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CIVIL SOCIETY, INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE  
AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM:  
RETHINKING EMP POLICIES

ABSTRACT

*The concept of «civil society» is central to the European political discourse, and this emphasis is reflected in the EMP-Barcelona Process. The EMP provides support for selected civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) among the Southern Mediterranean states. EMP activities involve NGOs in policy-making forums, economic development, intercultural dialogues, promotion of common values, human rights, and peace-making.*

*However, evaluating the role of civil society is highly subjective, often without transparency, accountability and characterised by a «democracy deficit». Systematic research is necessary to assess the influence of these groups, the mechanisms by which the EU selects CSOs for funding, the interests of key political leaders and bureaucracies (such as development and aid offices, or foreign ministries) in this process, and the constituencies for whom NGOs actually speak, particularly in non-democratic societies in the Middle East.*

*The purpose of this paper is to look beyond the rhetoric and ideological claims regarding civil society, and to examine the political and social impact of NGO activities («soft power») within the EMP framework, using activities related to the Arab-Israeli relationship as a case study. After presenting the conceptual framework, this paper examines the results and impacts of EU-funded NGO and civil society programmes, including political dimensions, accountability, access to the media and to governments, and the examples in which CSOs become parties to the conflicts and exacerbate the differences between societies. Instead of the universalism and common values that are central to the EMP concept, these groups often promote anti-democratic, partisan and exclusivist claims.*

*On this basis, specific policy recommendations are proposed in the realm*

*of civil society, funding for groups specialising in intercultural dialogue, and the EMP. These recommendations are designed to improve the oversight over CSOs funded under the EMP framework, in order to insure that their activities are consistent with EMP objectives and with their declared mission statements.*

#### OVERVIEW

The concept of «civil society» is a central component in the European political and policy discourse, in general, and in the context of the EMP-Barcelona Process, in particular. Through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, as well as via the initiatives of individual nation-states, Europe has provided a great deal of funding and other forms of support for selected civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) among the Southern Mediterranean states. Similarly, under the banner of nurturing and promoting civil society, the various EMP frameworks promote the active involvement of NGOs in policy-making forums, economic development, inter-cultural dialogues, common values, human rights, and peace-making initiatives. Many EMP-related documents include statements regarding the perceived importance and impact of civil society organisations.

However, the concept of civil society remains highly amorphous<sup>1</sup>, and the attempts to collect empirical data and evaluate the actual impact of CSOs and NGOs in promoting common values and intercultural dialogues have been very limited to date. Few research efforts distinguish between different types of civil society organisations, or seek to determine the influence of networks, types of groups, and officials empowered by these frameworks both within Europe, and also in the regional interaction among EMP members<sup>2</sup>. Among academics, officials, and within the NGO networks themselves, the belief that civil society plays essential and positive roles in political contexts is axiomatic and is therefore largely unquestioned and unresearched<sup>3</sup>. The ability of European officials to influence external actors through large-scale support of selected NGOs and officials in order to promote cooperation and peace between is similarly unexamined.

Once these assumptions are open to investigation, many important questions emerge with respect to EU funding of CSOs

and NGOs, in general, and with respect to promoting dialogue and common values in the EMP, in particular. For example, how do EU frameworks choose which organisations to support in order to reach the declared objectives? Does this process reflect the interests of key political leader, their staff members, or the bureaucracies (such as development and aid offices, or foreign ministries)? And for whom do NGOs actually speak, which special interests do they promote, and, in the EMP framework, are these interests consistent with promoting common values and dialogue?

Expanding this line of inquiry further, the interaction between civil society and democratic processes is highly complex, and in pluralist liberal Western societies, the democracy deficit that characterises most non-governmental frameworks is problematic. This issue becomes more important with respect to CSOs in non-democratic EMP partners. Can a CSO whose primary sources of funding and influence are provided by European governments, and whose decision-making processes are not transparent within their host societies, claim legitimacy as a civil society organisation? Do such organisations contribute usefully to intercultural dialogue and promotion of common values, particularly when these goals are not supported actively (or are opposed) by the regime?

Further issues emerge in the transition from the largely Western-based concepts of civil society to narrowly based non-democratic regimes, such as exist in the Arab Middle East. In tightly controlled systems, how can NGOs that do not receive tacit or explicit endorsement from the political elite and are tolerated by the regime function?

These questions become particularly acute when examining the claims that many CSOs and NGOs make regarding their objectives, such as furthering peace, dialogue, human rights, or humanitarian assistance. Upon analysis, these are not consistent with many of their actions that promote conflict. Systematic examination of the impact of such groups, whether in the Middle East, the Balkans, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, etc. must include empirical studies of the ideological and political positions of these NGOs and the officials that speak for them. The evidence clearly indicates that despite major funding and multiple efforts, the outcomes have been very meager – CSOs involved in intercultural dialogue in these conflict situations have not produced significant changes. Indeed, in some cases, CSOs have used their «soft power» capabilities,

including access to the media and to governments, to become parties to the conflicts and exacerbated the differences between the societies. Instead of the universalism and common values that are central to the EMP concept<sup>4</sup>, in their activities, these groups often promote, anti-democratic, partisan and exclusivist claims. Based on this experience, it is important to address the mechanisms that can be used to prevent such groups from using the rhetoric of peace, human rights, democracy, or humanitarian assistance to pursue an active role in conflicts.

The purpose of this paper is to look beyond the rhetoric and ideological claims regarding civil society, and to examine the political and social impact of NGO activities within the EMP framework, using Arab-Israeli relations as a case study. We will begin by examining the conceptual basis for the claims regarding the impact of NGOs and civil society in non-democratic political systems, and their roles in peace-making and conflict resolution. On this basis, the results and impacts of EMP-based and European funded NGO and civil society activity in the region will be considered. The analysis will include the political role of NGOs, the power that they wield in domestic and regional processes, and the question of accountability, or its absence. We will also suggest some specific policy recommendations in the realm of civil society, funding for groups specialising in intercultural dialogue, and the EMP. These recommendations are designed to improve the oversight over CSOs funded under the EMP framework, in order to insure that their activities are consistent with EMP objectives and with their declared mission statements.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLITICAL POWER

The basic concepts of «civil society» are generally attributed to Robert Putnam, whose early research (*Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*) highlighted the important role played by these groups in mobilising social capital, and as alternative frameworks for societal interaction during a period of systemic governmental weakness in performing these tasks. In his subsequent research (*Bowling Alone*), Putnam examined the decline of civil society in the United States, and the impact of this process<sup>5</sup>.

The term civil society is often used to refer to social frameworks

that provide an alternative to the prevailing «selfish and particularist interests» of governments (including democracies) and formal political organisations. In Barrington Moore Jr.'s theory, the emergence of democratic institutions in the West was promoted by the growth of civil society that acted as a balance to absolutist monarchic power<sup>6</sup>. CSOs are also non-profit organisations (NPOs) - in contrast to private business interests and for-profit institutions. Such «third sector» groups are often considered to be altruistic, based on voluntary participation, and promoting the common good, while business and political organisations are perceived as selfish and particularistic<sup>7</sup>.

These terms, and indeed the initial concept of civil society, are anchored in democratic and pluralist environments, primarily in Western Europe and the United States. In such frameworks, voluntary associations – whether for bonding (to strengthen interpersonal ties within existing communities) or bridging between different sectors of society – are legitimate and often positive alternatives to governmental and business based organisations.<sup>8</sup> In Putnam's model, «networks of organised reciprocity and civic solidarity» are a precondition and an inherent element in the process modernisation and development of pluralism and Western democracy<sup>9</sup>.

#### CSOS AS POLITICAL ACTORS IN DEMOCRACIES

The prevailing perception of civil society, particularly in Europe, allows or rather encourages CSOs to present mission statements, funding requests, and public activities, as defenders of the weak against powerful governments and business interests.

However, many civil society groups active today are not politically or socially neutral, with largely structural objectives, as described by Putnam. Rather, CSOs have become very powerful political and ideological actors, purposefully seeking to change existing norms and policies. Seibel has observed that CSOs «are not only providers of goods and services but important factors of social and political coordination»<sup>10</sup>. These NGOs go beyond bowling leagues and social groups, and promote partisan political and social agendas in the context of pluralistic democratic processes. They use their access and money to act as lobbies and campaign for their

agendas in the media, in parliaments, academic institutions, and other frameworks, thereby altering the balance of forces in the political and democratic arena.

In this process, CSOs and NGOs exemplify the central role of «soft power», based on impact via the media, international organisations such as the United Nations, university campuses, and similar venues<sup>11</sup>. Issues that NGO officials choose to emphasize in their reports, press conferences, e-mail campaigns, and advocacy receive significant attention in the media and in diplomatic frameworks, and rise to the top of the international agenda.

As a result, decisions regarding funding and other forms of backing for specific CSOs constitute significant political acts and should be treated as such, rather than simply as support for voluntary groups designed to strengthen social bonds or provide social services outside the governmental frameworks. The neutral and procedural vocabulary often used to describe civil society organisations is misplaced – many CSO, and NGOs with massive funding play important political and ideological roles in Western democracies – including Greenpeace, Medecins Sans Frontieres, Oxfam, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, etc. These groups set agendas and influence political perspectives, both with respect to domestic issues and foreign policy, in ways that are not available to other groups without access to such resources.

This use of soft power by CSOs is often hidden from public view. Unlike governmental institutions in a democracy, and businesses active in the marketplace, NGOs and CSOs are generally not subject to structural checks and balances or to other forms of accountability. This phenomenon, known as the «halo effect» shields NGO officials and the organisations from criticism or investigation<sup>12</sup>. As a result of the «halo effect», the reports and statements made by prominent NGOs are routinely accepted at face value by journalists, diplomats, academics and others, who act as force multipliers for the NGO agendas<sup>13</sup>.

In cases in which the «halo effect» is neutralised, and critical research takes place, the evidence shows that governments – including the EU and its member states – provide public funding for such CSOs, are using public money to influence the democratic process, without channeling these funds in a transparent and balanced manner. While government organisations are limited in their ability to use public funds derived from taxes paid by citizens

for the purposes of political lobbying and campaigning, the same common-sense rules are avoided when public funds are given to CSOs and used for lobbying. As will be demonstrated specifically below, this is of particular importance in European funding for CSOs that play an active role in influencing media coverage and political positions related to the Middle East.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY IN NON-DEMOCRATIC FRAMEWORKS

The examination of the link between political agendas and CSOs in non-democratic frameworks requires an entirely different approach. The greater the degree of authoritarian control, the less room there is for such groups to act independently. The political and social space in which voluntary organisations are able to act is defined and limited by the regime. Under these conditions, the non-governmental organisations that function must be considered to be those that are tolerated by the regime, or are part and parcel of political elite and power structure. In Iraq under the Ba'ath party and Saddam Hussein's regime, the idea that NGOs and civil society groups might be able to function independently was inconceivable. Similarly, in Palestinian society, during the Arafat era, the evidence indicates that the vast network of NGOs, many of which were funded by European governments or by large philanthropies such as the Ford Foundation, were an important part of the power structure supporting the regime. And in Egypt, the small number of independent NGOs that exist, such as the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, are harassed by the government, and their leaders, such as Dr. Saad Edidn Ibrahim, have been arrested and jailed.

For these reasons, the role of civil society in Arab and Islamic countries is hotly debated. Some analysts view civil society as the basis for opposition to the corrupt and absolutist power of the non-democratic political structure while, for others, the concept is more narrowly focused on building a secular opposition to Islamist forces<sup>14</sup>. As Hamzawy notes, among many intellectuals, civil society and the groups that claim to act in its name are based on the Western historical experience with little or not relevance to the Arab world.

As noted, when «voluntary organisations» required the permission of the government to operate, whether in democracies or dictatorships, their claims to status as independent civil society

organisations are undermined. Government funding for NGOs turns many of them into quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations (QUANGOs) and governmental non-governmental organisations (GNGOs).

In this environment, EMP funding provided by European governments and political bodies is used to choose and support particular representatives of civil society. In this situation, the line that separates political power frameworks and civil society organisations is particularly difficult or perhaps impossible to maintain.

#### CASE STUDY: EMP FUNDING FOR PALESTINIAN AND ISRAELI CSOS<sup>15</sup>

In 2005, the EU provided €279 million to the Palestinian Authority<sup>16</sup>, making it the largest single contributor<sup>17</sup> of international aid to the Palestinians. A significant proportion of this aid is channeled through CSOs, including humanitarian aid and development organisations, and human rights groups. Organisationally, this funding is provided by MEDA<sup>18</sup> and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership<sup>19</sup> through specific programs, including the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Partnership for Peace Programme (PfPP). In 2004, the PfPP distributed €7.5 million<sup>20</sup> to Israeli and Palestinian NGOs and CSOs specifically to encourage intercultural dialogue, discussion of common values, and similar objectives<sup>21</sup>. According to the EU's National Financing Plan 2004 for the West Bank and Gaza<sup>22</sup>, funding for CSOs is provided to support «local and international civil society initiatives which promote peace, tolerance and non-violence» and «ideas [...] for achieving the two-state solution». This document goes on to state that the program aims to promote initiatives which entail «less politicized, more practical activities which will promote communication and understanding».

The EU, however, does not provide any mechanism for evaluating the activities of these CSO recipients, other than to receive the reports provided by them. And individual officials serving in the region and involved in providing this funding and interacting with the CSOs involved have acknowledged that there is no oversight once the funding has been provided, other than a limited effort to insure that the money does not disappear due to

corruption, as was the case for other funds provided to the Palestinians. In many cases, the donors are primarily interested in being seen to have made the effort, rather than in showing results. Alon Liel, who served as the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry in 2000 and 2001, and in this capacity, was responsible for monitoring the «official» people-to-people activities, learned that his efforts to provide evaluations were resented by the donors. «Most of the projects had to be cancelled, or had become completely meaningless under the circumstances. During some of those that were somehow carried out, there were even Israelis and Palestinians who had engaged in fist fights, or at least in yelling at each other. I knew exactly how marginal the people-to-people activities had become. [...] many organizations had to pretend as if the programs had been successfully carried out». But when he reported this to a donor representative, «He simply refused to accept the bad news. He did not appreciate at all my sincerity. It looked like I had spoiled his day, if not his whole trip to our region. [...] The report he received from his Palestinian counterparts was probably very different and he preferred the good news to the bad ones»<sup>23</sup>.

The EU/EMP emphasis on CSOs in this framework is also hampered by the nature of the societies, which are, with the exception of Israel and Turkey, closed and non-democratic. The Palestinian NGOs, in particular, are very much subject to and influence or even controlled by the dominant political and economic forces in this society, and many of them can be considered GNGOs, in terms of their close links to the controlling elites, particularly in the mainstream Fatah movement. The democracy deficit of the major civil society organisations, specifically those funded by the EU for the objectives cited above (peace-building, intercultural dialogue, human rights, development, etc.) is very acute. Specific examples include MIFTAH, PCHR, ARIJ, PNGO, Al Mezan, and many others<sup>24</sup>.

Furthermore, detailed examination of some of the CSOs that receive funding under these EU frameworks reveal that they are active in the conflict itself, and have a counterproductive impact. For example, the Euro Mediterranean Human Rights Network<sup>25</sup> (EMHRN), is an umbrella organisation for NGOs in the Euro-Mediterranean region claiming to «support and publicize the universal principles of human rights as expressed in the Barcelona

Declaration [Barcelona Process, see above].» The EMHRN framework includes over sixty human rights groups working in the region that «monitor the Partner States' compliance with the human rights principles in the Barcelona Declaration».

However, many of EMHRN's partners<sup>26</sup> include extremely politicised NGOs such as the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (discussed below), Al Mezan and Al Haq, as documented by NGO Monitor<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, the only Israeli partner organisation is a politicized group based in the Arab sector and not representative of the Israeli public. Israeli civil society and the «third sector» is extremely vigorous, reflecting a wide range of social projects, bonding, and bridging activities<sup>28</sup>. But these groups are not represented in EMHRN activities or in wider EU programs.

An examination of EMHRN's activities shows that instead of encouraging dialogue and exchanges among equals, most of the statements are highly political. For example, in October 2002, EMHRN wrote a letter to Javier Solana<sup>29</sup>, the EU Foreign Affairs Ministers at the time, calling on the EU to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement. Similarly, in October 2005<sup>30</sup>, after the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, EMHRN issued a press release based entirely on statements by the heads of two highly politicised Palestinian CSOs<sup>31</sup>. And in April 2006, EMHRN issued another press release with a political statement reflecting the Palestinian position<sup>32</sup>, rather than any bridging activity that might lead to reduction in violence or mutual understanding.

The same problem and shortcoming is seen in many of the other Palestinian and Israeli CSOs funded in these frameworks by the EU and EMP. These include MIFTAH, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICHAD), the East Jerusalem YMCA, Adalah, the Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, the Arab Association for Human Rights (HRA), and HaMoked<sup>33</sup>.

These limitations and distortions in the EMP policies regarding CSOs related to this conflict are clearly reflected in the results. Despite major efforts to involve civil society in the Arab-Israel peace efforts, and large allocations from the EU and European governments, it is difficult to discern any positive impacts. Instead, the soft political power wielded by well-financed NGOs has been used to promote ideological campaigns, particularly in form of the campaign to demonise and delegitimise Israel through repeated use of terms

such as «apartheid», «war crimes», «violation of human rights», etc. This activity, often referred to as the Durban strategy, has also contributed to the tensions and conflict between Israel and Europe, which has funded many of these political and ideological NGOs<sup>34</sup>.

#### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

As demonstrated, EU policy, in general, and the EMP, in particular, emphasize the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in human rights, intercultural dialogue and people-to-people (P2P) programmes. This emphasis is based largely on hopes and theory, but there is little systematic empirical analysis of their impacts and limitations. As seen in the case of EU-funded CSOs active in the specific framework of Israeli-Palestinian conflict management and cooperation projects, these efforts do not have a measurable or sustained impact. Many of the groups involved are often participants in the conflict, rather than in promoting effective dialogue and common values, as outlined in the EMP objectives. In the few examples in which meaningful interaction and dialogue takes place, the impact on negative stereotypes and in building functional cooperation is shown to be limited to the micro-level, without visible influence on the wider society, and short lived.

To improve this record significantly and consistently, this research indicated that funding from EMP, and related policy guidelines require the development of empirical evaluation methodologies to determine effectiveness of programmes for which the funds are provided to the CSOs and NGOs. Transparency is extremely important in this process, as the information on the recipients of funding, the criteria, and evaluation processed must be available to all parties and to uninvolved external research and evaluation teams.

On this basis, each programme and organisation should be examined with respect to a number of critical criteria, including:

- the degree to which it is related to the wider society;
  - whether mission statements are consistent with activities;
  - the power relationships between the CSO and the ruling elites;
  - the terms of interaction in the context of intercultural dialogue.
- Furthermore, those CSOs which are, in fact, not part of a civil

society framework that encourages dialogue and mutual acceptance should not be funded under the relevant EMP programmes. Groups that are isolated in their own societies and reflect the common problem of the «democracy deficit» in voluntary organisations, are unlikely agents for promotion of wide-spread dialogue on the basis of equality.

Based on this empirical analysis, the EU is in need of a fundamental rethinking of its policy on NGOs and peace efforts in the EMP context, focusing on realistic goals that will not contribute to the conflict. In democracies, such as Israel and Turkey, EU funding for fringe groups that are alienated from the consensus create friction. In non-democratic societies, EU funding for NGOs that are closely identified with the corrupt ruling elite are also counter-productive. And efforts by the EU to impose its own ideology and specific experience, such as secularism, via funding for NGOs and civil society, should also be re-examined. In addition, greater emphasis should also be placed on promoting dialogue and mutual understanding between the Southern Mediterranean societies and the members of the European Union. While there is no guarantee of positive and long-lasting results, including greater mutual understanding and adoption of common values through such processes, the outcomes can be monitored closely, and the programs adjusted accordingly. These are among the major dimensions that have been absent in civil society organisation activities supported under the EMP to date.

<sup>1</sup> C. Hauss, *Civil Society*, in G. Burgess and H. Burgess (eds.), *Beyond Intractability*, Boulder (CO), Conflict Research Consortium-University of Colorado, available at [www.beyondintractability.org/m/civil\\_society.jsp](http://www.beyondintractability.org/m/civil_society.jsp) (August 2003).

<sup>2</sup> The EU definitions of NGOs and CSOs are highly amorphous. See Commission discussion paper, *The Commission and Non-Governmental Organizations Building a Stronger Partnership*, presented by President Prodi and Vice-President Kinnock on 18 January 2000, pp. 3 ff., available at [www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu) (November 2006), and [www.europeanhouse.hu/e/integration/discussion\\_paper.shtml](http://www.europeanhouse.hu/e/integration/discussion_paper.shtml) (November 2006), Official Journal, serie C, n. 268, 19 September 2000.

<sup>3</sup> For a limited exception see T. Landham and M. Abraham, *Evaluation of Nine Non-Governmental Human Rights Organisations*, IOB Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 2004, available at [www.euforic.org/iob/detail\\_page.phtml?&username=guest@euforic.org&password=9999&groups=IOB&&page=docs\\_eval\\_content](http://www.euforic.org/iob/detail_page.phtml?&username=guest@euforic.org&password=9999&groups=IOB&&page=docs_eval_content) (November 2006). The methodology employed in this analysis did not include establishing verifiable criteria for measuring impact.

<sup>4</sup> A. Papisca, Working Paper p. 2, para. 7; p. 3 paras. 12, 13, 15; p. 5 para. 23; see the *Introduction* of the present volume.

<sup>5</sup> R.D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton,

- Princeton University Press, 1993; id., *Bowling Alone*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 2000.
- <sup>6</sup> B. Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1966, pp. 413-432, cited by L.M. Salamon, W.S. Sokolowski and H.K. Anheier, *Social Origins of Civil Society: An Overview*, in «Working Papers of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project», n. 38, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, December 2000.
- <sup>7</sup> J. Cohen and A. Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, Cambridge (Mass.), The MIT Press, 1992.
- <sup>8</sup> The «bonding» and «bridging» functions of civil society are analysed in R.D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, cit.
- <sup>9</sup> R.D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*, in «Journal of Democracy», vol. 6, n. 1, January 1995, p. 66.
- <sup>10</sup> W. Seibel, *Government: Third Sector Relationships in a Comparative Perspective: The Cases of France and West Germany*, in «Voluntas», n. 1, 1990, p. 46, cited by L.M. Salamon, W.S. Sokolowski and H.K. Anheier, *Social Origins of Civil Society...*, cit.
- <sup>11</sup> J.S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York, Public Affairs, 2004; see also id., *The Decline of America's Soft Power*, in «Foreign Affairs», May/June 2004.
- <sup>12</sup> H. Slim, *By What Authority? The Legitimacy and Accountability of Non-Governmental Organisations*, in *International Meeting on Global Trends and Human Rights Before and After September 11*, Geneva, International Council on Human Rights Policy, January 2002; G. Johns, *The NGO Challenge: Whose Democracy Is It Anyway?*, Institute for Public Affairs, Australia, available at [www.aei.org/docLib/20030630\\_johns.pdf](http://www.aei.org/docLib/20030630_johns.pdf) (November 2006); P. Niggli and A. Rothenbuhler, *Do the NGOs Have a Problem of Legitimacy?*, December 2003, available at [www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/credib/2003/1203problem.htm](http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/credib/2003/1203problem.htm) (November 2006).
- <sup>13</sup> R.C. Blitt, *Who Will Watch the Watchdogs: Human Rights Non-Governmental Organizations and the Case for Regulation*, in «Buffalo Human Rights Law Review», vol. 10, 2004.
- <sup>14</sup> A. Hamzawy (ed.), *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Berlin, Hans Schiler, 2003 (Nahost-Studien n. 4).
- <sup>15</sup> This section includes research findings provided by Jeremy Sharon and Frederiqua de Courten and published in [www.ngo-monitor.org](http://www.ngo-monitor.org).
- <sup>16</sup> European Union, [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/gaza/intro/index.htm#2.3](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/gaza/intro/index.htm#2.3) (November 2006).
- <sup>17</sup> European Union, [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/mepp/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/mepp/index.htm) (November 2006).
- <sup>18</sup> European Union, [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/euromed/meda.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/meda.htm) (November 2006).
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- <sup>20</sup> European Union, [www.delwbg.ec.europa.eu/en/cooperatio\\_development/aid2004.htm](http://www.delwbg.ec.europa.eu/en/cooperatio_development/aid2004.htm) (November 2006).
- <sup>21</sup> European Union, [www.delwbg.ec.europa.eu/en/cooperatio\\_development/plan2004.pdf](http://www.delwbg.ec.europa.eu/en/cooperatio_development/plan2004.pdf) (November 2006).
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.
- <sup>23</sup> The specific example refers to a Norwegian diplomat, who was the head of the donor committee, including the EU; A. Liel, *People-to-People: Telling the Truth about the Israeli-Palestinian Case*, in «Palestine-Israel Journal», vol. 12-13, n. 4, 2005, pp. 19-21.
- <sup>24</sup> Detailed analysis of these groups is provided by [www.ngo-monitor.org](http://www.ngo-monitor.org).
- <sup>25</sup> NGO Monitor, [www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#euro](http://www.ngo-monitor.org/archives/infofile.htm#euro) (November 2006).
- <sup>26</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, [www.emhrn.net/pages/58#Palestine](http://www.emhrn.net/pages/58#Palestine) (November 2006).
- <sup>27</sup> See [www.ngo-monitor.org](http://www.ngo-monitor.org) and G. Steinberg, *Soft Powers Play Hardball: NGOs Wage War against Israel*, in «Israel Affairs» (forthcoming, 2007).
- <sup>28</sup> Y. Yishai and A. Timm, *Israeli Civil Society: Historical Development and New Challenges*, in A. Hamzawy, (ed.), *Civil Society in the Middle East*, cit.

- <sup>29</sup> NGO Monitor, [www.ngo-monitor.org/editions/v1n08/v1n08-1.htm](http://www.ngo-monitor.org/editions/v1n08/v1n08-1.htm) (November 2006).  
<sup>30</sup> NGO Monitor, [www.ngo-monitor.org/editions/v4n03/EMHRN-Discrepancy.htm](http://www.ngo-monitor.org/editions/v4n03/EMHRN-Discrepancy.htm) (November 2006).  
<sup>31</sup> Al Mezan, [www.mezan.org/document/EMHRN\\_RELEASE\\_EN.pdf](http://www.mezan.org/document/EMHRN_RELEASE_EN.pdf) (November 2006).  
<sup>32</sup> European Union, [www.euromedrights.net/pages/275/news/focus/9435](http://www.euromedrights.net/pages/275/news/focus/9435) (November 2006).  
<sup>33</sup> The political bases of these CSOs have been analysed at [www.ngo-monitor.org](http://www.ngo-monitor.org).  
<sup>34</sup> See [www.ngo-monitor.org](http://www.ngo-monitor.org).

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