b. The World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in Tunisia in 2005.

2. **Globalization and trade**; where ANND continues monitoring social and economic effects of trade agreements, especially in the framework of the World Trade Organization, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Agreement, the Pan Arab trade agreements, and bilateral free trade Agreements with the United States.

3. **Democracy and human rights**; where ANND will focus on the implementation of international agreements on human rights, as well as monitor dialogue on democracy and reforms, while stimulating the participation of civil society in this crucial process facing by the Arab region.

2004 has also seen an important development in the work of the ANND executive office. The program coordinator had an active role in planning, thus raising the capacities at the office.

The preceding few years were characterized by regional and international visibility, achieved through ANND's

participation in regional and international conferences and events, as well as its involvement in numerous international networks. The coming phase should strengthen ANND's presence and its active role in the participation and capacity building of civil society.

On the practical level, ANND's activities led to creating a vision for the working strategy and for linking previous experiences with future tasks. This is especially true in the 3 aforementioned sectors. ANND followed-up the regional preparations for the Arab Social Forum. Although the process was hampered by differences between members of the coordinating committee, ANND's assistance in organizing the Moroccan Social Forum and its support for Arab participants led to the former becoming one of the more successful national social forums. As a result, Morocco became a candidate to host the World Social Forum in 2006.

In 2004, ANND increased its participation in international groups, such as CIVICUS, whereby the network became a member of its executive board. Also, ANND was choosing as the regional coordinator for the Global Call against Poverty.

A distinguishing feature of ANND's work in the past year was the call to create the "Arab Civil Society Coalition";

a coalition to be formed from Arab networks working in various fields including education, environment, development, disability, and health. The aim of for the Call is to make the role of Arab civil society more effective in supporting the developmental role of the Palestinian civil society. The coalition will have a comprehensive responsibility in the fields of development and monitoring the application of the Millennium Development Goals.

The General Assembly of ANND was also supposed to take place in 2004. It was postponed to the beginning of 2005 due to the preparations of the program and work plan, as well as work on expanding memberships in the network and developing the organizational structure.

Following is a detailed report on the activities of the preceding year, instituting the following phase of ANND's work plan and activities.



ANND Panel on “Future of the Arab Social Mouvement”, during the Second Moroccan Social Forum, 27-29 July 2004

From the right: Mrs. Neimat Kuku (Sudan), Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad (Lebanon), Mr. Ezz Eddin Al-Asbahi (Yemen), Mr. Allam Jarrar (Palestine)

Networking and Information Exchange

1. ANND's Website

ANND created a website with a database to search and access information as a primary step to create a resource and information center. The center will contain a database of all publications, reports, and newsletters on the programmatic focus of ANND.

The network also works on publishing a periodic electronic newsletter on the challenges of development in the Arab region and some of the more pertinent issues. This is through the contribution of ANND members and other civil society activists from the region and around the world. The newsletter is a tool to participate in lobbying and advocacy campaigns in the sectors pertaining to the network's strategy.

ANND created an ICT department to fulfill the needs of members and other Arab organizations. This will enhance networking and exchange, among them and with international network, in addition to the execution of programs using modern communication and media technologies.

The ANND IT department has 3 sections:

- Hardware: it contains the assets of the IT department: Mail Server, Local Area Network, Internet Server, File Server, and 11 computers, in addition to a scanner and 4 printers.
- Program library: it contains the latest programs needed by ANND.
- Internet: this is one of ANND's strategic tools. ANND has its own website (www.annd.org) that is constantly being updated and developed into a tool for interaction between Arab civil society organizations. The website has received many accolades from visitors, due to its useful content.

2. Meetings of the Coordinating Committee:

The Coordinating Committee met during the 4th World Social Forum in Mumbai. It discussed the preparatory process of the Arab Social Forum and the role of ANND. A second meeting was held in Morocco during the Moroccan Social Forum, where a report on 2003 activities

and the 2004 program document were presented, in addition to financial issues and the budget.

Another 2 meetings were held between committee members. The first was during the participation of the majority of the committee in Beirut, at the strategic planning meeting for the MDGs. The second was held at the end of June during the preparatory meeting for the Arab International Forum to Support Palestinian Civil Society for Development. The main topics were the Arab Social Forum and its preparatory process.

3. International Meetings

A. International Conference on Democracy G05: The Montreal International Forum in Canada is organizing an international conference on global democracy. The conference will have 3 themes on the main challenges to the international system following developments in the nature of actual powers and the role of international organizations and of governments. The conference will be held in Montreal at the end of May 2005. A preparatory committee was formed from theme coordinators, experts, and consultants in international policy, to cooperate with the executive committee of the forum. ANND was chosen to be on the preparatory committee and to coordinate the

1st theme on the development of the role of civil society based on geopolitical changes.

B. The World Alliance for Citizen Participation (Civicus): This is one of the more important coalitions comprising NGOs and international organizations and donors. Its main goals are to support international cooperation and coordination to strengthen civil society organizations, empower them, and help in coordination with donors and funds. ANND was elected to the Executive Board of Civicus, due to its regional role in supporting and developing civil society in Arab countries and its work on international visibility.

C. Coordinating Committee of Social Watch/ Reports: ANND participated in the work of Social Watch in 2004, through writing national reports and articles on human security and freedom from fear. All were published in the annual report. ANND worked on launching the report in the United Nations in New York and in the presence of international press. It also organized a seminar for the representatives of member countries and international organizations, also at the UN headquarters.

ANND also participated in the meetings of the Coordinating Committee of Social Watch and the strategic planning meeting held in Montevideo. The latter

resulted in numerous decisions concerning the future of Social Watch and its actual role.

D. ANND participated in the **4th World Social Forum** (WSF) in Mumbai. It held 3 seminars on the future of Arab civil society movements and the Arab Social Forum. ANND also participated in Arab seminars and meetings on the preparations for the “Arab Social Forum”. The meetings resulted in forming a committee of 12 members in ANND to follow-up preparations.

E. ANND participated in the **Strategic Planning Meeting for the Millennium Development Goals in Northern Europe**, held in Denmark. Participants included representatives of UNDP programs and NGOs from those countries. Discussion focused on goals 7 (sustainable development) and 8 (international partnership and the role of advanced countries).

F. The Moroccan parliament, in coordination with the regional office of the UNDP, organized a **Workshop on the Regional Report on MDGs**. ANND was invited to participate in the workshop that attempted to repair the process of achieving goals, and the participation of civil society therein.

G. **Global Call against Poverty (GCAP)**: ANND signed on the call that represents a broad coalition of regional and international organizations and networks. The coalition

will hold global actions through 2005 on 3 important occasions: the G8 summit in the UK in July, the United Nations General Assembly in September, and the 6th Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Hong Kong. ANND is also member of the international steering committee of GCAP, coordinating work in the Arab region.

H. **Euro-Mediterranean Platform**: ANND contributed actively to the preparations establishing the forum. It is also member of the Steering Committee preparing for the establishing general assembly and the civil forum in Luxembourg in 2005.

I. **Regional Coalition of CSOs**: ANND initiated a call to Arab networks working on various issues such as environment, gender, health, education, and disabilities to establish a coalition of civil society organizations. The coalition will work on partnership towards the achievement of MDGs. The following networks participated in the meeting:

- a. Arab Network for Environment and Development
- b. AISHA
- c. Arab Organization for the Disabled
- d. Education Network
- e. Rehabilitation International – Arab Office
- f. World Health Movement – Arab Office



Regional Similar parallel to the World Economic Forum in Jordan, 15-17 May 2004

Development Program

Regional Campaign for MDGs in the Arab Region- Strategic Planning Workshop

1-3 April 2004–Beirut, Lebanon

Between 1 and 3 April 2004, ANND, in coordination with the UNDP, organized a strategic planning meeting on the MDGs campaign in the Arab region. The workshop aimed at introducing the participants to the procedures of managing the regional campaign, establishing a specific strategy to launch the campaign in the Arab region, and producing a position paper and work-plan to utilize these goals. It focused on using MDGs as an effective tool to achieve sustainable progress in the Arab region and on identifying means and methods to strengthen Arab CSOs and their involvement in international events and actions.

The workshop included representatives from 10 Arab countries: Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Sudan, Bahrain, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia, and Iraq, in addition to representatives from national UNDP offices in Qatar,

Kuwait, the UAE, Sudan, Tunisia, Lebanon, and Syria, and representatives of Lebanese and Egyptian media.

Over the course of 3 days, participants presented reports on the launching of MDG campaigns in Tunisia, Sudan, and Lebanon, in addition to experiences from Latin America and Asia. This was followed by a workshop on planning campaigns to monitor the achievement of MDGs in Arab countries.

Main Achievements of the Workshop:

1. Initiating partnership between various actors: the UN, CSOs, and the public sector to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.
2. Stressing that the role of civil society should not be restricted to the follow-up and monitoring of the implementation mechanisms of MDGs; it should extend to taking a fundamental role in formulating indicators for Arab countries and to publish recommendations on

national public policies relating to the goals.

3. Launching a regional MDGs campaign through the framework of the international campaign launched by Social Watch. The campaign will be for 1 ½ years, ending in August 2005, and prior to the high level meeting of the UNGA. The evaluation of the campaign will take place at the end of 2004.
 - a. The strategy of the campaign is based on lobbying and advocacy. It uses advocacy methods such as capacity-building and awareness-raising, in addition to national and regional networking and exchange of experiences, providing a database for national campaign, participation of local media, and lobbying decision-makers in ministries and parliaments.
 - b. The regional campaign has 8 national campaigns in Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Bahrain, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan.
4. Recommending that CSOs should be involved in reporting on the dynamics of the campaign and in providing their input on related issues.
5. Focusing on the main roles of relevant actors from various perspectives, the role of civil society and the UN from the point of view of NGOs, and their own role from the point of view of the United Nations.

Participation in the Organization of a Regional Preparatory Meeting on Partnership between the Arab and Palestinian Civil Society to Support Development in Occupied Palestinian Territories

9-10 June 2004

ANND, in coordination with ESCWA and the PNGO, organized a workshop on the partnership between Arab and Palestinian civil society to support development in the occupied Palestinian territories. The meeting, held in Beirut between 9 and 10 June 2004, was attended by 85 civil society participants. They represented 63 NGOs and national and regional networks from 17 Arab countries. This is in addition to participation from international organizations, the Minister of Planning in the Palestinian Authority, and the board of trustees of the “Legal Support Fund for Palestinians”.

The workshop aimed to provide a summary of the preparatory inter-Palestinian meeting. It also aimed to define the developmental priorities, plans, and vision of the Palestinian civil society, in addition to the exchange of experiences and information among civil society organizations on the Palestinian, Arab, and international levels. The meeting recommended the following practical mechanisms for the coordination and mutual support of

Arab and Palestinian CSOs:

- Developing an emergency plan for the Palestinian territories based on the needs of Palestinian society.
- Developing criteria for choosing the segments with the most urgent need in the occupied territories.
- Providing sustainable support and aid.
- Involving the public in the current discussion of development in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The main output of the workshop was emphasizing the priority of working towards just and comprehensive peace, due to the impact of the political situation and security on developmental realities. This is in addition to resisting occupation, working towards and independent and democratic national authority, contributing to building civil society organizations and their support, providing the needs of Palestinian society, and creating common visions for development in Palestine.

This was followed by exchange of various experiences of CSOs in Arab countries as well as the lessons learned from Arab-Palestinian cooperation and partnership. The meeting recommended the following strategies and mechanisms to support the partnership process:

1. Supporting the publication, dissemination, and transfer of information through media and the internet on the situation in Palestine and of development in the territories.
2. Strengthening the networking between Palestinian and Arab CSOs.
3. Developing Arab-Palestinian plans for political alternatives, to be distributed to Arab CSOs for discussion.
4. Developing sectoral plans to boost action and partnership on common issues.
5. Motivating partnership on the educational level: conducting studies and courses, increasing grants, holding technical courses unavailable in the occupied territories, and exchanging students and teachers (these courses and programs should be spread widely).
6. Encouraging Arab CSO volunteers to participate in programs on development in the occupied Palestinian territories.
7. Organizing lobbying and advocacy campaigns on development issues in Arab countries.

Arab International Forum on Development and Rehabilitation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories–Towards an Independent Palestinian State

11-13 October 2004

In coordination with the ECOSOC, ANND participated in organizing “The Arab International Forum on Development and Rehabilitation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories–Towards an Independent State” between 11 and 13 October 2004 in the UN House in Beirut. The 4-day forum included the presentation of papers and holding workshops and general sessions. Participants included around 500 representatives of UN organizations and agencies, international governmental organizations and associations, numerous NGOs and governmental organizations, in addition to official delegations from member and non-member countries of the ESCWA region.

The forum aimed to stress the necessity of continuing the rehabilitation and development of the occupied Palestinian territories, in spite of the instability in the political and security situations. To achieve this aim, the forum focused on the following:

- 1- Supporting Arab-Palestinian partnerships and increasing the utility of Arab financial support mechanisms for the Palestinian people.
- 2- Stressing that the international community has responsibilities and obligations towards the Palestinians, based on international conventions and principles and the various resolutions of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council.
- 3- Presenting the vision, priorities, and future plans in Palestine, on social and economic development of the occupied territories, to Arab and international societies.
- 4- Strengthening inter-Arab and multilateral partnerships on the governmental, civil society, and funding levels in order to provide aid to the Palestinians, through the current international framework based on surpassing the social and economic effects of the occupation and facing future challenges, in spite of the instability in the political and security situations.
- 5- Mobilizing Arab support for the rehabilitation and development of the occupied Palestinian territories, through:
 - a. Reinforcing the support mechanisms of governments, foundations, and organizations.

-
- b. Promoting private sector Arab/Palestinian/international partnerships.
 - c. Promoting the participation of Arab CSOs in sustainable development projects in emergency situations.
 - d. Identifying stronger links and channels for the Palestinian Diasporas to support Palestinians under occupation.

Workshop on Partnership between Arab and Palestinian Civil Societies:

October 14 2005

ANND organized a workshop on “Partnership between Arab and Palestinian Civil Societies” on October 14. Participants in the workshop included representatives of CSOs from Palestine and the other Arab countries; representatives of the following ministries and agencies in Palestine: Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry for Detainees and Released Detainees, and Ministry of Health; in addition to representatives of Arab networks active in various development sectors (health, education, environment, and agriculture); and representatives of groups directly influenced and involved by these sectors: women, youth, and the disabled.

The workshop aimed at stressing the responsibilities and obligations of Arab civil society towards the Palestinians; the support of development in the occupied Palestinian territories; and the production of successful partnership mechanisms between Arab and Palestinian civil societies. More specifically, the goals of the meeting were to:

- contribute to a clear understanding of the needs, priorities, capacities, and opportunities for cooperation and partnership between the Arab civil society and the Palestinian civil society;
- locate practical dynamics for regional networks in all the relevant sectors to work with the organizations of Palestinian society, opening the way towards locating tools for Arab and regional support of Palestinians and their organizations;
- discuss the five strategies adopted by Palestinian civil society:
 - * raising societal awareness of the main issues in development and combating poverty;
 - * influencing the public instruments, legislations, and policies of decision-makers in general, and the Palestinian authority in particular;
 - * providing services;
 - * institutionalization and capacity building;

-
- * networking and coordination between all players influential to the process of development and democratic transition.

The main conclusion of the workshop was the announcement of a regional coalition formed of regional networks, especially sectoral networks, in order to encourage linkages and develop exchange between the Arab and Palestinian civil society and to provide the necessary support for Palestinian NGOs to face the challenges of relief and development in the occupied territories. Therefore, the Coalition of Arab Networks (CAN) will work on:

- * Shaping an aid plan and developing it into a time-defined strategy to begin working and executing the mechanisms.
- * Organizing national seminars and meetings to explain the strategy.
- * Working towards the organization of a joint meeting between CAN and the Arab funds to shape the plan and support means for communication and networking.

ANND Achievements 2004 (Not in the Program Document)

Follow-up of Regional Preparatory Process for the World Summit on the Information Society–Second Phase

13-15 September 2004

ANND participated in the Regional Arab Conference: Towards a More Just Information Society, held in Jordan between 13 and 15 September 2004, in the context of the regional preparatory process for the WSIS to be held in Tunis in November 2005.

Conference participants included representatives of CSOs, specialists, academics, and activists from 9 Arab countries: Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, and the UAE. Several working papers were discussed, focusing on the dimensions of developmental necessity of the information and knowledge society in Arab countries, the situation of the information society in the Arab region, and the protection of rights and freedoms.

ANND facilitated the participation of member organizations from Tunisia and Jordan and presented a paper entitled: The Developmental Dimension of the Information Society and the Role of Civil Society.

The conference concluded with several recommendations on the national and Arab regional levels. The main points in the first level were:

-
- calling on CSOs to create plans and programs for raising awareness on the effect of ICT on human rights, democracy, and development issues;
 - demanding from Arab governments and the private sector to cooperate with CSOs in all activities and preparatory processes and to respect the Universal Declaration for Human Rights and protect the rights of individuals, especially the right to expression and the freedom of publishing and flow of information.

A caucus of Arab CSOs was established to protect and support the principles of human rights, development, democracy; the active participation in local and regional preparatory meetings in the second phase of the WSIS; and the active role of the Arab groups by all available means, especially electronic media.

On the global level, the recommendations called on the international community, especially international organizations managing information and communication technology, to interact and coordinate with Arab and international CSOs to protect human rights, democracy, and sustainable development, and to play an active role in reaching a more just information society that fulfils the aspirations and rights of peoples, internationally, regionally, and locally.

Participation in Establishing the General Principles of the Arab Caucus In Preparation for the WSIS 15 September 2004

ANND participated in the 2nd meeting of the Arab caucus, held in parallel to the Arab regional conference “Towards a More Just Information Society” on 15 September 2004.

The participants agreed to record the general principles of the Arab caucus: strengthening the participation of Arab CSOs in the WSIS; raising awareness about the Tunis events; developing the information society to develop social justice; working to empower women to allow them to participate in the sustainable development process; and paying attention to the interests of children, people with special needs, and other marginalized groups in Arab societies.

Participation in the 2nd West Asia Preparatory Meeting for the WSIS 21-23 November 2004

With a contribution from the Heinrich B?ll foundation, ANND supported the participation of member organization in the 2ndRegional Preparatory Conference

for West Asia held in the Umayyad Palace in Syria between 21 and 23 November 2004. ANND was represented by Mr. Ahmad Qala'i from the Tunisian League for Defending Human Rights and Mr. Magdi Bilal Abdel Hamid from the Egyptian Organization for Social Support, in addition to its facilitation of the participation of representatives of the executive office of ANND and a young activist from Iraq.

Mr. Abdel Hamid presented a paper on "The Challenges of Illiteracy and the Mechanism for Applying the Information Society in the Arab region". Mr. Qala'i distributed reports on the situation of human rights in Tunisia.

ANND presented 2 papers on:

1. Youth in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities in Building an Information Society, presented in the civil society session.
2. Information and Knowledge Society: Issues of Development, Trade, Reform, and Democracy, presented in the sessions on international issues.

ANND also called the Arab civil society caucus working on the WSIS to hold a consultative meeting on 23 November. The participants stressed the importance of

participating in the preparatory meeting and the WSIS; increasing the scope of representation and awareness of CSOs and their follow-up of the content summit; and increasing coordination with international organizations following-up the summit such as Social Watch.

In conclusion, the participants adopted the following:

1. The international office facilitates the organization of the summit while the role of the Arab caucus will be based on activating the participation in the summit. Both roles will be complementary.
2. The call is open to all who want to participate in the discussions on the website established for increasing discussion on the preparation of civil society for the Tunis Summit. All those who are interested can participate through: www.arabcaucus.net.
3. Discussions will be started on the publication of a joint Arab working paper on the opinion of Arab CSOs and based on the Amman Declaration, or the possibility of preparing various papers on the issue.
4. There will be an attempt to prepare a regional meeting of CSOs prior to the Cairo meeting. The meeting will be organized jointly between the Arab Caucus and the International Office.

Points in the Program Document not Achieved in 2004

Regional Meeting to Develop the Capacities of CSOs in the Arab Region on the Regional Campaign for MDGs

(Second Half of 2004)

ANND had indicated in its plan the organization of a meeting to be held at the end of 2004 in order to build the capacities of civil society organizations in the Arab region. The meeting would have been in the context of the regional campaign for MDGs. This goal was partially reached in the strategic planning workshop held in April 2004. Therefore, another meeting was not seen as necessary.

A preparatory regional meeting for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (Millennium +5) on the evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of the MDGs after 5 years of its launch.

End of 2004

The preparatory regional meeting was not held because ANND aims at holding a preparatory meeting in mid-2005 to evaluate the achieved progress on one hand and to prepare for the Millennium +5 Summit on the other hand.



Activities from various arab countries during the opening of the second Moroccan Social Forum, 27-29 July 2004

Globalization and Trade Program

A meeting parallel to the Arab Summit-Tunisia

14-16 March 2004

The annual Arab Summit took on a special significance and importance this year following an increasingly active debate on reforms and democratization initiatives in the Arab region. ANND has been active in initiating the Arab Civil Forum, held at the occasion of the Arab Summit meeting in Beirut in 2002. This forum marked a change in so far as Arab CSOs decided to monitor the implementation of official positions, using this as a form of advocacy, pressure, and participation. This is highly significant since the Arab League is embarking on a restructuring and reform process that could mean an opportunity for Arab CSOs to strengthen their role within the Arab League.

ANND proposed this parallel meeting based on the importance of following up on the initiative that was launched through the Arab Civil Forum as well as enhancing the input of Arab civil society organizations

in the discussions on reforms in the Region. The meeting was organized in collaboration with the Arab Institute for Human Rights and the Tunisian League for Human Rights, ANND's members in Tunisia.

The meeting was held under the title "Enhancing the Role of Arab CSOs in the Process of Reforming the Arab League", between the 14th and 16th of March 2004. It was supposed to take place in parallel to the Arab Summit; however the Summit was postponed until May 2004. The meeting gathered several civil society representatives and experts on issues of reform, democratization, and the Arab league. It was an initiative to energize the involvement of Arab CSOs in the reform process. It also served as a venue for Arab CSOs to elaborate their recommendations regarding the issues of the Arab Summit meeting during 2004, which included:

- The Palestinian question.
- The situation in Iraq.
- Reforming and restructuring the Arab League.

- The Greater Middle East.

In this regard, the meeting was divided into five main themes, including:

1. The interest of civil society in reforming the Arab League.
2. The relationship between the Arab League and Arab civil society, reality and prospects.
3. Discussion of the Greater Middle East Initiative.
4. Analysis of the reform process of the Arab Charter of Human Rights.
5. The responsibilities of Arab civil society towards Iraq and Palestine.

Preparatory meeting for the Arab Social Forum (ArSF)

Office of the Arab NGO Network for Development

4 April 2004, Beirut, Lebanon

ANND called for a meeting for the follow-up committee of the Arab Social Forum on the 4th of April 2004. ANND is a member of the follow-up committee, which was established after several preparatory meetings regarding the ArSF that took place the World Social Forum 2004 in Mumbai. The committee includes 13 regional networks

and organizations involved in the process of the ArSF. During the WSF meetings, the follow-up committee had agreed to hold a preparatory meeting to discuss the progress in the preparatory processes and to further elaborate the concept paper of the ArSF.

The meeting was attended by 14 representatives of several members of the follow-up committee. In total, 7 out of the 13 member organizations of the follow-up committee were present, including the Tunisian League for Human Rights, Moroccan Social Forum, Sudanese Social Forum, Palestinian NGO Network, Collective of NGOs in Lebanon, the Coordination Forum of the NGOs Working among the Palestinian Community in Lebanon, in addition to ANND.

Participants in the meeting highlighted and discussed national processes and preparations for the ArSF. Representatives from each of Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, and Sudan presented their preparations on the national levels and the challenges they face. The agenda of the meeting also included the issues of youth participation in the ArSF, the relationship of political parties to the social forums, the preparations for a regional meeting for Arab civil society organizations in parallel to the World Economic Forum in Jordan, and

the concept of the ArSF and its background. Participants also highlighted the outcomes of the meeting held in Tunisia in parallel to the Arab Summit, organized by the Tunisian League for Human Rights in coordination with ANND.

The meeting was declared an informal consultation meeting for the follow-up committee of the ArSF, given that not all 13 members of the committee were present. Extensive and informative discussions were undertaken regarding the expectations from the ArSF, the proposed activities within the framework of preparations for the ArSF, and the role of various groups within the proposed forum. Presentations of national preparations were an informative exchange of ideas among the participants. The meeting was an opportunity for members of the follow-up committee to discuss several issues that were important for the progress of the ArSF preparations, such as the role of political parties and funding.

As a result of the meeting, the following decisions were taken:

- Preparing a research paper on the Arab Social Movement.
- Circulating the main discussion points from the meeting to all members of the follow-up committee.

- Continuing preparations for the meeting parallel to the World Economic Forum.
- Developing the process of mobilizing youth within the framework of the ArSF.

Regional Seminar Parallel to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Jordan Regency Hotel 14-15 May 2004, Amman, Jordan

The WEF has been gathering in Davos annually since 1973. It brings together representatives from the private and the public sectors from around the world to debate the global economic agenda. The WEF in Jordan is part of the process of the Davos Forum. It tackles the regional economic agenda and various economic issues. The World Social Forum (WSF) first convened to represent the perspective of the global social movement on the issues of the WEF. Later, the WSF became independent of the agenda of the WEF although it still tackles its issues. The two meetings are organized during the same period of every year.

In 2004, the WEF in Jordan gathered businesses and governments from the region in a process that focused on implementing policy reform. The debates focused on

four key areas:

- Partnering for Regional Reform.
- Defining the Business Agenda.
- Transitioning Iraq – Iraq Revisited.
- The Global Agenda: Impact on the Region.

Consequently, it was essential that Arab civil society organizations follow this meeting and provide an alternative perspective on the issues of the WEF agenda, especially as they are in the process of preparing for the Arab Social Forum.

ANND, in coordination with the Jordanian Women Union (JWU), organized a seminar in parallel to the Jordan WEF. The seminar was held a day prior to summit for the purposes of attaining enough media coverage.

The permission for holding the seminar was issued by the Jordanian government just four weeks before its proposed date. This raised several difficulties regarding logistics. It did not leave enough time, for many of the invitees, to get visas to Jordan. Others had difficulties with booking their agendas. The meeting gathered around 75 participants from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen, Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. However, no international participants joined the meeting. In addition, several

participants declined from participation, including assigned panel speakers.

The seminar tackled the issues of the WEF agenda as well as the regional and global trade agreements including the World Trade Organization; the Euro-Mediterranean partnership agreement; bilateral trade agreements with the United States; Arab regional trade; the economy of Iraq and its accession into the WTO; and the role of CSOs in enhancing the relevancy of the trade agreements to the needs of the locals; among other issues.

The meeting highlighted the various perspectives of Arab and Jordanian civil society organizations regarding important issues of the Arab Social forum: funding, regional and global partnership, objectives of the forum, etc. It clarified the debates present in the Jordanian society and between CSOs, especially regarding issues of globalization, relationship to international organizations and processes, and the role civil society in Arab countries.

Media coverage was not as expected, given that all local, regional, and international media groups had to mobilize their main capacities to cover the WEF in the Dead Sea. Media groups were asked to be in the Dead Sea from the 14th of May. Accordingly, the organizers of the seminar

called for a press conference on the 18th of May 2004 to present the final declaration resulting from the seminar. It was relatively comprehensive and covered the issues included in the agreed-upon evaluation indicators.

Moroccan Social Forum

27-29 July 2004, Rabat-Moroc

The second Moroccan Social Forum met in Rabat between 27 and 29 July 2004, after it was organized for the first time in 2003 in Bouznika. The agenda of the Forum covered issues of neo-liberal globalization and human development, women's rights, geopolitical changes, democracy and public freedoms, the cultural dimensions, the environment and sustainable development, migration, and the dynamics of the Arab social movement. The MSF 2004 hosted the 1st Moroccan Youth Social Forum. The MSF also hosted several cultural and artistic events and an open space for participants to exhibit materials that represent their own background, organization, country, issue, etc.

ANND participated in the MSF through organizing the participation of a group of 30 Arab activists, including 13 young participants, from 10 Arab countries. In addition,

ANND organized two conferences and three workshops:

- Conference on the "Future of the Arab Social Movement".
- Workshop on "Mainstreaming Youth Issues in the Millennium Development Goals Campaign".
- Conference on "Palestine, Iraq, and the Greater Middle East Initiative".
- Workshop on the "Impact of War on Youth".
- Workshop on the "Crisis in Darfur, Sudan".
- Discussion circle on the Arab Social Forum.

ANND organized two of the five activities, including the conference on the "Future of the Arab Social Movement" and the workshop on "Mainstreaming Youth Issues in the Millennium Development Goals Campaign", in partnership with the Heinrich Boll Foundation. The latter supported the participation of an ANND delegation of 30 persons, including travel, accommodation, and per diem.

“The Future of the Arab Social Movement”

The conference highlighted and discussed issues surfacing as main challenges and controversies in the discussions held around the Arab Social Forum (ArSF). It was a follow-up for several discussion meetings that ANND had organized around issues and dynamics related to the Arab social movement. Since 2002, ANND has been involved with various Arab groups in launching the preparatory process for the organization of the Arab Social Forum (ArSF) itself.

The workshop included three presentations:

- The first presentation was on political parties within civil society, highlighting the role of civil society organizations and that of political parties and their relationship in the Arab region. This presentation was given by Ms. Niamat Koko, a civil society activist and researcher from the Sudan Gender Center for Research and Development.
- The second presentation explored the partnerships within civil society, the role of international civil society organizations in the Region, and their relationship with other local and regional civil society organizations. The presentation was given by Mr. Izzeddine El- Asbahi

from the Yemeni Human Rights Information and Training Center.

- The third presentation was given by Dr. Allam Jarrar from the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), who spoke about the experience of Palestinian civil society organizations. His presentation focused on four main issues: historical background of the social movement, the implication of the social conditions on the institutions of civil society, the situation and reality in the Palestinian society, and the opportunities for progress.

“Mainstreaming Youth Issues in the MDGs Campaign”

As declared at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, the MDGs are a set of eight goals that tackle poverty, education, AIDS, health, women’s participation, environmental sustainability, and global partnerships for development. The global MDGs campaign is currently at the forefront of worldwide campaigns for development. Accordingly, 189 countries from around the world, including all Arab countries, are committed to the realization of the eight goals by 2015. In the Arab

Region, there is a growing recognition of the importance of mobilizing efforts and resources within the framework of a regional MDGs strategy that aims at answering to the needs of various Arab countries and populations.

ANND organized this workshop to highlight the importance of youth participation in the process of achieving the MDGs. The workshop gathered young activists from various Arab countries, including Palestine, Syria, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Sudan, Yemen, Bahrain, Iraq, and Jordan.

The workshop was part of an overall approach that ANND has adopted, aiming at mobilizing and strengthening youth participation and involvement in various campaigns and processes of civil society in the Arab region. Along with discussing issues related to the MDGs, the workshop served as a chance to highlight the importance of mobilizing youth on various development issues in the Region, such as the processes of the Arab Social Forum.

Three main presentations were given during the workshop;

- “The Situation of Arab Youth and their Expected Role in Development”, by Mr. Redwan Bou Joumaa from the Algerian Institute for Human Rights.

- “Good Governance and the Role of Youth in Enhancing Policy Making”, by Mr. Issam Khoury from the Syrian Cultural and Environmental Training Center.

- “Mechanisms for Organizing and Mobilizing Youth within the MDGs Campaign”, by Ms. Leila El Wadi, a young Moroccan reporter and activist.

Other participants gave brief interventions on their experiences and the various youth programs in the region. The workshop was an opportunity to highlight the situation and conditions for youth in the Arab region and present statistics related to that matter. Moreover, the discussion went over the main obstacles for the progress of the role of youth in the Arab countries. Consequently, more focus was put on the role of youth in the MDGs campaign.

Participants concluded the workshop by noting down a set of recommendations based on the discussions they held.

The workshop served as an important opportunity to enhance the understanding of youth organization in the Arab region and mechanisms of working together on a regional level. It helped ANND better understand its proposed regional youth project. In addition, it opened

the way for enhanced networking and exchange between the participating youth. An e-discussion yahoo group (youths_mdgs@yahoogroups.com) was launched as a means for maintaining contact and collaboration between youth groups involved in the meeting. It has also been expanding to include more youth from various Arab countries.

“Impact of War on Youth”

The workshop included three presentations by Ms. Rana Kamel from Iraq, Ms. Haya Gaith from the Palestinian NGO Network, and Mr. Mohammad Jaber from the Youth Center for Training and Resources in Lebanon. The workshop was moderated by Mr. Ahmed Abdurrahman from the Palestinian Student Committee in Quebec.

The first presentation by Rana Kamel focused on the current situation in Iraq and the security problem limiting the activities of civilians in general. She talked about the misconduct of the US forces and its impact on the lives of young Iraqis. Ms. Kamel stressed on the problems facing Iraqi youth in attaining proper education.

The second presentation was given by Mohammad El Jaber who spoke about the situation of the Palestinian refugees in general, focusing on the conditions in Lebanon where he currently resides. He spoke on the situation in the camps and their inhabitants, focusing on access to services.

The third presentation was given by Ms. Haya Gaith from Palestine. She pointed to the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and the impact of the wall being built by the Israeli government. She also highlighted issues related to the right of return. Ms. Gaith focused on the conditions of youth in Palestine, saying that many factors have a significant impact on their development, including;

1. Political aggression: Palestinian youths are deprived of their basic rights.
2. Cultural aggression: there are consistent attempts to fight the national identity of the Palestinians and to impose the foreign Israeli ways on the Palestinian society

“Crisis in Darfur, Sudan”

ANND organized a briefing session on the Darfur crisis as a parallel event during the MSF. The session aimed at presenting a briefing on the background and root causes of the conflict, and to look into the strategic implications on the Region as well as the expected role of Arab civil society in this regard. The session was chaired by Mr. Kassem Aina from the “Coordinating Committee for NGOs working among the Palestinian Communities in Lebanon”. It included two presentations by Dr. Hassan Abdel Ati from the “Sudanese Civil Forum” and Ms. Niamat Koko from the “Sudanese Gender Center for Research and Development”.

Dr. Hassan Abdel Ati presented a historical overview of the Darfur region starting from the “Fur Sultanate”: the first Islamic Sultanate in Africa. This discredits some claims that the conflict is between Muslims and non Muslims. He continued to the present day situation. The socio-economic, political and cultural characteristics of the region were also highlighted, with emphasis on the two main population groups: pastoralists and farmers.

Mrs. Niamat Koko presented the position of the Sudanese civil society which views the conflict as basically “resource based”. She indicated that all attempts to present it as

a conflict between Arabs and non-Arabs or Muslims and-non Muslims are simply not acceptable. Within the framework of diversity in Sudan, it is very difficult to draw these lines, but unfortunately the international community seems to advocate these divisions. Mrs. Koko drew light on the atrocities being committed during this conflict especially regarding human rights abuses by all factions towards women and the systematic rape which takes place.

The discussion that followed concentrated on the role of Arab civil society organizations in helping to resolve this crisis, as well as the regional and international dimensions of the conflict.

Discussion Circle on Issues of the Arab Social Forum

Based on the recommendations of the meetings of the Arab participants at the World Social Forum in 2003 regarding the preparations for the Arab Social Forum (ArSF), ANND called for a discussion circle for Arab civil society participants in the MSF to discuss issues of the Arab Social Forum and its process of preparations. The meeting gathered interested and involved participants

from various Arab civil society organizations including members of the ArSF follow-up committee.

The meeting included a brief by Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad on the progress achieved till now in the process of preparations for the Forum, and the complexities and problematic areas that have risen throughout. Participants presented their perspectives on the importance of the Arab Social Forum and the process of mobilizing towards this aim.

National Consultations on the Arab Social Movement

Yemen, Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan, and Egypt

In the process of preparations for the Arab Social Forum (ArSF), national social forums or smaller national consultations have been planned in Morocco, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Bahrain, Lebanon, Algeria, Tunisia, and Sudan. The Moroccan and Palestinian social forums are already under way since 2003. There are also ongoing preparations for the Egyptian and Tunisian forums, while the rest of the countries are in the process of discussions.

Accordingly, and within the process of enhancing debate around the Arab social movement and possible mechanisms for organizing the Arab social forum, ANND

proposed launching national consultations in various Arab countries, which would bring together national civil society members, NGOs from other Arab countries, as well as international organizations. The aim of such consultations was to establish a participatory approach within Arab civil society debates and establish more developed venues of communication and cooperation between ANND members and non-member Arab CSOs. As proposed, the consultations would cover the different working areas of ANND members, including social development, gender, and human rights, as well as sustainable development, globalization and trade, and democracy. Moreover, the consultations would cover issues more specific to the Arab region, such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Iraqi post war developments, and the violation of human rights.

The process of preparations for the ArSF witnessed several complexities throughout the year. They hindered the ability to organize an effective series of national consultations in this regards. However, ANND worked towards achieving this activity through linking the debate on the Arab social movement to the most important developmental and social issues covered by CSOs in various Arab countries. Accordingly, ANND organized two national consultations in each of Bahrain and Sudan. The consultation in Bahrain took more of a regional aspect since it gathered organizations from other Gulf

countries. Moreover, scheduled at the beginning of 2005, two other consultations will take place in each of Sudan and Egypt. The consultations were delayed due to logistical matters.

The regional consultation in Bahrain was organized on the 25th of November 2004, by the committee of ANND members in Bahrain, which includes Awal Women Society, the Bahraini Young Women Group, the Bahraini Society for Sociologist, the Bahraini Association for Human Rights, and the Bahraini Society for Economists. Participants in the meeting came from several countries in the Gulf region including the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain. In addition, several UNDP personnel attended the consultations.

In Yemen, a national consultation was organized in partnership with the Human Rights Information and Training Center, between the 29th and 30th of November. The workshop brought together representatives of concerned Yemeni organizations, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Social affairs, and Ministry of Planning.

Both in Bahrain and in Yemen, the agenda focused on the role of Arab civil society organizations in enhancing the social movement, with an emphasis on their role in development and the MDGs campaign.

The meetings aimed at discussing the role of civil society organizations and social movements in contributing to policy-making procedures and monitoring of the implementation of national policies. Accordingly, discussions highlighted the role of CSOs in the Millennium Development Goals campaign and how this will impact their overall role in society as engines for change.

Specifically, participants discussed the challenges and opportunities that face CSOs and social movements in the region. They highlighted the role of civil society organizations in monitoring governments' commitment to the achievement of the MDGs.

In Bahrain, presentations concentrated on the need to review the development process in the gulf countries, which is today based on imbalanced economic growth due to the reliance on oil. This causes a situation of unsustainable development in the region. Moreover, participants presented on the role of CSOs in following up the commitment of governments to the social and economic rights of their citizens.

In the Yemeni meeting, presentations discussed the general role of the Yemeni NGOs: providing services and contributing to local development, such as fighting human poverty and unemployment; providing job opportunities, health and educational services; as well as contributing to limiting the impact of socio-economic, political, and

cultural inequalities. The presentations also discussed the relationship and partnership between Yemeni civil society organizations and governmental bodies and the expectations regarding achieving the MDGs by 2015. There was a note from the representative of the Minister of Planning acknowledging that expectations show that Yemen will only succeed on achieving goals no' 2 and no' 3, since all the available data shows bad indicators for the progress so far.

ANND's executive director participated in the meetings by presenting a regional perspective on the importance of the relationship between mobilizing civil society organizations in the MDGs campaign and strengthening the social movement in the Arab region.

As a result of the meetings, several issues were noted as critical factors regarding the role of Arab CSOs in enhancing social movements in the Region, including:

- The importance of organizing a broad-based grassroots campaigns to bring the issues to the public. Such campaigns would be based on building partnerships and achieving collaborations among civil society organizations (unions, local NGOs, etc.).
- The efforts of civil society organizations in networking with the governmental bodies, ministries, UN agencies, and UNDP offices to draw a collaborative development

work plan, implement it, and monitor the process of its implementation.

- The work of civil society organizations in monitoring official data and reports and even producing shadow reports, such as shadow reports on the implementation process of the MDGs.
- The human efforts invested towards facing globalization challenges, especially given the increasing significance and importance of the presence of social movements on the international, regional and local levels. Accordingly, the capacities of civil society organizations should be enhanced, as well as the presence of an enabling healthy environment, with democratic transparent practices and good governance.
- The importance of a strong media to cover the work and activities of CSOs, build public opinion, and bring the discussed issues to the public.
- Providing the enabling environment for CSOs to perform their role including a proper legal framework that upholds their rights as well as their duties.



Workshop on "Impact of War in Youth" organized as part of the Youth Moroccan Social Forum, 27-29 July 2004

Democracy Program

Two Workshops in Coordination with the Heinrich Boll Foundation

Civil Society from an Arab Perspective:

the Experiences and Challenges of Iraq and the Region 15-16 October 2004

The workshop was held between 15 and 16 October 2004. It focused on the various concepts of civil society; its challenges in the Arab region; and the situation imposed by occupation and conflict in Iraq, Palestine, and Algeria. The workshop highlighted issues related to Islam and Islamists and their understanding of civil society; the effect of funding on the role of CSOs; and the relationship between NGOs and political parties. This is in addition to highlighting the efforts of Iraqi organizations and the different concepts of Iraqi civil society, its challenges and needs.

Participants in the workshop included 30 researchers, professors, and activists from Iraq, Palestine, Syria,

Jordan, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Lebanon. The third day was for Iraqi participants. The workshop concluded with the following recommendations:

- Teaching civil society in universities.
- Building capacities and implementing a project on democracy: establishing common links between CSOs.
- Holding a specialized workshop on the issues at hand.
- Evaluating the needs based on the experience of civil society in armed conflicts.
- Focusing on the process of cooperation with Iraq.
- Creating a program document to train trainers for Iraq and establish a center for NGOs.
- Holding a meeting with Iraqi participants to create a program document as a basis for real strategic planning.
- Creating a network in Iraq.
- Researching the possibilities of empowering organizations to perform better and on participatory

principles, starting with the current participants and including other researches in the future.

- Coordination between ANND and the Arab Institute.

Legal Framework for NGOs

13-14 December 2004

The workshop was in coordination with the Arab Initiative for Freedom of Association. It included a general presentation on the declaration of principles and criteria for the freedom of association in the Arab world: internal administration of NGOs, funding and its role, and partnership with the public sector. It then highlighted the laws governing political parties and unions in the Arab world and presented case studies from Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Syria, Morocco, Bahrain, and Jordan.

Regarding the functioning of CSOs, the workshop discussed the influence on of international and regional blocks, their organizational structures, and their effect on Arab laws.

The workshop concluded with several recommendations, implementation mechanisms, and a plan of action. It was

a first step towards motivating the function and role of NGOs, political parties, unions, and other components on Arab civil society through lobbying for more democratic legislation.

Following are some of the recommendations:

- Holding a workshop on Iraq attended by activists with previous experiences and legal experts.
- Creating an Arab observatory for the freedom of association; since this initiative includes a monitoring aspect, it should add the cases of Iraq, the Gulf States, and other countries to its proposed publication.
- Establishing a center for NGOs to provide services, office space, and help for newly established organizations.
- Holding a workshop for lawyers specialized in association laws.

The main recommendation was to encourage ANND to propose a law for associations in Iraq, in coordination with experts and activists from Arab countries and representatives of Iraqi CSOs. Iraqi CSOs will lobby for the adoption of the proposal.

The 3rd day, focusing on Iraqi participants, included training on advocacy campaigns with specific strategies and goals, with a focus on electoral campaigns.

Project Planning on the Role of Civil Society in Building Democracy

ANND conducted a project planning on the role of civil society organizations in the processes of enhancing democratic practices. ANND's involvement on this issue was discussed along two main axes:

A- Situation of CSOs:

- a. Legal framework governing the functioning of CSOs—law off association in Arab countries.
- b. Internal challenges to the functioning of CSOs, especially those that lead to their weakness and inability to build democracy.

B- Analysis of the relationship of media with civil society: how to transform media into a tool to serve civil society, how to use media to raise the awareness of CSO staff and individuals, and how to encourage citizens to participate in activities organized by CSOs.

ANND will follow-up the implementation of the following UN conventions: CESC, ICCPR, the CRC, CEDAW, and CAT. As a first step, ANND collected the texts of the agreements, the status of each agreement in each Arab country, their reservations and reasons, and defined reporting mechanisms for each agreement.

Capacity Building of ANND Executive Staff

Kinda Mohammadieh and Ryan Majed, from ANND's executive office participated in training courses in Yemen and Portugal.

The first workshop was organized by the Center for Information and Training on Human Rights in Yemen. It was a practical introduction to political, civil, economic, social, and cultural rights, in addition to human rights from a developmental perspective. Participants were also trained on the implementation mechanisms of relevant agreement.

The second workshop, organized by “Global Dignity” in coordination with Social Watch, focused specifically on social, economic, and cultural rights, to give them equal standing with civil and political rights.

The two training courses developed the teamwork techniques of participants and strengthened their knowledge and skills.

Elections

In the first half of 2004, ANND continued the program started in the previous year in coordination with the

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). The program, aiming to suggest ideas for reform, studies democracy in 3 Arab countries: Yemen, Jordan, and Egypt and included research on electoral systems and the participation of women and political parties.

Several case studies were presented in two workshops: the first in Jordan and the second in Egypt. They focused on the following issues:

- Administration of elections in Yemen
- Political parties and elections in Egypt.
- Participation of women in Jordanian elections.
- Media and elections in Jordan.
- Tribalism and elections in Yemen.
- Minorities and elections in Egypt.
- Women's quota in elections.
- The role of money in Lebanese elections.
- Electoral monitoring: the case of Morocco.
- National reconciliation and elections in Bahrain.
- Islamists and elections in Tunisia.
- Media and elections in Lebanon.

ANND coordinated the translation of all the studies from

Arabic into English. It also produced two detailed reports of the 2 workshops and translated them, in the aim publishing 7 bilingual books.

ANND renewed the partnership agreement with IDEA in the second half of 2003 to work on the Election Process Information Collection Project to fill out the forms related to electoral issues in 10 Arab countries: Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Bahrain, and Yemen, and uploaded them on www.epicproject.org.

Three researchers, Riva Mattar, Bernadette Daou, and Rayan Majed, under the supervision of the general coordination of the project, Marwan Saker, fill out 5 questionnaires on the following issues: direct democracy, media and elections, electoral management bodies, technology and elections, and fairness of elections.

Concerning the goal of capacity building, IDEA invited Rayan Majed to participate in a training workshop on electoral techniques organized by BRIDGE in South Africa.

Reform Projects and Initiatives in the Arab World

During the Last years, numerous papers were published on reform initiatives in the Arab region. This these discussed the US initiative for a Greater Middle East and the European initiative, as well as Arab initiatives. It dealt with Arab reactions to the initiatives and focused on the role of civil society in reform processes. ANND used these papers as a basis for its projects; they will be the basis for ANND's program in the following years.

ANND presented a **proposal to the Dutch government to encourage and support democratic progress in the Arab region**. The project aims to stimulate dialogue between Arab CSOs and governments on the local and regional levels on democratic projects in the area. It also aims to stimulate similar regional dialogue between Arab countries.

During the conference on **“Global Democracy: the Visions of Civil Society and its Strategies” organized by the Montreal International Forum**, ANND will coordinate the first theme on the challenges of civil society and changing regional priorities.

The OECD and UNDP organized a conference to launch the regional program on good governance for

development. The conference was organized on the Dead Sea in cooperation with the Jordanian Ministry of Justice. ANND was invited to participate in the conference that resulted in the recommendation for organizing a workshop for civil society to outline their positions and the mechanisms for participation in the reform projects.

The UNDP will organize a conference on the nascent democracies to be held in Qatar in 2006. ANND will organize the parallel civil society forum.

ANND was also invited to participate in **the regional preparations of the international conference on democratic communities to be held in Chile in 2005**. The meeting was held in Qatar and organized by the Ministry of Exterior and Freedom House in coordination with the Arab Institute for Human Rights and PANORAMA (in Palestine). The network participated through the Bahrain member the board of directors and will be involved in the summit itself next May.

Solidarity Campaigns

ANND organized activities in solidarity with the Palestinian and Iraqi people on several occasions. Solidarity activities this year were practical and far from traditional. They aimed to provide qualitative input in facing the challenges and building a true solidarity movement. ANND organized the following activities on the issue in 2004:

1. Solidarity with the Palestinian People

- a. ANND organized a civil society meeting in coordination with ESCWA, the Palestinian National Authority, and the Arab League. This was in preparation for the International Arab Forum to Support Palestinians for Development. More than 80 persons representing various sectors from different Arab countries participated in the meeting, in addition to experts.
- b. ANND participated in organizing the International and Arab Forum to Support Development in Palestine in coordination with ESCWA, the PNA, and the Arab League. ANND organized a side event workshop attended by 200 persons who approved a paper prepared by ANND members in Palestine. It includes an action plan and recommendations to enhance cooperation between Arab and Palestinian organizations.
- c. ANND organized an activity week that has become an annual event in solidarity with the Palestinians, especially refugees. This event will take place every September to commemorate the Sabra and Chatila massacres in collaboration with Assafir Beirut Daily and the Italian newspaper, Il Manifesto, in addition to the Coordination Committee for NGOs working in Palestinian Communities in Lebanon. Participants included delegations from European countries, especially Italy, Spain, and France. It involved field visits to the Palestinian camps and political and governmental actors, as well as cultural activities carried out by European and Palestinian bands and troupes, in addition to art and Palestinian traditional crafts exhibitions.

d. ANND contributed to supporting and empowering participants from the Palestinian civil society in the West Bank, Gaza, and the Diaspora in many international conferences and forums. This was in the aim of creating visibility to the just cause they represent.

CSOs in many international conferences and forums, to allow them present their experiences, challenges, and issues.

2. Solidarity with Iraq

a. ANND, in coordination with the UNDP is preparing a 1½ year program to build the capacity of Iraqi civil society through a program that encourages exchange of experiences and empowering Iraqi experts from different ages, sectors, and regions. The project also aims to create a resource and information center in Baghdad to support civil society.

b. ANND, in coordination with the Heinrich Böll Foundation, organized two expert workshops. The first was on the “Challenges of Civil Society in Arab Countries” with a special focus on Iraq, and attended by representatives of Arab and Iraqi organizations. The second was on the “Legal Framework for Civil Society Organizations” in coordination with the Arab Initiative for the Freedom of Associations.

c. ANND contributed to support the participation of Iraqi

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Minutes of the ANND Board of Directors Meeting Rabat, 30 July 2004

Participants:

Amina Zo'bi: Jordanian Women's Union

Mohammad Saleh Sallougha: Al-Amal Association-Algeria

Sayyed Abdel 'Al: National Organization for Human Rights

Anas El-Hasnaoui, Abdel Hamid El Kam, Othman Makhoun:
Espace Associatif-Morocco

Abdel Nabi El-Ekri: Bahraini Association for Human Rights

Kassem Aina: Coordinating Committee for NGOs Working in
the Palestinian Communities in Lebanon

Izzat Abdel Hadi: Palestinian NGO Network-Ramallah

Ziad Abdel Samad, Kinda Mohammadih: Arab NGO
Network for Development-Executive Office

Halima Joueidi: Tunisian Association for Democratic Women

Absent:

Khaled El-Mohtar (excused): Lebanese NGO Collective

Fawzia Abdallah (no longer the coordinator): Coordinating
Committee for Yemeni NGOs for the Rights of Children

Jamal Jawahiri (excused): Iraqi Al-Amal Association

The meeting was presided by the host organization,
Espace Associatif, represented by Abdel Hamid El-Kam.
He initiated the proceedings with a welcoming address
and the presentation of the orders of the day:

1. Preparing for the General Assembly
 - a. Approving the documents:
 - i. Annual report
 - ii. Financial report
 - iii. Future action plans
 - iv. Evaluation reports
 - v. Membership reports
 - b. Membership issues

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2. Arab social forum
 3. Miscellaneous activities:
 - a. Palestine
 - i. Arab International Forum for Rehabilitation and Development of Occupied Palestinian Territories
 - ii. Commemorating the Sabra and Chatila massacres
 4. World Summit on the Information Society
 5. Millennium Development Goals
 6. Democracy
 7. Forum on Global Governance (G05)
 8. Chili conference on democracy
 9. Democracy program with “No Peace without Justice”, the European Union
 10. Iraq program
 11. Workshops:
 - a. Civil society
 - b. Legal Framework
 - c. The World Bank and the IMF
 - d. Security, peace, and development

1. Preparing for the General Assembly

General Assembly documents were distributed at the beginning of the year, and then redistributed by email along with the invitation to the meeting.

The **Executive Director** of ANND provided a quick presentation of the main points in the meeting. He stressed on the main achievements of the network in the past years, focusing on international coalitions formed by the network to increase visibility and efficiency in most international forums. He also contributed to formulating the vision and positions of some of those coalitions, such as Social Watch, the Third World Network; Our World is Not for Sale coalition, and Civicus.

He presented the proceedings of the strategic planning meeting held at the end of last year, and which recommended an action plan for ANND. The plan was elaborated in program and action plan, especially on the following issues: development, trade, and democracy.

The director also introduced the problems concerning membership. He stressed that the issue be discussed by board. The latter created a committee to propose a framework for membership and a working plan. The committee is comprised of Abdel Hamid El-Kam

(revision of the internal statutes), Salaheddine El-Jourchi (presenting a report on membership), Izzat Abdel Hadi (re-writing the vision and program), and the Executive Director (coordinator of the plan).

He then presented the results of the questionnaire filled by 25% of the members. The answers showed a gap between the membership and the board of the network. This is a challenge that has to be overcome to develop the work of ANND. This was followed by a discussion on the support and services that will be provided by the executive office through the establishment of a resource and information center.

Mrs. **Amina Zo'bi (Jordanian Women's Union-JWU)** then pointed to the fact that the activities of ANND did not have an impact on the members outside the executive office. She said that it is necessary to expand the base of the network membership and create more coalitions, based on set criteria. She also congratulated the work of the executive office although the members of the coordinating committee are not involved enough in its work.

Mr. Izzat Abdel Hadi (Palestinian NGO Network-PNGO) indicated that the objective of ANND is to empower civil society. This should be in parallel with the network's

global work and building international coalitions. He suggested the following:

- * Research on reform projects.
- * In-depth analysis of the issue of religion and the "war against terrorism".
- * Propose issues related to peace, security, and stability.

He stressed the importance of working on a strategy to organize the relationship between members, the executive office, and the coordinating committee. This should include formulating ANND's general policy and ensuring that activities fall within its mission and the agreed-upon vision. The executive office needs to guarantee the implementation of policies without interfering with the work of the members. Terms of reference for the executive office and its staff should be formulated.

Concerning membership, Mr. Abdel Hadi added that the difference of the various types of members, networks, social movements, and NGOs should be looked into.

Mr. **Abdel Nabi El-Ekri (Bahraini Association for Human Rights)** pointed to the necessity of establishing criteria for membership. Mr. Salaheddine El-Jourchi (**Tunisian League for the Defense of Human Rights**) thought that ANND has seen qualitative progress,

although there are two main gaps: the first is between its Arab and international roles, and the second is between its leadership and its members. He concluded with the necessity of finding criteria for member participation and the creation and training of cadres. He suggested that the seminar on the “legal framework” be held in Tunis, to support LTDDH.

Mrs. **Halima Joueidi (Tunisian Democratic Women’s League)** asked that members should be in charge of organizing the meetings and that their involvement should not only be in the General Assembly.

Mr. **Sayyed Abdel Aal (National Association for Human Rights-Egypt)** saw that the flaws are due to the members, and not necessarily the performance of the executive office. He suggested supporting the role of youth in ANND.

Mr. **Mohammad Saleh Sallougha (Al-Amal Social Association-Algeria)** asked that ANND holds a meeting in Algeria on “Peace, Security, and Development. He supported the calls for a clear vision and criteria for membership.

Mr. **Kassem Aina (Coordinating Committee for NGOs working in the Palestinian Communities in Lebanon)**

reminded the meeting that the executive director was chosen by the General Assembly and not the Coordinating Committee. He has been given directives through his contract with the network. The Executive Director signs contracts with donors, and thus he is responsible for implementation and communications with them. He concluded by saying that membership should be restricted to networks and associations.

Mrs. **Amina Zo’bi** then indicated that ANND cannot just be restricted to the members of the Coordinating Committee. Members should have a fundamental role and position, and that many organizations are willing to become members. She pointed to the fact that members of the Coordinating Committee have responsibility towards their respective country, but this should not be exclusive to them. Activities should be undertaken after consultations. As for the executive office and its mandate towards implementation, she saw that this issue has been decided, but some criteria should be set so as not to go beyond the vision and objectives of ANND.

Mr. **Othman Makhoun (Espace Associatif)** pointed to the weakness of ANND’s website, since it is only in English. As for membership, he believes that they are the

strength of the network but we need to overcome the stiff rhetoric. He said that duplicity should not be allowed in membership to networks and that ANND should focus on its presence on the local levels.

Mr. **Anass Al-Hasnaoui (Espace Associatif)** suggested broad national consultations. He said the aforementioned questions were introduced since the establishment of ANND and that they should be resolved quickly.

Mr. **Kassem Aina** then spoke about the need for field visits among members. He suggested a committee from members of the executive office to elaborate practical suggestions for the General Assembly.

Miss **Kinda Mohammadih** then asked about the need for all members of the Coordinating Committee to participate in every activity of ANND. She pointed to the difficulties faced by the Executive Office in implementing the youth program, since it was not given importance by members of the committee. This delayed the activities on many occasions. On the other hand, communications between the Coordinating Committee and members, and sometimes with the Executive, are slow. In some cases, poor communications are an obstacle to work.

The **Executive Director** then clarified some points. The members of the Coordinating Committee are not elected as representatives of their countries, since they are elected in the General Assembly, and not all countries are represented. Members in the latter should be consulted.

He then spoke on the growth of the network's role regionally, as well as globally. An example is when ESCWA and the Arab League chose ANND to organize the International Forum on Palestine. UNDP also chose the network to run the regional campaign for the MDGs. This is in addition to the relationship with parliaments, where ANND participated in two Parliamentary meetings: the first in Beirut on accession to the WTO and the second in Morocco on MDGs. He also pointed to the fact that regional Prepcoms prior to international summits are considered regional meetings.

As for exchange of information between members, he spoke on the role of the network in giving the LTDDH the opportunity to be actively involved in the Preparatory Committee for the WSIS, held in Tunis in June 2004. The league had a very important contribution but it did not distribute a report on the issue, and thus ANND members were not informed.

He then spoke on ANND's vision and goals, and opportunities for their development. But this does not mean that they do not exist. The website for example has been developed, but running a multi-lingual website is a financial and administrative burden. Regarding this point, member's capacities have to be built to benefit fully from technology and enhance communications and networking abilities. The administrative burden in coordinating Arab participation in any international meeting is also very high, since members usually do not respect criteria, registration processed, or providing information. He then spoke about the need for commitment and the type of information being exchanged.

The Executive Director concluded by summarizing the presentations. He said that the goal of the network is to empower civil society and that the regional dimension should be given more priority. Then he pointed to the main priorities: issues of reform, debt, war, peace, security, and associations' rights. Organizationally, ANND should define the relationship between members, the coordinating committee, and the secretariat. He stressed on the necessity to focus on the quality of membership and to work on issues concerning women and youth. This is in addition to the need for broad national consultations in each country on the role of ANND.

The meeting then created a committee to follow-up preparations for the General Assembly comprising of: Abdel Hamid El-Kam, Izzat Abdel Hadi, Salaheddine El-Jourchi, Amina Zo'bi, and Ziad Abdel Samad. The committee will present a proposal for membership criteria and policy, suggest and verify new members, and propose amendments to the internal statutes of ANND.

2. Arab Social Forum:

The Executive Director presented a report on the Arab meeting held during the Moroccan Social Forum. It was a consultative meeting with no decision-making mandate and was held due to the request of Arab participants, and not as an ANND initiative. This was due to the sensitivity of ANND's strong presence although the network is aiming to diffuse the tensions. This will be through taking a back seat to preparations to the ArSF, especially since preparations are not complete. He reminded the participants of the main conclusions of the meeting: launching national forums, profiting from regional and international events to consult on the issue, and the right of any entity to organize consultations.

Mrs. Amina Zo’bi suggested going back to the Mumbai committee and supporting national forums. **Mr. Izzat Abdel Hadi** spoke about ANND’s interest in the forum and stressed that the network is focusing on content. In this respect, ANND should discuss issues such as EU initiatives, the greater Middle East, and reform projects. **Mr. Salaheddine El-Jourchi** suggested the formulation of a working paper on the current situations with practical recommendations. **Mr. Abdel Nabi El-Ekri** also stressed the need to activate the Mumbai committee. He was supported by **Mr. Anas Hasnaoui**. **Mr. Sayyed Abdel AI** pointed to the fact that the forum is not an ANND project but it falls under its mandate. There needs to be coordination with other parties and an effort to reduce tensions.

The discussion concluding by assigning Izzat Abdel Hadi to draft a working paper on the Arab Social Forum, including the position of ANND, its suggestions, and the proposed themes.

3. Miscellaneous Activities:

In conclusion of the meeting, the Executive Director presented the future activities of the network:

- Palestine:

*** The Arab Aid Forum for Rehabilitation and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories:**

ANND was nominated for the consultative committee of the forum and organized a preparatory meeting for civil society. The network will also attend the meeting of the private sector and of the funds (held in the beginning of September in Cairo during the meeting of the Arab League). ANND was also charged with organizing the cultural event parallel to the forum that will be held in Beirut at the end of September 2004.

* Commemorating the Sabra and Chatila Massacres: In collaboration with the Coordinating Committee for NGOs Working in the Palestinian Communities in Lebanon, ANND is organizing the yearly event in commemoration of the massacres. More than 100 participants are expected from Italy, Spain, France, the UK, the US, and Asia.

- World Summit on the Information Society:

* ANND is preparing a proposal to stimulate Arab participation in the preparatory process and the summit itself. This is in addition to initiating dialogue and the

exchange of information between the concerned parties. The organizers of the parallel civil society forum have asked ANND to play this part due to the weak Arab representation in the First Phase in Geneva.

- Millennium Development Goals:

* ANND is a focal point for the MDGs Campaign, but the campaign itself needs a broad coalition and participation. The executive director suggested inviting specialized networks to join the campaign, such as the People's Health Movement due to its role in coordinating medical relief in the Arab region (on goal #3 related to health); the Education Network coordinated by the Center for Teachers' Creativity (the goal relating to education); the Environmental Network on goal #7; and AISHA on the goal related to women. ANND will focus on the first goal related to poverty. A coalition between those networks might lead to a successful campaign with broad participation.

- Democracy:

* The Executive Director spoke on the great interest in the democratization and reform process in the region. This

should lead ANND to focus on the issue, especially on the following levels:

- The Montreal International Forum is organizing a **Forum on International Governance (G05)** on democracy and governance. ANND was asked to coordinate the theme related to regional blocks and the role of civil society.

* **The Chile Conference on Democracy:** participants from the Arab region are the Arab Institute for Human Rights and PANORAMA. ANND had contacted the initiators and is currently negotiating with them means to make the Arab participation more effective.

* **Democracy Program with "No Peace without Justice", the European Union:** ANND is participating through a committee to present the proposal to the European Union. The proposal is about democracy in the Arab world. The leadership of the committee is "No Peace without Justice". ANND will tackle the issue of elections if the project is approved.

- Iraq:

* ANND presented a project to UNDP to empower and support civil society in Iraq, in coordination with Iraqi Al-Amal Association.

- **Workshops:**

- * **Civil Society:** In coordination with the Heinrich Boll Foundation, ANND is preparing for a workshop on the concepts of civil society. Miss Zeina Halabi has been charged to prepare a concept paper to be the main point of discussion in the workshop. In addition, there will a discussion on the challenges to building a civil society in Iraq.
- * **Legal Framework:** ANND is preparing for a workshop on the legal framework for associations in the Arab world. We will suggest moving the workshop to Tunisia as requested by LTDDH and discuss the best mechanism to make it successful.
- * **The World Bank and the IMF:** ANND is in the process for looking for funding to organize a workshop on the policies of the WB and IMF and the issue of debt in the Arab region.
- * **Security, Peace, and Development:** As suggested by Social Al-Amal Association, we will need to prepare for this workshop and find financial resources.

The meeting was adjourned after the participants agreed on all the above suggestions.

ANNEX 2

Regional MDGs Campaign in the Arab Countries Strategic Planning Workshop

1-3 April 2003 - Beirut-Lebanon

The Arab countries had witnessed significant progress on issues of human development. However, the pace of change has decreased during the nineties. Most Arab countries have not been moving at the rates required for reaching their development goals and a few will be able to achieve their targets. In spite of the differences in human development requirements and conditions amongst various Arab countries and within each country, as well as the deterioration of social and economic conditions in the Arab Region, there is a vital need to elaborate a common regional strategy for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This strategy would enhance the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in monitoring the implementation of the goals by Arab governments and other responsible groups. Moreover, it will allow CSOs to pressure their governments to be accountable and to implement policies that serve the MDGs.

In view of that, the Arab NGO Network for Development

(ANND), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and under the patronage of the Minister of Economics and Trade, organized a strategic planning workshop that aimed at introducing the participants to mechanisms for managing a regional MDGs campaign, and at elaborating a strategy for launching the campaign in the Arab Region. The concept of this workshop stemmed from the importance of discussing the perspectives of Arab CSOs on issues of development in general and on the MDGs in specific, and the necessity of setting a common work plan that addresses their challenges and needs in this regards. It specifically aimed at addressing the means to strengthen the role of CSOs and their participation in regional and global processes of the MDGs.

The workshop was attended by CSO representatives from ten various Arab countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Sudan, Bahrain, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia, and Iraq), in addition to representatives of UNDP regional and local offices from Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sudan, Tunisia, Lebanon, and Syria. Moreover, several media representatives from Lebanon and Egypt were present in the workshop. (Please see attached the list of participants in the strategic planning meeting)

The workshop took place over a three day period. During the first day, participants presented reports from several Arab countries where the MDGs campaign has been already launched. Presentations covered the experiences of Tunisia, Sudan, and Lebanon in addition to experiences from Latin America and Asia. Participants from Morocco, Syria, Bahrain and Jordan also highlighted their experiences.

During the first day sessions, participants agreed on the importance of the real participation of civil society in advocating for the MDGs and monitoring its implementation in various Arab countries. Furthermore, they stressed that CSOs' role should not be limited to monitoring and advocacy; however they should be partners in identifying, developing, and localizing (adapting) the MDGs indicators. Discussions also covered the importance of partnership between various involved groups from civil society, the government, and the private sector, and their role regarding the MDGs and the means to foster the partnership between them.

In addition, participants in the first day sessions debated issues of local political commitments towards the MDGs, explaining that governments are usually not held responsible for such commitments. It was also highlighted

that quantitative indicators overshadow qualitative ones, and that there is a lack of the youth's perspectives and participation in MDGs policies. Moreover, participants noted that there is a lack of an updated and independent database on MDGs-related statistics, which presents a common weakness in most Arab countries.

Afterwards, participants moved on to discussing the work plans, which would be the basis for the regional campaign and means for achieving sustainable change in the Arab Region. Accordingly, the participants were divided into four groups based on the countries they belong to (the Mashrek group "Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan", the Maghreb group "Morocco and Tunisia", Gulf countries group "Bahrain, Kuwait, Yemen, and UAE", and the Nile group "Egypt and Sudan").

Each group identified the expected outcomes from the workshop, which included:

1. Mechanisms for mobilizing CSOs in monitoring the MDGs
2. Introducing mechanisms for pressuring governments towards adopting the MDGs and enhancing the role of CSOs as main partners regarding the MDGs, as well as setting a plan for social mobilization

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3. Focusing on the MDGs' indicators from the CSOs' perspectives, and reaching a mechanism for questioning the role of CSOs in the MDGs campaign, and mobilizing CSOs in monitoring and evaluating the progress on the MDGs
 4. Identifying the role of CSOs in writing the MDG Reports; this necessitates mapping Arab civil society organizations
 5. Clarifying the relationship between the UN, the governments, and the involved CSOs
 6. Discussing the issues of funding and campaign costs
 7. Focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of CSOs regarding the MDGs campaign
 8. Considering the differences between the Arab countries regarding the MDGs

The groups identified what they consider to be the general and specific objectives of the campaign, while concentrating on the main outcomes expect from implementing the MDGs. The four groups also worked on setting an executive plan for the main activities in each of the Arab countries.

The general identified objective focused on the importance of launching an advocacy plan, including capacity building

and strengthening Arab CSOs. In addition, participants stressed on the need to strengthen the partnership with national and regional UNDP offices in various Arab countries, raise awareness and share information on the MDGs, as well as set a communication and networking strategy for the regional campaign.

During the third day, participants discussed the role of each of the groups involved in the campaign, including the role of CSOs, UNDP and different UN agencies, governments, and the private sector. Discussion included perspectives of CSOs on their role and their relationship with the UNDP, as well as the perspectives of the UNDP and its relationship with CSOs. There was also a special focus on the role of governments and private sector.

Participants went on to set the implementation plan and identify CSOs' activities in each country. For these purposes, participants were divided into several workgroups based on the countries they come from. Each group set a schedule of activities to be implemented in their countries, and identified the time frame and mechanisms for execution of the proposed plan. (Please see attached, the adopted plans of activities)

Closing Session and the workshop recommendations:

After the presentation the outcomes of each of the working groups, the deputy resident representative of the UNDP in Lebanon and the representative of the regional office, Ms. Nada El-Nashif, the representative of the Global office of the MDGs campaign, Mrs. Marisol Sanjines, and the executive director of the Arab NGOs Network for Development, Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad, presented closing remarks on the regional campaign and the workings of the meeting.

Ms. El-Nashif explained that the Arab region is relatively late in launching the MDGs campaign. She stressed on the importance of the involvement of Arab CSOs in the MDGs campaign that ought to urge the governments to adopt national development policies that are based on local needs.

Furthermore, she noted that there is a need to set mechanisms to study and monitor the MDGs' quantitative indicators and consequently follow-up change over the years. The UNDP representative invited Arab CSOs to enhance their partnership with local UN agencies and adopt the MDGs as the common platform for development analysis.

Ms. El-Nashif noted that the UNDP has a program that supports partnerships between CSOs and public institutions. UNDP offers resources and information materials, specifically in Arabic. CSOs need to communicate with the UNDP offices regarding the information and resources they need. Moreover, she highlighted that the UNDP allocates Seed Funds for capacity building, identifying MDGs' costing, websites, and training. CSOs need to follow-up with local UNDP offices on these issues.

The representative of the MDGs Global Campaign, Ms. Marisol Sanjines, stressed on the importance of the meeting. She appreciated the successful efforts exerted to organize. She explained that the outcome actually exceeded the average expectations from similar meetings especially that it was the first meeting that brought together representatives of civil society organizations, UNDP offices, and government.

She explained that the networking process and sharing of information and experiences that took place during the meeting was very important and essential for the success of the campaign. The meeting was significant because it was an opportunity to become familiar with the needs, plans, and work mechanisms adopted by Arab

CSOs regarding the MDGs campaign. This is significant because each region is different and the local ownership of the campaign is very important. In this regards, the “tailoring” of the goals, to the national and sub national levels, is essential for the success of the campaign. Finally, she commented that the strategic planning meeting is just the first step in the process of a successful MDGs campaign and that we all (governments, CSOs, UN agencies, and private sector) have a common responsibility.

Consequently, Mr. Abdel Samad stressed that the MDGs strategic meeting revealed opportunities for real cooperation between various stakeholders. Accordingly, the main objectives should be strengthening the role and capacities of CSOs and their partnerships with the UNDP national offices. He stressed that the role of CSOs is not merely monitoring, but CSOs should have a major role in adapting indicators and proposing recommendations regarding national MDGs policies, which should be implemented by the governments.

He highlighted the important role that CSOs are playing in the global campaign, noting that the regional campaign which is coordinated by ANND is part of a global campaign for CSOs led by Social Watch. The latter is closely coordinating with the UNDP global campaign,

and ANND tries to reflect this global cooperation at both the regional and national levels in the Arab Region. On the other hand, he explained that the Social Watch 2005 annual report will focus on the MDGs. Thus Arab CSOs have a chance to report on the MDGs progress and their perspectives on it through the Social Watch report.

At the strategy level, Mr. Abdel Samad stressed that the common objective of the campaign is advocacy, based on capacity building, raising awareness, lobbying at the level of decision-makers such as ministries and parliaments, dissemination of information, working closely with the media, and networking with active partners.

He referred to the essential link between the MDGs and human rights, as it is presented in the Millennium Declaration. Accordingly, implementing the MDGs is linked to international agreements and conventions on issues of social, human, economic, and political rights. Consequently, the MDGs campaign presents an opportunity to address the specific issues of Arab countries and the implications of local and regional challenges.

He added that the timeframe is very important, and that CSOs need to take part in the follow-up meeting at the global level and be ready for that event. Thus, they have

to finalize the national preparations and start working before the end of 2004. Moreover, the first phase of the campaign should end before the high level meeting planned for September 2005. He explained that a regional meeting could take place by the end of July 2005 in order to evaluate and finalize a report for the high level meeting.

In conclusion, Mr. Abdel Samad stressed that ANND, as a regional structure, could support the regional MDGs campaign through allocating resources, developing a fundraising strategy, supporting the establishment of national networks, preparing comparative reports, and promoting exchange of experiences.

ANNEX 3

Arab-Palestinian Civil Society Partnership Recommendations of the Working Groups

Working Group on HEALTH:

Needs and Priorities:

Immediate relief needs should not be de-linked from sustainable development and technology, including the following remarks:

1. Lack of buildings and equipment in the north of Palestine and some areas of the Gaza Strip.
2. Lack of medicines and difficulties in distribution.
3. Lack of specialized medical fields, such as heart, vascular, and brain surgery.

Challenges and Expectations:

1. Access to services.
2. Quality.
3. Lack of information and health studies.
4. Diversity of medical boards and overlapping mandates.

5. Separation between services and governmental, non-governmental, and private medical establishments.
6. Distribution of support on all who are in need in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Mechanisms for Cooperation:

1. Communication by providing information for all.
2. Creation of a specialized medical information portal.
3. Working directly with the health committees of Palestinian NGOs, the PNA, and other health organizations.
4. Coordination with the Emirates Red Crescent Society on their program for advanced surgery in Palestine.
5. Creation of a multilateral committee representing all actors.
6. Coordination with the Qatari Red Crescent.
7. Training, supporting, and preparation of medical staff on various levels, linking all actors (doctors) in a unified framework, raising health awareness, and management.
8. Encouraging primary health training and supporting medical schools.
9. Assisting in the establishment of a Palestinian medical school, with branches in Gaza and North West

Bank, under a common administration and support structure.

10. Twinning of Palestinian medical schools with Arab medical schools.
11. Ensuring specialized medical training by supporting the work of the Qatari Red Crescent Society, and requesting support for training materials from the Arab league and Arab ministers of health.
12. Establishment of blood banks, including the immediate need for a blood bank in each of Gaza and the West Bank. The Emirates Red Crescent Society has already initiated a similar project.

Working Group on EDUCATION:

Needs and Priorities:

- * Developing the infrastructure of Palestinian educational institutions.
- * Modernizing specialized programs for teaching staff and other human resources and encouraging the exchange of experiences.
- * Modernizing and developing curricula, including:
 1. Unifying all school curricula in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

2. Creating a unified curriculum for Kindergartens in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
3. Developing scientific research in all educational levels, and providing necessary financing.
4. Spreading electronic education.

Mechanisms for Cooperation:

- * Twinning between Arab and Palestinian educational institutions.
- * Organizing programs in Arab institutions to train Palestinian teachers, with an attempt to establish, at a later stage, an Arab training center for teachers.
- * Supporting Palestinian student funds in universities to allow them to increase their capacity in providing teaching subjects.
- * Creating a fund to support students and prevent drop-out in Palestinian schools.
- * Organizing a program for communication between Arab and Palestinian students, such as internet programs in Palestinian camps.
- * Organizing programs for teachers to exchange experiences on the university level.
- * Encouraging mutual research initiatives between Arab and Palestinian universities.

Working Group on LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY:

Challenges and Expectations:

- * The strong and deceptive Zionist propaganda.
- * The deteriorating Arab conditions and their effects on the stability of the Palestinian situation.
- * Laxity in the relocation of the Palestinian issue from the Palestinian sphere to an Arab sphere.

Mechanisms for Cooperation:

- * Focusing campaigns on specialized and specific issues.
- * Using different channels, forums, and regional and international meetings for propaganda.
- * Using audiovisual media for propaganda.
- * Establishing a public relations organization to protect, defend, and publicize Palestinian development issues.
- * Establishing a center for human development, and the training of leaders and activists in lobbying and advocacy to support development issues.
- * Cooperation with international legal institutions and the CERD.

- * Creating a lobbying group in the General Secretariat of the United Nations.
- * Creating a common Arab Palestinian committee for coordination and follow-up.
- * Defining conditions and criteria for Arab Palestinian partnership.
- * Organizing a periodic Arab Palestinian meeting (e.g., every 6 months).

Working Group on UNEMPLOYMENT AND INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS

Needs and Priorities:

- * Creating job opportunities.
- * Providing credit (bank for the poor).

Challenges and Expectations:

- * Communications.
- * Transparency through providing good governance models to enhance confidence and attract Arab funding.
- * Lack and flow of information.

Mechanisms for Cooperation:

- * Creating an Arab fund to provide loans in occupied Palestinian land, and providing necessary information for credit, conditions, etc., through a conference followed by new trade agreements.
- * Implementing training, rehabilitation, and awareness programs on managing micro projects in the framework of new trade agreements.
- * Providing a database on Arab and Palestinian expertise on the subject.

Working Group on AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT, AND WATER RESOURCES

Needs and Priorities:

- * Providing channels for institutional communications between Palestine and the Arab world.
- * Providing assistance in rehabilitating the agricultural sector.
- * Marketing agricultural products.
- * Assisting in providing credit and loan programs.

Challenges and Expectations:

- * Lack of information and its limited availability.
- * Lack of sustainable institutional communication.
- * Constraints imposed by Arab governments on public freedoms.
- * Occupation.
- * Scarcity of resources allocated to investment in this sector.

Mechanisms for Cooperation:

*** Communication:**

- 1) Collaborative workshops.
- 2) Electronic communications.
- 3) Databases on infrastructure and institutions.
- 4) Radio and television programs and newspaper reports in Arab countries to raise awareness and disseminate information on the destructive policies of the occupation authorities on the agricultural, environmental, and water resource sector.
- 5) Twinning with similar institutions.
- 6) Multilateral committees to follow-up the execution of cooperation mechanisms.

* **Encouraging rehabilitation:**

- 1) Funding tree-planting campaigns.
- 2) Funding the rehabilitation of artesian wells and destroyed irrigation systems.
- 3) Providing credit at low interest rates for small farmers.

* **Pressuring the Israeli government to stop its destructive policies in international organizations and other governments:**

- 1) Support missions.
- 2) Documentaries.
- 3) Documentation and electronic media.
- 4) Periodic reports.
- 5) Distribution of materials to journalists.

* **Marketing:**

- 1) Providing channels to market Palestinian products such as olive oil, nuts, and other food products.
- 2) Assisting in market research.
- 3) Assisting in increasing the quality of agricultural products to raise their export value.

Working Group on OTHER ISSUES

Needs and Priorities:

- * Using an organized methodology to develop ICT.
- * Developing human resources.

Challenges and Expectations:

- * The IT sector is unproductive.
- * Lack of human resources in this sector.
- * Limited updating of websites.
- * Weakness of knowledge about the internet.

Mechanisms for Cooperation:

- * Creating a productive and research based Arab IT network.
- * Encouraging Arab organizations to support a mobile information library in refugee camps inside the occupied territories.
- * Creating a database of experts in IT inside and outside the occupied Palestinian territories.
- * Collecting used computers in Arab countries and distributing them in the occupied Palestinian land.

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- * Establishing email dialogue groups.
 - * Creating a mailing list for Arab and Palestinian NGOs participating in the meeting.
 - * Creating a page on the website of the Palestinian NGO Network that includes projects that need adoption or support.

ANNEX 4

Workshop on Arab Civil Society Partnership

Held during the: “International Forum on Development and Rehabilitation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: Towards and Independent State”

“Summary of the Workshop Proceedings”

Location: UN House – Beirut

Date: Thursday 14/10/2004

Organizers: ANND – ESCWA

Chair: Mansour Bin Fata

Speakers: Ziad Abdel Samad (ANND) – Izzat Abdel Hadi (PNGO)

Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad, Executive Director of ANND, opened the workshop by pointing to the conclusions of the preparatory workshop held last June on the partnership between the Arab civil society and its Palestinian counterpart. He focused on the 2 working papers resulting from the meeting: “The Palestinian Vision to Formulate and Prioritize Development Objectives and its Challenges” and “Coordination Mechanisms between Civil Society in the Arab World and in Palestine”.

One of the main objectives of this international forum was to come out with specific recommendations on the working mechanisms to support development in the occupied Palestinian territories, the resolve of the Palestinians, and their held in overcoming daily challenges. The workshop was able to elaborate the main titles of a plan to create a coalition between CSOs in Arab countries to implement these recommendations.

Due to the necessity of defining a perspective of the Palestinian civil society in setting coordination mechanisms, Izzat Abdel Hadi (PNGO) participated in writing and presented a paper on “Coordination Mechanisms between Civil Society in the Arab World and in Palestine”.

The paper highlighted the need of Palestinian civil society of support from its Arab counterpart and to the necessity of presenting strategic directions from a Palestinian perspective to build mechanisms that can be used by Arab NGOs to support development in Palestine. This could be a pioneering effort in Arab cooperation and a basis for democratic transition in Arab countries. The mobilization of Arab civil societies to support this Palestinian outlook will lead to the mutual support and strengthening of Palestinian and Arab civil societies.

Therefore, it is vital to link support, relief efforts, and health aid provided to Palestinians with long term development strategies. This can ensure the capability of Palestinians to sustain their efforts in setting the foundations of independence and self-reliance. If support to the Palestinians continues as it is (humanitarian and relief aid only), this could lead to a culture of negative reliance and could threaten Palestinian steadfastness.

The paper pointed to the Palestinian developmental vision and its different trajectories it took after the outbreak of the Intifada, such as:

- Continuing the resistance against Israeli occupation.
- Continuing to build the state and develop a democratic society providing social justice and gender equality.
- Answering the needs and priorities of local communities by building innovative models for societal development.

To achieve this vision, the paper presented some of the main strategies adopted using the SWAT method. They are:

1. Maintaining access to information on the Palestinian situation and on the realities of development through the internet. The information has to be verified and trustworthy. This can be through education institutions

and the media and through supporting networking, exchange of information, and investigations.

2. Developing opinions and individual visions to create parallel processes to build strategic plans in the Palestinian and Arab civil societies. This will assist in fighting poverty, creating income-generating projects, and developing a Palestinian contingency plan taking into consideration the various political scenarios.
3. Capacity building and human resource development.
4. Creating mechanisms for coordination and implementation:
 - a. To support and institute networking between Palestinian and Arab CSOs, and therefore create different sectoral networks and unions (the disabled, youth, workers, students, etc.);
 - b. To organize mobilization and advocacy campaigns in support of the Palestinian issue, through instigating and mobilizing popular relief campaigns in Arab countries; organizing campaigns to raise awareness on the situation; to compel Israel to change its policies towards the Palestinians; and to influence decision-makers, donors, and governments; and linking with campaigns outside the Arab world and with international frameworks.

5. Funding through an increase in multilateral projects and research in the region, developing independent Arab funding projects, and opening a serious dialogue with Arab funds and various other mechanisms in order to reach a common vision.

Discussion, Follow-up, and Recommendations:

Najat Aridi:

- We cannot consider that Palestinian and Arab CSOs are two different parties and that they should create partnerships together. This delineation should not be between organizations that are supposed to have a common plan. There are already many efforts under way for such partnerships.
- There are many existing relief strategies with a developmental perspective and they are conducted by ministries and NGOs in the occupied territories.
- As for Arab funds that need to support the funding of development projects in Palestine, I had mentioned their names during the proceedings of the forum.
- There is a contradiction in the suggestion for the factualness of the information: at a time when information provided by the Central Statistics

Administration and the PNGO website was doubted, there was a focus on the need of information on the situation in Palestine through the internet. This information need also be scrutinized.

Hassan Abdel Ati (Sudan):

- All of the strategies presented in the papers are acceptable, but the problem lied in how Arab CSOs view the Palestinian situation and how they deal with it. There are many solidarity committees with the Palestinians in Arab villages, but they do not focus on coordinated and clear visions. Therefore, ANND should support and coordinate an Arab strategic plan. A technical follow-up committee should be set up and Arab funds should support this work and fund it.

Ahmad Abdel Karim (Syria):

- The Committee to Support the Intifada in Syria managed to work with 222 Palestinian NGOs. It provided around 15 million US dollars in that period, earmarked to support Palestinian citizens, associations, and refugees. The committee hopes to work on a strategy that does not

normalize relations with Israel and that aims to support the Palestinians, fight the Zionist project, and create coalitions in the geographic and social frameworks.

Mohammad Mbayed:

- There is a suggestion to create an implementation strategy on the short term with suggestions for the long term. Palestinian NGOs should indicate the priorities, needs, and common interests, for coordination purposes with Arab CSOs.

Issam Nadda (Egypt):

- We should stop using big slogans and suggest clear and frank strategies and activities, and use them based on the needs of Palestinian CSOs.

Sari Hanafi (Ramallah):

- We need to work on maintaining a concept of multi-directional partnerships to present a picture of what is happening in Palestine and to show the situations of the Palestinians in the Diaspora. It necessary to look

at the Palestinian issue as an issue of geography and of a people.

Ghania Malhis:

- We need to be aware of the pressures exerted by European and US donors. Palestinian NGOs depend almost completely on foreign funds. Arab funds should have as a priority the support of Palestinian NGOs, but not as an alternative to funding the PNA.

Abdel Hakim Al Shafe'i (Morocco):

- True democracy allows the support of strong and independent CSOs. The problem is that the role of these organizations remains limited on the social and economic levels. Therefore, it is necessary to start a dialogue on the strategies and issues in each country. Media should also not exaggerate the situation but show the steadfastness of the Palestinians.
- There is a suggestion to provide visual materials about the Palestinians to be used as documentation that would truly reflect Palestinian culture.

Iqbal Doughan (Lebanon):

- We need to put more focus on coalitions. It was mentioned briefly, but coalitions can use different strategies. We need to work on forming a civil society and NGO committee in each country, away from government interference, to follow-up on activities and suggested mechanisms.

Magdi Abdel Hamid (Egypt):

- The presented strategies can be used as a basis to start working. But the executive mechanisms need a framework of unions of Arab NGOs to cooperate on them.
- We need to network between sectoral networks. No matter how large these networks become, they cannot include all organizations. We need to work on making their representation more comprehensive.
- There is also a need for a broad preparatory meeting of Arab CSOs and it is suggested that ANND carries out its organization.

Naimat Koko (Sudan):

- The main challenge facing Arab CSOs is transforming these strategies into qualitative and practical plans

through forums and national plans. The primary challenge is in the ability of citizens to invest in the strengths and support them.

- On the issue of funding, there is a proposal as an alternative to falling under the control of foreign donors, and that is to work on partnerships with Arab funds coordinated with civil society.
- We need to provide ANND with national plans elaborating the strategies and look into implementing them using the available funding frameworks.
- For mobilization, we need to create publicity materials, publish them, and work with the Palestinian community (films on Palestinian women).
- We also need to work on implementing a comprehensive program to build the capacities of Palestinian and Arab CSOs.

Farid Ghoulam (Bahrain):

- We need to create working mechanisms to be implemented by local networks in Arab countries, such as the Bahraini Network, in coordination with PNGO.
- We also need to work on clarifying and defining visions and mechanisms to be fully implemented in

Arab countries. Some might be implemented as is but it will be incomplete. We need to work on approving comprehensive national working plans away from Arab and international interference with Arab civil society.

Issa (Algeria):

- It is necessary to reevaluate and go in depth in the tools for communication and networking on one hand, and the how the media shows the Palestinians on the other. We should not reproduce the same picture in media, thus Arab participation should be widened.

Salwa Abou Khadra:

- The priorities in aid and relief go to the large institutions working on the infrastructure, emergencies, and developmental relief. Therefore, Palestinian families do not receive any of this aid. We should work on creating a program for automatic small funds for families, students, youth, and unions. This should reach them to support relief and development projects, so as not to surrender to US pressure.

Badria Ali Ahmad (Bahrain):

- We need to deliver a statement from all those present in the Arab forum to the UN General Secretary, UN agencies, the EU, and IOs to support the Palestinians and immediately stop the current aggression against Gaza.

Wadad Ahmad:

- We need to stress on the means to strengthen the relationship and communications of Arab and Palestinian NGOs with European NGOs.

Mona Nashashibi:

- It is necessary to work to include media watch in the coalition and partnership to influence the international public opinion and face any attempts to discredit it.

Jihad Abou Zeid (Jerusalem):

- We need to give more importance to Jerusalem and its dying institutions. We need to tackle the situation in Jerusalem in many sectors.

Main Recommendations:

- Mobilization and Influencing the Media:

- * Create and publish mobilization materials in support of the Palestinians (films on Palestinian women);
- * Show documentaries on the Palestinians to general audiences to reflect Palestinian culture;
- * Deliver a statement, in the name of the participants in the Arab forum, to the UN General Secretary, UN agencies, the EU, and IOs to support the Palestinians and immediately stop the current aggression against Gaza.

- Capacity building:

- * Work on forming a civil society and NGO committee in each country, away from government interference, and provide ANND with national plans elaborating the strategies and look into implementing them using the available funding frameworks.
- * Implement a comprehensive program to build the capacities of Palestinian and Arab CSOs.
- * Form civil society and NGO committees in each country, away from government interference, to follow-up on activities and suggested mechanisms.

- * ANND should support and coordinate an Arab strategic plan. A technical follow-up committee should be set up and Arab funds should support this work and fund it.

- Funding:

- * As an alternative to falling under the control of foreign donors, to work on partnerships with Arab funds coordinated with civil society.
- * There is a basic need to start a dialogue on mobilizing resources, their utilization, and spending in an atmosphere that respects transparency criteria and work ethics.

- Conclusions:

The Coalition of Arab Networks will work on following-up all these suggestions and recommendations. The mailing list will be used to enhance communications between these organizations. The main tasks will be:

- * Formulating the plan and translating it into a strategy within a timeframe to start implementation and execution of mechanisms.

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- * Organizing national seminars and meetings to explain the strategy.
 - * Aiming towards organizing a joint seminar between the coalition and Arab funds to shape this plan and reinforce the means of communications and networking.

Annex 5

Arab Prepcom for the WSIS–Towards a More Just Information Society

Le Royal Hotel – Amman, Jordan

13 – 15 September 2004

Organizers: Heinrich Boll–Germany, International Center for Women’s Solidarity–Jordan

The second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) will be held in Tunis in November 2005. In addition to the importance of holding it in an Arab country, the summit will discuss issues that are relevant to Arab societies today: gender equity, illiteracy, investment in education, cultural and civilizational diversity, good governance, and the suitable environment for the Information Society, such as press freedoms, the right to information, and the right to technological information and modern technology.

In the process of preparing for the summit, Amman saw the holding of an Arab regional meeting between 13 and 15 September 2004. Participants included civil society representatives, experts, academics, and activists from 9 Arab countries: Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine,

Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, and the UAE. They presented various working papers on the following issues:

- 1) Developmental necessities for the Information and Knowledge Society in Arab countries,
- 2) The absence of Arab Civil Society from Geneva 2003,
- 3) The reality of the Information Society in the Arab World and the protection of rights and freedoms,
- 4) The state and civil society in the Knowledge Society,
- 5) Capacity building–partnership with the private sector.

The conference also discusses two fundamental issues in relation to information and communication technology: gender and young people with disabilities. This was in addition to the presentation of successful models of websites, leaders of the information field, in addition to practical examples of how to use technology in the process of development.

The opening session was led by the minister of communication and information technology of Jordan, Dr. Fouad Al-Zo’bi, represented by Dr. Issam Za’balawi, the minister of higher education. This was followed by a word from the organizers, the Head of the Board of Trustees of the International Institute for Women’s Solidarity, Ms. Loris Ihlas, and Dr. Hadeel Qazzaz.

In the first session entitled “**Developmental Necessities for the Information and Knowledge Society in Arab Countries**”, the Arab NGO Network for Development presented a paper on the developmental dimension of the Information Society and the role of civil society in Arab countries. The paper shed light on the nature of knowledge, the knowledge society, and the basic features of their management mechanisms, as basic possibilities for building such a society. It also emphasized that an empowering environment as a component of an information society is needed for this mechanism.

The paper also discussed the possible role of civil society in achieving the developmental vision of the information society, such as lobbying to make development the axis and goal of the information society and using technology to quicken development through increasing the quality of social services and supporting their sustainability, providing jobs, reducing poverty levels, and supporting marginalized groups. Issues that should be focused on include gender and disabilities in relationship with technology; making information and communication technology more familiar, accessible, and available to ordinary people regardless of gender, age, religion, ethnicity, or social status; making sure that computers and the internet reach all social segments through providing

low cost alternatives; in addition to empowering women to use technology in the development process and adapting this technology to the requirements of people with special needs.

Finally, the paper discusses the developmental challenges towards building the information society in the Arab World, on one hand, and the obstacles to knowledge, on the other. This focused on the political atmosphere imposed by governments on non-governmental institutions and organizations, and on individuals and activists in the field of technology and information, especially those relating to human rights.

The session on “**The Reality of the Information Society in the Arab Nation and the Protection of Rights and Freedoms**” discussed issues related to the legal background of rights, freedoms, and digital transactions and the protection of intellectual property rights in the information society. It also delved into philosophical issues on the abundance of information and the problematic of knowledge, in a paper presented by Habib Maalouf, the Lebanese Association for Environment and Development. In a paper entitled “From Intellectual to Existential Discontent”, Maalouf spoke about the price humanity pays to see the world in an abstract manner

through the information medium, i.e., knowledge, not as a philosophical concept but as the practical concept that overcame all previous values of knowledge.

The latter is totalitarian and focuses on what is essential and fixed, on the contrary to today's information (fast, infinitesimal, and constantly changing). Therefore, the abundance of information does not lead to knowledge. It might strangle it along with the possibility of human creativity.

After discussing some of the more recent challenges in the information revolution and communication technology, Maalouf argues that the information age, characterized by the rapid growth of the internet, can be called the age of transfer and dislocation from scientific forums to the electronic market and from intellectual to existential discontent: the unlinking of thought and behavior, theory and practice, education and nurturing, development and environmental protection, and economic progress from the achievement of well being and true happiness.

In the paper on the legal framework for freedoms and digital signatures and on the protection of intellectual property rights, Dr. Omar Bin Younes from the Arab Legal Encyclopedia project discussed the classifications of rights, freedoms, and electronic contracts. He differentiated

between global rights of communication and those that include commitments and responsibilities. First, the right to communicate is global and includes 4 types of rights: the right to access communication media, the personal right to communicate, the right to access information, and the right to participate in communications. Second, commitments and responsibilities are a reflection of rights and include an accountability aspect on three levels: minor responsibility, medium level responsibility, and major responsibility. He closed by indicating the types of rights that were challenged by the internet: the right to privacy and intellectual property rights.

Dr. Mohammad Hejazi, director of the Center for Intellectual Property Research, spoke on the issue of intellectual property in the information society. Intellectual property rights are those that are provided by society to individuals or institutions and that concern creative work such as inventions, trademarks, indicators and geographical data, industrial plans, secret or classified information, authoring rights, etc. Therefore, laws governing authorship also protect programs and are the main tool to protect creators and programmers. Here, we should not mix between the program itself and the medium used to store it, whether it is regular paper, floppy disk, compact disk, magnetic tape, or any other

medium. This differentiation is important due to the fact that programs are not bought and sold but are licensed by the owner of the program to be used.

Dr. Hejazi's paper reached a number of conclusions based on the fact that Arab countries face the challenge of making policies that should guarantee the use of information technology while protecting intellectual property rights. The recommendations include: increasing social awareness of the importance of knowledge and information regulations; encouraging research and development conducted by the private, public, and civil sectors; developing human resources in information technology and related aspects such as laws; developing a unified Arab policy to improve negotiations on the transfer of technology; and the necessity of involving developing countries in negotiations on the future of intellectual property instruments to reflect their interests.

In the session concerning "**The State and Civil Society in the Information Society**", Jamal Abdelaziz Eid, from the Arab Network for Human Rights, presented a paper on the role of the state in encouraging the information society. He indicated that the state is the cornerstone in building an Arab society of knowledge. Although the civil and private sectors can play an important role in creating

and developing an information society, the state has to provide the space for them to do so.

The state should create the necessary environment in different fields, especially in the educational system that should become compulsory until the secondary stage at least; the development of adult literacy programs in rural and urban areas; and in creating institutions and centers specialized in information and communication technology. On the economic level, the state should encourage the private sector to invest in ICT and create regulations protecting intellectual property rights and digital signatures. On the level of the technology itself, the state should develop the internet infrastructure and create technology institutions that would adopt and encourage youth that excel in this field.

Regarding civil and political rights, the state should open the way for civil society through protecting the right of creating institutions and private associations, end censorship and repression of the freedom of opinion and speech, protect the right to exchange information, and expand the scope of democracy to allow for difference, diversity, and change.

A number of good practices were discussed following the presentation, mainly the Dubai Digital Government,

and the “Ask the Government” program through the Jordanian Media Center.

The following session was on “**Capacity Building-Partnership with the Private Sector**”. Dr. Mohammad Hourani presented a paper on the partnership between the private sector and civil society and its role in protecting human rights through the information society. The partnership can be on two levels: material and technical support from the private sector to civil society institutions to allow them to work in the best conditions, and direct cooperation through the exchange of experiences and information.

Other issues discussed at the meeting included the relationship of ICT with gender and with young people with disability.

The relationship of ICT and young people with disabilities was discussed by Mohammad Al-Asa’ad Soua, KAWTAR. He discussed the possibility of using ICT to allow people with disability to be more creative: remote communications, working at home, collecting information, exchange of opinions, and remote education, i.e., exiting the confines of private space. But the reality shows that consumer technological products do not take into consideration the needs of people with disabilities

and the various types of those disabilities, leading to a discrepancy in competence and difficulty in accessing the job market. Another issue concerns the opinion of people with disabilities on the role of technology in their access to the job market, but there is no data on this issue. Therefore, people with disabilities should be included in researching the issue. This role can be played by civil society organizations that consider the issue of disability as a major challenge to development and that people with disabilities can have all the necessary skills to be highly productive.

The executive director of the International Center for Women’s Solidarity, Lina Koura, questioned the relation between ICT and gender. She asked if concepts are to be changed then we need to understand the importance of gender equity in ICT and in using affective tools to include the concept in strategies and policies for ICT. This is due to the fact that gender equity increased the well being of people. Women should take on their roles, but they are present in rural and poor areas that are neglected by such strategies. If we are just to provide women with computers, this does not mean we are empowering them to use ICT. There are various facts that impede the access of women such as the violence they endure, the high cost of access, the weakness of suggested solutions, the lack

of Arabic content, the weakness of education on ICT, and the restraints that local cultures put on women in education and work.

In between sessions, some successful sights were highlighted: www.hrinfo.net - www.annd.org - www.jordan.jo - www.amanjordan.org. This was in addition to a presentation on Reem Khatib, the youngest child to receive an international certificate for using a computer. She had used various websites and created her own to tell stories. She used sites specialized for children and sent greeting cards to her friends. Her website is www.hanaa.net/reem.

Other successful practices relating to development were:

Palestine: www.rafahtoday.org

Uganda: www.computerbook.com

Cambodia: www.motoman.com

America: www.boodmobile.com

In the final session the participants met in three groups on “The Internet Charter”, the “Amman Declaration”, and the “General Guidelines for the Arab Group”. This was followed by the final declaration and recommendations.

Annex 6

Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting: “Towards a More Just Information Society”

Amman 13-15 September 2004

“General Principles of the Arab Group in the Tunis Summit 2005”

The first phase of the World Summit for the information society was held in Geneva in December 2003. Arab participation was not visible, except for a few civil society representatives. This was in spite of the importance given to this summit, the resulting declaration of principles, and the action plan that would change the way individuals and Arab citizens interact with the information and knowledge society.

Following a number of meetings, in Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine, an Arab regional meeting, “Towards a More Just Information Society”, was held. The participants agreed on the general principles of the Arab group, based on the 2003 Arab Human Development Report on Building a Knowledge Society and on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common ground to achieve the following goals:

1. Strengthening active participation of Arab CSOs in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), whose 2nd phase will be held in Tunis in 2005, as well as in preparatory meetings.
2. Developing awareness and knowledge of the Tunis summit and the expected role of NGOs in achieving its goals.
3. Enhancing the information society to develop social justice, empower women to include them in the developmental process, and attend to children, people with special needs, and marginalized segments of Arab societies.

The participants agreed on the following implementation mechanisms:

1. Creating a lobbying group of Arab civil society organizations to include their goals in the summit.
2. Coordinating efforts between the Arab NGO group in the summit and other groups on common issues.
3. Creating a website for the Arab group.

The action plan is based on the following steps:

1. Discussing the Amman Declaration of the regional

meeting: “Towards a More Just Information Society” organized by the International Institute for Women’s Solidarity – Jordan.

2. Opening the membership of the Arab group of the WSIS to allow the participation of Arab CSOs.
3. Organizing the work of civil society organizations on the national levels, in relation to the 2nd phase of the WSIS to be held in Tunisia, and the follow-up activities.
4. Participation in the preparatory meetings of the summit to be held in Syria, Geneva, and Tunisia.
5. Organizing an Arab preparatory meeting prior to the WSIS.

Annex 7

The Arab Seminar in parallel to the World Economic Forum

Convened on the Dead Sea - Jordan

Amman 14-15 May 2004

“Closing statement and recommendations”

The Arab seminar in parallel to the World Economic Forum convened in the Jordanian capital. The symposium was organized by the Jordanian Woman Union in co-ordinance with the Arab NGO Network for Development, between the 14th and 15th of May 2004.

The participants included 75 representatives from various Arab civil society organizations from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen, Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria in addition to representatives from the Arab Immigrants Associations in Europe. However, the participant from Sudan was not able to attend due to his inability to attain a leave visa from the Sudan officials, thus preventing him from leaving Sudan to Jordan.

The seminar dealt with the following worksheets:

- The economic and social characteristics of the regional and international partnerships.
- The relationships between the regional and international partnerships and human rights.
- The impacts of the regional and international partnerships on the Arab region; critical reading of the papers suggested at the World Economic Forum.
- Jordan’s position on the regional and international partnerships.
- The World Trade Organization.
- The bilateral trade agreement between Jordan and the United States.
- Regional and international cooperation and their impacts on women.
- The role of civil society organizations, given the implications of globalization.
- The challenges facing the Arab Region and its relation with the economic, international, and regional agenda.
- Challenges in Iraq: present and future situation.
- The present challenges in Palestine.
- The economic agenda and reforms in the Arab Region.
- The Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

- The new economic system and its impact on issues related to intellectual property rights.

In addition, a working session to discuss the perspective of the Arab civil society organizations regarding the presented working papers of the World Economic Forum was held.

The participants in the meeting dealt with the gap between industrial and developing countries. They discussed the efforts of developing countries to face economic crisis, and the insistence of industrial to apply laws that exploit the resources of former and aggravate the degradation of their economic situation. Issues of cheap labor and dominance by multi-international corporations were also tackled.

The participants also discussed the negative effects of global capitalism embodied in the domination of the industrial countries over the world politically, economically, militarily, and culturally, especially with the rise of the United States' role as a unilateral power. This was the result of marginalizing the role of the United Nations and international conventions. Trends of militarization of globalization were demonstrated in the war on Iraq. The occupation of Iraq aims at controlling its oil resources and exploiting its strategic location to

entrenching conditions in the Arab region thus serving the US-Israeli.

The participants in the seminar stressed the importance of dealing with the complex political situations in the region, in order to facilitate the success of developing economic, political, and humanistic policies.

They reached two important provisions that they saw as essential for peace and stability in the region, the prerequisites for any proposed development agenda. The first is to end occupation in Palestine and implement human rights, including the right to self determination, having an independent state, and the return of refugees. The second is to end occupation in Iraq and to transfer full control of the state to the Iraqis, to stop all kinds of torture, massacres, and the worst kinds of repression and terrorism being used against Iraqi civilians.

In addition, participants stressed that the policies of the WTO and IFIs that are committed to economic neo-liberalism and open market policies, have doubled the negative impacts on the economic and social structures. Moreover, they did not help in achieving the social and economical development promised to developing countries in general, including the Arab region. Moreover, it was clear that the weak and irrelevant policies regarding these

institutions in many of the Arab countries were the result of their inability to work together and attain complementary coordination. These conditions led the developing countries to lose their ability to become a real and active partner, able to impose certain conditions to retain equilibrium in such treaties and protect their nations' interests.

Structural adjustment policies adopted by Arab countries due to pressures from the World Bank and the IMF were one of the main reasons behind the delay of development and behind social disintegration. This is a warning of an impending socio-economic crisis, increasing poverty, rise in unemployment, and increase in the general debt in comparison with the growth of the GDP.

The participating organizations considered that democracy, public rights, and political, economical, and structural reforms are essential issues. They represent the major demands from the public. They are issues that arise from internal visions and reflect national goals and objectives. Accordingly, these organizations believe that reform initiatives, such as the latest "Greater Middle East" initiative presented by the US administration cannot be accepted except if they stem from internal dynamics and mechanisms that reflect the needs and concerns of various social segments in the Arab countries.

The only means to deal with the difficulties and challenges facing the region is in introducing fair and equitable regulations and policies, whereby authority is peacefully transferred, legislative and executive authorities are equal, and where the judiciary is independent, both public and private freedoms are respected, and the freedom of speech and expression is protected and enhanced. In addition, there is an essential need to commit to respecting human rights and re-adopting fair electoral systems and regulations that secure real participation and thus secure questioning, accountability, and transparency.

Participants warned that any delay in adopting trade agreements between the Arab countries and the weakness of trade among themselves, at the time when opening markets for foreign products is accelerated, would only lead to slowing down economic growth rates, and would not help in achieving development. This is because, while Arab countries are struggling to attract foreign investments into the region, Arab money is being deposited in foreign banks and is invested in projects outside the region. This raises a question regarding the reasons which prevent Arab investors from settling down in their homelands.

At the end of the seminar, the participants made the following recommendations:

1. Ending the occupation of Palestine and applying international resolutions that secure complete rights for the Palestinians.
2. Immediate and full termination of occupation in Iraq and prosecuting those responsible for all the political and economic crimes being committed against Iraqis.
3. Holding the US administration responsible for the hideous crimes committed against the Iraqi people, especially in “Abu Ghoreib”. Giving the Iraqis their right self determinations, enabling them to build an independent country and enhance relations and partnerships with other countries based on the needs and interests of Iraq.
4. Attaining a formula of collaboration among Arab countries that ensures the economic complementarities in the region; this formula should also ensure a clear, common, and strong Arab position able to guarantee the interests of Arab countries in economic agreements and treaties.
5. Committing to human rights especially the UDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, CRC, and other relevant conventions. These conventions have been signed by most of the countries but have not been translated into specific laws and working programs.
6. Supporting scientific research and development organizations and pushing industries to allocate a share from their profits to support scientific research in order to develop and treat the negative impact of production on public health and the environment, in the quest for sustainable development.
7. Committing to the concept “Education for all”, through free but obligatory education systems, covering all phases of education (elementary, secondary, university, and technical), based on international human rights references. However the participants insisted that the educational system should not turn into a commodity, especially regarding university education and vocational training. Participants insisted on the need to develop the education curriculums to suit social and market needs.
8. Respect of the culture specifics of each society, while avoiding seclusion from other cultures and foreign sciences or interference in educational curriculums for political purposes.
9. Reconsidering structural adjustment policies and privatization and stressing the need to include them

within a complete development agenda that serves the interests and needs of the people.

10. Setting regulations and laws that insure the safety of investments and their alignment with economical, social, cultural, and political needs and interests, and in respect of environmental and developmental standards.
11. Strengthening the rights of Arab women and accomplishing complete equality in citizenship between the genders through laws that eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.
12. Developing dynamics for dialogue between Arab CSOs, and supporting the development of networks that help in finding common grounds and exchanging information and experiences; this would allow the creation of pressure groups that could advocate for adequate public and private policies and for shared work programs that could contribute to facing the negative implications of capitalism and globalization.

Annex 8

Mainstreaming Youth Issues in the MDGs Campaign-Recommendations

- Producing a shadow report in September 2005 to present the youth perspective on the MDGs campaign.
- Establishing a concrete relationship between civil society organizations and research centers.
- Advocating for reforming laws in Arab countries that currently limit youth participation.
- Coordinating youth-led civil society campaigns on the MDGs.
- Establishing a youth follow-up committee for the Arab Social Forum.
- Organizing youth activities on raising awareness and lobbying governments.
- Working on formulating youth positions and recommendations regarding global partnership issues (MDG # 8).
- Developing youth activities and following-up issues of debt and technology in the Arab region, AIDS and medicine, as well as addiction and drugs.
- Lobbying donor organizations to link the funds they provide to the enhancement of youth participation.
- Establishing and activating forums and spaces for youth communication over the internet.
- Establishing national centers for follow-up youth issues and problems.
- Enhancing youth participation in various Arab conferences and meetings, and achieving representation of Arab youth in the Arab league and the United Nations.
- Advocating against obstacles that weaken the establishment and mobilization of global partnership for development.
- Lobbying the Lebanese government to improve the conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.
- Lobbying and advocating for enhanced youth political participation.
- Lobbying media for enhanced coordination and more quality programs.
- Establishing a follow-up committee for organizations participating in the workshop and promoting the participation of their representatives in various campaigns and relevant follow-up activities.