

Synthesis Report from the e-Consultation on

Cooperative Multistakeholder Action:

Constructive or Confusing Global Governance?

June 13 – July 31, 2016

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Executive Summary

From June 13 – July 31, 2016, The Stanley Foundation, in collaboration with The Stimson Center, brought together eighty-two scholars, NGO leaders, UN practitioners, policy analysts, and government officials from around the world for a seven-week e-Consultation on *Cooperative Multistakeholder Action: Constructive or Confusing Global Governance?* The Stanley Foundation has embarked on exploring cooperative multistakeholder action (CMA), with a belief that greater understanding of this topic by the policy community will improve global governance. An integral part of a broader examination of this topic, the online dialogue was organized to help inform the development of a practical guide on ideas, methods, and practices for understanding, generating, and enhancing cooperative multistakeholder action on significant global issues.

Within interval #1 of the e-Consultation on “Understanding Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance”, a major takeaway was the recognition that new coalitions of traditional global actors (states and international organizations) and non-traditional actors (civil society, the business community, and the media) find their primary comparative advantages in increasing capacity (through the mobilization of resources from diverse sources) and political will when seeking to address a shared global problem or “global governance gap.” In short, these unique and flexible hybrid arrangements aim to overcome governance constraints and failures that governments predominantly face. CMA coalitions have dealt with diverse issues, ranging from, for example, peacebuilding and climate governance to promoting human rights, combatting illicit financial flows, and better governing natural resources and the Internet.

In the the second interval discussion on “The Craft of Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance”, illustrative examples (for example, how the Coalition for the International Criminal Court closely interfaces with states and the United Nations Secretariat and how the International Campaign to Ban Landmines engaged the associated state-led Ottawa Process) demonstrated many of the functions of cooperative multistakeholder action by performing, for instance, roles in areas as varied as norm diffusion, pressuring reluctant governments, conducting public awareness campaigns, providing inputs to treaty text revisions, fulfilling information dissemination functions, and sometimes directly influencing negotiations by inserting NGO leaders within state delegations. With regard to a multistakeholder coalition's lifecycle, the starting point is often—though not exclusively—the initiative of a like-minded group of NGOs and only later governments and international organizations become more involved. At the same time, within a developmental or post-conflict context, building a multistakeholder coalition requires strong national ownership to ensure a high degree of success and sustainability.

Within the final interval of the online dialogue focused on “Cooperative Multistakeholder Action and New Frontiers for Global Governance”, several of the suggested “new frontier” issues included protracted displacement and refugees, conflict prevention, and resurgent authoritarianism and democratic backsliding. In an effort to further “improve the craft of cooperative multistakeholder action”, it is important to recognize how incentives and interests differ for each stakeholder group. External actors can help to create “safe spaces” (a type of incentive) for all stakeholders. In addition, advances in technology and science allow us to re-think collaborative and network governance in a more distributed manner. By using

crowdsourcing, data, and expert technology, for instance, one can identify expertise, roles, and interests in new ways and re-imagine multistakeholdership and partnership for the 21st century.

Overall, other major insights, experiences, and specific recommendations shared were:

- It is not enough for a top-down actor to simply call for multistakeholder governance. It has to actively foment such channels and be open to venues created from below.
- When state actors are either unable or unwilling to provide basic human rights and no actor alone is able to effectively regulate, the multistakeholder initiative model is possibly the most feasible, legitimate, and effective approach to establish human rights.
- There are “forum shopping” implications in which states can employ multistakeholder arenas to sidestep traditional intergovernmental arenas where they are outvoted.
- State-driven demand for multistakeholder action exists; this is transforming sovereignty.
- In contributing to “smart coalitions”, NGOs can bring to a multilateral negotiation technical expertise, a penchant for shaming governments, and norm entrepreneurship.
- Ensure that multistakeholder coalition building is based on an understanding of different perspectives and motives and done with a purpose in mind (and not for its own sake).
- Is there a point beyond which entities are, or could, do better in a "momentum organizing" style, where leaders put in the time to get to know each other well and share foundational principles but are not extensively coordinating day-to-day? When is multistakeholder action not the right course or how do we judge when it is not working?
- Clearly outlined procedures and carefully managed processes create trust among and help to focus diverse stakeholders; we recommend neutral secretariats and skilled discussion facilitators that define procedures, manage communication, and guide processes.
- Governments and international organization can fund CMA coalitions, but this requires that diverse coalitions are recognized as legitimate and complement state regulation.
- There is potential for a “super-coalition” around Goal #16 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which deals with peace, justice, and strong institutions.
- The digital environment, particularly the Internet, is a (by now not so) new frontier issue that will continue to pose challenges and opportunities to national and global governance.
- As governance institutions and processes are re-designing themselves, multistakeholder partnerships should take stock of what works and how to apply the tools, insights, and methods that can make them more legitimate and effective (see the literature at ogrx.org).
- It is not about choosing between traditional NGOs and less formal/more fluid actors like movements. It is about figuring out how to build strategic alliances between them. It is about developing flexible funding mechanisms for movement actors and amplifying the voices of legitimate grassroots actors in multilateral fora. It is about building a global ecosystem of support for movements focused on mobilizing diverse constituencies to advance democracy and social justice.
- A United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (or Network) could serve as a forum for multistakeholder coalitions to amplify their voices and leverage impact. Alongside the still central role of states in global decision-making, such an assembly or network could offer moral authority and another access point to global policy discussions. In so doing, it would dilute the current over-reliance of NGOs on governments for international participation opportunities and enhance the standing of multistakeholder coalitions.

Overview of the CMA e-Consultation

From June 13 – July 31, 2016, The Stanley Foundation, in collaboration with The Stimson Center, conducted a seven-week e-Consultation on ***Cooperative Multistakeholder Action: Constructive or Confusing Global Governance?*** Eighty-two individuals from around the world and from many professional disciplines, including scholars, NGO leaders, UN practitioners, policy analysts, and government officials, participated in the online conversation. The exercise is part of a larger initiative, undertaken by The Stanley Foundation, New America, and The Stimson Center, to reflect on the effectiveness and legitimacy of—as well as to consider new, innovative approaches to—multistakeholder action within global governance. Through three workshops held in New York, Washington, D.C., and Denver, and the commissioning of five background papers, a guide or primer on cooperative Multistakeholder action will be prepared for presentation and discussion at the 57th Strategy for Peace Conference, organized by the Stanley Foundation from October 26-28, 2016 at Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia.

For the e-Consultation and wider project, cooperative multistakeholder action (CMA) in global governance is defined as: “innovative transnational and multi-actor coalitions which combine states, international organizations, and non-state actors that seek to strengthen and promote new international norms and achieve effective responses to policy challenges.”¹ The emphasis here is on a definition that reflects the contributions—to both norm creation and diffusion as well as concrete actions on the ground—of diverse stakeholders from within civil society, governments, international organizations, the business community, and the media.

The e-Consultation was structured in three two-week intervals (plus one additional summing up week), and the heading of first two-week interval was “Understanding Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance”, the second interval dealt with “The Craft of Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance”, and the final interval focused on “Cooperative Multistakeholder Action and New Frontiers for Global Governance”. For each phase, participants were requested to contribute to the online dialogue by responding to select questions, as well as commenting on other contributor’s interventions.

e-Consultation Focus and Goals

The number and variety of actors (including, for example, governments, international organizations, the private sector, and a wide variety of civil society groups) involved in global governance has increased dramatically, but this phenomenon remains poorly understood. The lack of common tools to analyze this changing context has further restricted policymakers and stakeholders in global governance from understanding their options and acting in the most effective manner. The Stanley Foundation has embarked on exploring cooperative multistakeholder action, with a belief that greater understanding of this topic by the policy community will improve global governance. As an integral part of this exercise, a seven-week e-Consultation was organized to help inform the development of a guide or primer of ideas,

¹ Heather Hurlburt, “Cooperative Multistakeholder Action: Discussion Paper for the May 23-25 Convenings”, New America, The Stanley Foundation, and The Stimson Center, May 2016, 1.

methods, and practices for understanding, generating, and enhancing cooperative multistakeholder action on significant global issues.

Goals:

- Capture key insights, experiences, and policy recommendations from policymakers, practitioners, and scholars concerned with making global governance more effective, legitimate, and accountable through inclusive approaches that harness the capabilities, networks, and ideas of all relevant stakeholders.
- Support the design of a multi-faceted and user-friendly primer (common, practical, and actionable guidelines) for improved cooperative multistakeholder action in global policymaking and implementation in the context of changing global governance.
- Contribute to a stakeholder mapping and evaluation (horizon scan) of the global governance agenda, governance gaps, and emerging issues, particularly related to rapid political/social/economic/technological change globally.

From the seven-week discussion, the following synthesis report of the chief insights and policy-oriented recommendations made has been produced, including specific ideas to further the development of a guide for improved cooperative multistakeholder action in global policymaking and implementation. Furthermore, an accompanying compilation of all participants' contributions to the online dialogue has been generated.

As part of the broader project on cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance, a Policy Memo synthesizing findings and recommendations from two recent workshops on cooperative multistakeholder action held in New York (May 23) and Washington, D.C. (May 25) can be accessed by [clicking here](#). In addition, the Discussion Note prepared for these workshops by Heather Hurlburt of New America can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

I. Interval #1 (June 14 – June 26): **Understanding Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance**

The initial two-week interval of the e-Consultation aimed to ensure that the participants comprehended cooperative Multistakeholder action in global governance from a, more-or-less, similar level of understanding, albeit coming from varied backgrounds and professional experiences. For this first interval, the main questions posed to participants were:

- ❖ How are multistakeholder coalitions filling gaps in global governance? What, in your view, are examples of successful multistakeholder coalitions, and where have efforts come up short? (*please share specific lessons*)
- ❖ How is large-scale cooperative multistakeholder action redefining the role of states, cities, businesses/industry, civil society, intergovernmental organizations, the media, and other actors in global governance (for example, in combating climate change,

governing the Internet, promoting corporate social responsibility norms, and safeguarding the security of states and people)? *(please give 1-2 examples)*

- ❖ Can cooperative multistakeholder action build global norms in the behavior of fragile states that have limited governance capacity, authoritarian states where the nonstate role is circumscribed, predatory states, or areas under contested control?

Several participants shared the view that multistakeholder networks are critical to policy-making and problem solving in global governance, though their track record at times can be “extremely uneven” as one contributor noted and another highlighted the often inherent tension between state-based (traditional) and non-state (non-traditional) actors. Their primary value-add is found in the areas of increasing capacity (through the mobilization of resources from diverse sources) and political will, as well as overcoming other constraints (or even failures) that governments mainly face, when seeking to address a shared global problem or “global governance gap.”

Among the diverse examples of successful multistakeholder coalitions shared included: the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers Association, the Coalitions for the International Criminal Court, from the world of cyber-governance (e.g., ICANN/IANA and the NETMundial Principles), countering violent radicalization and the exploitation of youth and children, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the Voluntary Principles for Security and Human Rights (VPs), the Community of Democracies (CD), the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), the Freedom Online Coalition (FOC), the Open Government Partnership (OGP), the Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade (PPA), responding to transnational organized crime and illicit financial flows, the Pacific Area Special Operations Conference, the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (a formally-mandated multi-sectoral system addressing maritime piracy), and at the local level in supporting elections in Nigeria and security sector reform in Afghanistan.

While multistakeholder arrangements lack the legitimacy and enduring nature of formally constituted intergovernmental organizations, they garner respect and appreciation by their ability to act quickly and nimbly, and they seem to be most effective by operating in policy spaces that are not already “owned” by some existing formal entity. In doing so, these often innovative arrangements are redefining how traditional actors (i.e., the dominant state and intergovernmental organization actors of the twentieth century) perform and support global governance, ceding ground and making space for a burgeoning number of non-traditional actors from within civil society (including NGOs, social movements, and religious institutions), the media, and the business community. Indeed, multistakeholder initiatives can support the regulatory capacity of states, particularly for trans-national issues and for issues where hands-on business expertise and buy-in is critical (e.g. to set up an effective monitoring system for factories in the garment supply chain of Western brands). Governments, in fact, often function as “orchestrators/conveners” of multistakeholder initiatives.

Private industry has begun operate as an active participant in politics and the human condition rather than as a passive bystander interested solely in profit. Moreover, social media tools have increased the capacity of civil society organizations and individuals to similarly organized in new, influential ways that can alter whole regimes. On the flip side, multistakeholder coalitions

can often provide states with a reason to continue not doing what they should have been doing all along, as other actors step in to pick up the slack for failed or indifferent governments. At the same time, it is important to stress that a redefinition of the role of the state happens only when there is a degree of institutionalization of a particular multistakeholder coalition.

In terms of building global norms within authoritarian or fragile states, it was felt by some participants that the multistakeholder model faces limitations that are intrinsic to the nature of authoritarian or under-developed political systems. However, the goal of broader inclusion should not be discarded, especially as organized civil society and private sector actors are often those that "push the envelope" on political participation, and in some areas more direct involvement in issues of international interest may be more palatable than others. For instance, Chinese NGOs have had success in contributing to certain international debates around environmental issues, yet far less so in the case of human rights. The idea of a state-driven multistakeholder coalition is possible within a truly democratic society, but not within an authoritarian system where state instruments of coercion are often employed actively to intimidate independent civil society organizations.

Further key takeaways, insights, and specific recommendations from this portion of the online dialogue include:

- Three major ways in which multistakeholder initiatives vary: (1) in purpose, (2) in membership and structure, and (3) in effects.
- In the context of limited or no access by governments to private socio-economic spaces (for example, the tracking of international financial flows and money laundering linked to international terrorism or organized crime), innovative multistakeholder coalitions (in the form of "public-private-partnerships") can help to fill gaps to counter violent extremism and fight crime.
- In West Africa, conflict-prone states suffer from governance challenges, in particular the poor management of natural resources. Addressing protracted intra-state violence requires an inclusive governance regime that offers a voice and opportunities to foster accountability by all major stakeholder groups.
- Network structures that incorporate non-state actors are treated with more suspicion by states than those which are purely intergovernmental.
- "Humanitarian law" is often viewed in the Middle East as an imposition of Western values based on a system of secular values ranked above divine law. Programs ostensibly building the "rule of law" worldwide commonly run afoul of questions as to "whose law, and what are the implications of adopting the intent and conceptual framework from Western donors?"
- Cooperative multistakeholder action is likely to work best (in the sense of permitting the inclusion of a broad gamut of voices constructively, without bogging down the policy process) when there is already in place such a system in specific countries regarding a particular topic, and that topic becomes linked to an international regime and/or agenda.
- It is not enough for a top-down actor, whether a government or an international organization (the UN, for instance), to simply call for, or will into being, multistakeholder governance. It has to actively foment such channels and be open to venues created from below.

- The NETMundial Initiative (on the Future of Internet Governance) provides a successful model for how the international community can approach global, multi-layer Internet policy-making in a trans-border digital context.
- When state actors are either unable or unwilling to provide basic human rights and no actor alone is able to effectively regulate, the multistakeholder initiative model is possibly the most feasible, legitimate and effective approach to establish human rights.
- There are “forum shopping” implications in which states can employ multistakeholder arenas to sidestep international arenas where they are outvoted in traditional intergovernmental organizations. Democratic governments view the advantages of certain types of multistakeholder arrangements compared to their more illiberal counterparts, and as global power diffuses, a move toward multistakeholder initiatives might be a conscious strategy designed to prolong American influence in the world.
- People are demanding much more from states than ever before. In turn some states, looking to fulfill those demands (at least minimally), are looking to innovative approaches, including new types of relationships with non-state actors, to accomplish this. In short, a state-driven demand for (some) multistakeholder action exists, and this, in turn, changes the dynamic around protection of sovereignty.

II. Interval #2 (June 27 – July 10): **The Craft of Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance**

The craft or practice of cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance involves many different stages (or phases) and specific types of engagement from a variety of stateholders within governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, academic and research institutions, and the media. Often operating in a sequential or linear fashion, these “functions” of cooperative multistakeholder action include—but are not exclusively limited to: (i) initial trust and coalition-building around a policy issue, (ii) advocacy/norms development and dissemination, (iii) policy agenda-setting, (iv) implementation, and (v) monitoring/oversight and evaluation/accountability. For this new two-week interval, we wish to seek your perspectives on the craft of cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance in its many dimensions.

For this second interval of the e-Consultation, the main questions posed to participants were:

- ❖ What are the major functions (e.g., initial trust and coalition-building around a policy issue, advocacy/norms development and dissemination, policy agenda-setting, implementation, monitoring/oversight and evaluation/accountability) of cooperative multistakeholder action? Where are tensions and opposition (including intense polarization) likely to be most apparent? (*please cite 1-2 examples*)
- ❖ What are some useful methodologies and tools for mapping and better understanding key stakeholders in global governance (e.g., in the areas of actor typologies, capacities, power, relationships, geography, and boundary setting, including those usually unseen or marginalized)?

- ❖ What, if any, are the differences about cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance in the early phase of trust/coalition-building, advocacy/norms, and policy agenda-setting versus the latter phase of implementation and monitoring/oversight and evaluation/accountability? How are priorities set in a given policy context? What happens when an issue becomes re-framed by new actors or precipitating events? During the lifecycle of a multistakeholder coalition, are there general lessons on expansion, merging (for example, with another related coalition or coalitions), and responding effectively to both success and failure?

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (and its close interaction with states and the United Nations Secretariat) and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (and the associated state-led Ottawa Process) are illustrative examples of cooperation between multiple stakeholders from different sectors within global governance. They demonstrate many of the functions of effective (and cooperative) multistakeholder action, by performing, for example, roles in areas of norm diffusion, pressuring reluctant governments, conducting public awareness campaigns, providing inputs to treaty text revisions, fulfilling information dissemination functions, and sometimes directly influencing negotiations by inserting, for instance, NGO leaders within state delegations. Both during the Ottawa Process and drafting of the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute, large coalitions of NGOs sought the support of like-minded states. Middle powers, such as Canada, whose human security-agenda drove the adoption of both treaties to an important extent, were able to apply their "soft power", despite opposition from powerful states, including the United States, China, and Russia.

With regard to a multistakeholder coalition's lifecycle, the starting point is often the initiative of a like-minded group of NGOs and only later governments and international organizations become more involved. Thus, at least in cases such as the Coalition for an International Criminal Court, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, or the Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly, NGOs perform a catalytic or initiating role. At the same time, within a developmental or post-conflict context, building a multistakeholder coalition requires strong national ownership to ensure a high degree of success and sustainability, especially during the coalition's implementation phase.

Critics may be tempted to decry any alleged "institutionalization" of interactions between nongovernmental stakeholders and governments, with legitimate concerns about co-option and legitimacy. But in an unstable world buffeted by Brexit, it seems worth the effort, argued one contributor. As another also contends, not only will multistakeholder initiatives grow in importance as a way of focusing attention on critical global governance deficiencies (the coalition building, agenda-setting and norm diffusion parts of the equations) but also actively implementing solutions (points iv & v above). This is especially true since multistakeholder initiatives, unlike governments, do not have to focus to the same extent on crisis management; they can plan, advocate for, and implement solutions to address "over the horizon" concerns a lot more effectively (at least, under ideal circumstances). As another contributor commented, umbrella organizations/coalitions appear more important in the earlier phases of coalition-building and advocacy than in the later phases of implementation and monitoring, in which the number of non-state actors involved shrinks (as some move to new issue areas) and cooperation takes place more between individual groups (and states).

Monitoring is also an important tool to set the agenda going forward in a multistakeholder coalition's implementation phase. In the context of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, for example, Reaching Critical Will (manifesting many of the qualities of effective CMA) has been a vigorous advocate for nuclear disarmament and also deeply critical of the nuclear weapon states' progress in this area. Thus, it is not surprising that the coalition's monitoring reports grade progress towards disarmament particularly harshly, and assign a high level of importance to making progress in this area.

Beyond the linear progression of functions outlined above, one contributor share the experience that led to the strengthening of genocide prevention commitments among member states through regional fora and more recently to the creation of the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC). Rather than a "coalition-building around a policy issue", there was a long period of exploration—an experimentation of sorts—through which options were considered and proposed. A state-led initiative created with significant input from civil society organizations, GAAMAC is an example of how many issues might not be addressed properly if there is no interaction among "a variety of stakeholders within governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, academic and research institutions, and the media."

As far as developing a typology for the various types of cooperative multistakeholder action out there, one criteria that presents itself as a relatively-easy-to-discern characteristic for a given multistakeholder coalitions is its level of formalization/organization. At the less formal end are movements of diverse stakeholders who pull together informally to call attention to an issue. These can be one-off efforts, or they can exhibit slightly more coordination, especially where actors are repeat players in a given policy space. More formalized coalitions tend to exhibit certain organizational features, such as branding of the coalition, websites, and regular convergences. More formal still are self-identified organizations with membership criteria and obligations, rules governing collective action, and funding mechanisms. The most formal organizations tend to have secretariats, regular dues structures, and legal personality. In all of these cases, it is important to acknowledge the role of civil society organizations in identifying an issue/policy space ripe for CMA and then driving toward formalization (to lesser and greater degrees).

In terms of examples of coalitions of actors merging on once disparate (and certainly separate) issues, some interesting development are underway in the two spaces of climate change and security (especially "resource security). For example, the G7's New Climate for Peace Initiative is an example of governments employing think tanks to contextualize, research, and report on a critical issue facing the international community, perhaps with more speed than seven governments would be able to do on their own. As an agenda-setting effort, it is starting to deliver results, though it is too early to say whether this generates momentum within governments to take concrete actions beyond what they are already doing.

Greater interest and engagement in multistakeholder alliance-building is driven, in part, by a need to demonstrate to funders the "Value-for-Money" proposition in giving to a specific NGO. This points out a tension between understanding the "best ways" to advance our shared understanding of what makes for good global governance and what those who are funding these

same collaborations understand as success. Consequently, NGOs will see the value of collaboration differently depending on their relative state-of-evolution at a given time. In response, one commentator recommends that: 1) we expand that consideration to other practical realities NGOs face (e.g., funding sources), and, 2) we better anticipate the sets of "best practices" involving multistakeholder action that will vary across different sets of circumstances; in short, "one-size doesn't fit all."

Further key takeaways, insights, and specific recommendations from this portion of the online dialogue include:

- Employing the relative strengths of all major stakeholder groups is essential to standing up effective "smart coalitions." For example, NGOs can bring to a multilateral negotiation technical expertise, the appearance of democratic legitimacy, a penchant for shaming governments, and norm entrepreneurship.
- Single-issue advocacy campaigns—pursuing a coherent and widely shared norm—have the greatest chance for success in mobilizing support across and between diverse stakeholders; complex and more nuanced reform initiatives, with few marketable aspects (or clear-cut and attractive milestones to be achieved), are far less likely to raise widespread and broad-based support.
- Just as the demand for pre and post-conflict stabilization activities increased in recent years, the supply of such assistance from donors has dramatically decreased. Have IOs, NGOs, think tanks, or for-profit actors been able to fill the gap? There is a significant debate about this, but various experiences of relative success and relative failure suggest that the record is mixed.
- Civil society groups often find it harder to engage/participate as effectively once these organizations have become more formal and institutionalized. The reasons for these participation-related challenges are diverse, but they include: lack of funding; difficulty justifying continued engagement as progress is perceived as too slow; reputation-related considerations; and changes in strategy/priority at the organizational level.
- Most NGOs are started by issue-focused visionaries who assemble a small group of people who share the vision. Over time, though, growth in staff, turnover in management, and changes in funding streams require more formal structures and stronger internal controls. Are there parallels here in CMA coalition formation?
- The stakeholders within a diverse coalition need to contain both "thinkers" and "doers", including think-tanks, NGOs, development organizations, and bi/multilateral political organizations. Whereas the "thinkers" are crucial during the planning and evaluation phases, the "doers" are instrumental during implementation phases, including in applying pressure on the implementers.
- One important lesson, thus far, for implementing the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda is the need for self-organization within civil society organizations and for better coordination mechanisms among Major Groups and other Stakeholders. A tension has emerged around the ability to keep the High-Level Political Forum process truly multistakeholder within a UN organization comprised of sovereign state members.
- Key will be continuing understanding that to reach the 2030 Agenda's goals and targets, all stakeholders are needed at every level to assist states in achieving the goals and targets they pledged to reach, with the necessary financing and capacity building. Ultimately,

implementation of the Agenda will be monitored on a national level, with states reporting to a regional and international level.

- One can imagine that multistakeholder coalitions more top-down in their origins might be more readily institutionalized than their bottom up counterparts, since using an already existing intergovernmental organizations as a base is a recognizable focal point, but also a natural source for staffing. This could have implications for a coalition's effectiveness moving forward.
- Ensure that the multistakeholder coalition building is done with a purpose or an outcome in mind and not for its own sake. Past lessons suggest that having often an explicit goal or line can influence the realization of maximum benefit in a particular policy space. A shared understanding of perspectives and motives, along with a keen and agile awareness of comparative advantages and limitations in service of a defined goal, can go a long way to building successful multistakeholder coalitions and realizing and leveraging new opportunities for collaboration.

III. Interval #3 (July 11 – July 24): Cooperative Multistakeholder Action and New Frontiers for Global Governance

For this final two-week interval of the e-Consultation (July 11-July 24), we sought to push the boundaries on current approaches to cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance and begin to explore emerging new models and the frontiers of global collective action. In particular, we sought the thoughts and practical experiences of participants on the value and space for forming truly interdisciplinary “super multistakeholder coalitions” on critical global issues that can build upon successful examples of cooperative multistakeholder action. Furthermore, we welcomed perspectives on specific ways to strengthen the interface between civil society, business, citizens, and United Nations in responding to today's most pressing global threats and challenges.

For this third interval, the main questions posed to participants were:

- ❖ What are the linkages and potential areas of collaboration between multistakeholder coalitions dealing with human rights, internet freedom, corruption, extractive industries, and climate change (toward the creation of, for example, “super multistakeholder coalitions”)? How about the linkages and potential areas of multistakeholder coalitions dealing with counterterrorism, development, aid, disaster relief, countering violent extremism, and peacebuilding in conflict-affected states?
- ❖ What are some “new frontier issues” (including emerging challenges, threats, and opportunities) in global governance which could benefit from new kinds of cooperation between governments, international organizations, the private sector, and a wide variety of civil society groups?
- ❖ What are some under-developed concepts, tools/instruments, and techniques that could be showcased within a primer or set of practical guidelines for enhancing the overall effectiveness of cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance (e.g., the introduction of different kinds of “new social compacts” to harness the

capabilities, ideas, and networks of diverse stakeholders toward solving a particular policy challenge)? What technical and organizational innovations are emerging in cooperative multistakeholder action along various stages of Cooperative Multistakeholder Action? Are these innovations sufficient for harnessing the capabilities, networks, and ideas of all relevant stakeholders? What questions have been left unanswered or still need to be asked by this exercise? Do states and international organizations need to change their behavior (or, in certain cases, undertake institutional reforms) to create the space and improve the conditions for new (non-traditional) transnational actors seeking to engage in and contribute to global governance? If yes, what form would the necessary behavioral and/or institutional reforms take?

Dealing with protracted displacement and refugees is a “new frontier issue” for cooperative multistakeholder action that is not just a government, international organizations, or NGO issue but one that involves those displaced and the communities that host them. Secondly, the area of conflict prevention is another issue that stretches from the stratosphere of international policy to the people that reside in conflict affected communities. It is not just a problem for the next UN Secretary-General but a problem for everyone, no matter how we are organized into what groups, organizations, movements, and communities. These two issues are inter-linked. Failure to prevent or resolve conflict results in protracted displacement, humanitarian crises, and myriad developmental challenges.

Resurgent authoritarianism and democratic backsliding are also “new frontier issues” in global governance, Freedom House's findings about a decade-long decline in aggregate freedom scores around the world, combined with new research on the extent and sophistication of authoritarian cooperation and collaboration (plus the prospect of an increasingly illiberal world order), are scary. This is also an area for creative cooperative multistakeholder action. The Community of Democracies (CD) was an important step, but this multilateral organization needs a shot in the arm. There are positive developments in the regional organizations (notably the OAS) and gutsy civil society initiatives around the world, but the dictator's learning curve appears to be outpacing that of the democrats. If repressive trends continue, peacebuilding, development and a range of other social change sectors will face an existential crisis that could take generations to resolve.

On the “craft” of effective CMA, it is important to recognize how incentives and interests differ for each stakeholder group. Sustaining engagement over multiple, often difficult, multilateral (and multi-stakeholder) negotiation rounds is challenging. Particularly for civil society actors with limited resources, such engagement is a tough sell for their own constituents. Understanding the incentives of all stakeholders and facilitating the participation of civil society actors is, therefore, critical to ensure the multistakeholder nature of the initiative over time. Creating “safe spaces” for all stakeholders can be facilitated by external actors, but the role of governments in this context are, for example, not well-explored.

A few lessons for global governance emerge from the tripartite framework (engaging civil society, donors, and host governments) of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States: *first*, the New Deal provides a more diversified template for civil society (for example, by redefining

civil society space in each country of the New Deal; providing peer support across borders, providing technical support, and demonstrating north-south collaboration); *second*, the New Deal serves as a springboard for advocacy around SDG Goal #15; and *third*, the New Deal can pivot to deal with multiple crises.

Advances in technology and science allows us to re-think collaborative and network governance in a more distributed manner. Using crowdsourcing, data, and expert technology one can identify expertise, roles, and interests in new ways and re-imagine multistakeholdership and partnership for the 21st century. Enabling tools such as mappings (e.g. netmundial solutions map at <https://map.netmundial.org/>), expert networks (e.g. network of government innovators at <https://networkofinnovators.org/activity>) or data collaboratives (<https://medium.com/@sverhulst/data-collaboratives-matching-demand-with-supply-of-corporate-data-to-solve-public-problems-dc75b4d683e1#.c4u5qdsqk>) can enable ideation and co-creating of solutions, co-defining and framing of problems and sharing expertise and insights in new and effective ways that should be taken into account by multistakeholder partnerships.

Further key takeaways, insights, and specific recommendations from this portion of the online dialogue include:

- While the multistakeholder approach has been widely accepted in theory in the digital domain, questions about “legitimacy” and “representation” remain as barriers to progress in multistakeholder cyber-governance. For instance, stakeholders from sectors other than government often are better placed to develop policy, but their lack “legitimacy”, especially with respect to the question of whose interest they “represent,” remains a barrier to progress and practical outcomes in cyber-space.
- We are witnessing the potential breakdown of the Westphalian system of nation-states as sub-national groups appear to be gaining prominence, alterations to concepts of sovereignty take further hold, social media permits mechanisms of organization that were previously unavailable to the broad majority of the world’s population, and the internet provides constantly improved ways for dissident voices to continue being heard.
- Is there a point beyond which entities are, or could, do better in a "momentum organizing" style, where leaders put in the time to get to know each other well and share foundational understandings and principles but are NOT extensively coordinating day-to-day? This model is being used by Black Lives Matter and #IfNotNow in the US, inspired by Occupy. In addition, when is multistakeholder action not the right course or how do we judge when it isn't working?
- Clearly outlined procedures and carefully managed processes create trust among very heterogenous stakeholders. We recommend neutral multistakeholder initiative secretariats, as well as skilled discussion facilitators, that define procedures, manage communication, and guide processes. They can help participants stay focused on the objective of the coalition, particularly during the delicate formation stage. Guidelines for good practices have, however, not yet been established.
- Governments and international organization can support multistakeholder initiative funding, but this requires that these diverse coalitions are being recognized as legitimate entities that complement state regulation. We believe that making the case for the CMA model (e.g. through academic and public writing) is, therefore, critical to also to improve the often dire funding situation of future multistakeholder coalitions.

- There is definitely potential for a “super-coalition” around the 16th Sustainable Development Goal, which deals with peace, justice, and strong institutions. Goal 16 was originally proposed as two goals (one dealing with peace and violence, and one dealing with accountable governance). The fact that they’re now joined together under this umbrella might provide an interesting impetus for building a larger partnership.
- In a nutshell, the digital environment, particularly the Internet, is certainly one of these (by now not so) new frontier issues that will continue to pose challenges and opportunities to national and global governance.
- As governance institutions and processes are re-designing themselves, multi-stakeholder partnerships should take stock of what works and how to apply the tools, insights and methods that can make them more legitimate and effective (see the literature at ogrx.org).
- It is not about choosing between traditional NGOs and less formal/more fluid actors like movements. It is about figuring out how to build strategic alliances between them. It is about developing flexible funding mechanisms for movement actors and amplifying the voices of legitimate grassroots actors in multilateral fora. It is about building a global ecosystem of support for movements focused on mobilizing diverse constituencies to advance democracy and social justice.

IV. Other CMA Examples/Issues Beyond the Three Intervals

- 1) ***Creating a UN Parliamentary Assembly or Network***: For several of the contributors, creation a UN Parliamentary Assembly or Network represents a quintessential emerging opportunity for advancing multiple stakeholder collaborative political actions on a number of global challenges. The idea is to form an international "network" of parliamentarians already elected to various national legislatures—where they can consult together and collaborate on any number of transnational issues. The singular key element is that these individuals would not take direct orders from any national government executive branch, but would be accountable instead directly to the voters who elected them. While such a network or assembly would likely possess no legislative authority at its inception, the process of debating and deliberating upon and eventually passing resolutions on many international matters might, more and more over time, be seen as conveying both moral authority and "the voice of the world community."

Multistakeholder coalitions and a UN parliamentary dimension would have a mutual interest in collaborating to advance the collective interest. Their mandates and agendas would be mutually reinforcing. A UN Parliamentary Assembly or UN Parliamentary Network would serve as a forum that would expand the scope of a CMA coalition’s involvement on global issues. It would provide another access point to international policy discussions on global issues. In so doing, it would dilute the current over-reliance on governments for international participation opportunities and enhance the standing of multistakeholder coalitions—within an institutional architecture that would evolve beyond the strictures of the nation-state system.

A follow-on question that arose from this portion of the conversation (recognizing that new demands on NGOs come with costs) is: what benefit is created from the

UNPA/UNPN idea, and in what ways can it help to push the boundaries on current approaches to cooperative multistakeholder action in global governance? In what way would this be similar or not to work with a national parliament? The ultimate attraction of a multistakeholder coalition to the UNPA/UNPN, it was reasoned, may be dependent on the authority given to (or ultimately claimed by) a UNPA/UNPN. Another contributor observed that the international Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly is another example for a multistakeholder coalition in the making and that it may be worth exploring what role international parliamentary institutions play in multistakeholder action. As noted earlier, a UNPA/UNPN could serve as a forum for multistakeholder coalitions to amplify their voices and leverage impact.

- 2) ***Operationalizing the Responsibility to Protect***: Another area where more needs to be done is preventing, responding to, and rebuilding after mass atrocities (genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing). In the past century, from Raphael Lemkin to Samantha Power, from The Genocide Convention to the ICC, R2P, and the US Atrocities Prevention Board that President Obama established, many have contributed a great deal to developing and implementing the norms, policies, and laws that aim end and mitigate mass atrocities and punish those who commit them. Much more remains to be done to realize the goal of atrocity prevention, as the daily news out of Syria reminds us. One multistakeholder initiative that aims to contribute to these efforts is the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes ([GAAMAC](#)), which was founded recently and had its second meeting earlier this year in Manila (*note: this new initiative is also referred to in Part II above*). It is an organization led by states, that works in partnership with NGOs, academics, and the UN Office of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and R2P. It aims to support states interested in implementing atrocity prevention.

Of course, one could criticize such organizations because they will not be able to end atrocities once and for all, or compete with great power politics such as is playing out in Syria. But GAAMAC and other similar organizations could still be useful in order to share information, lessons learned, support domestic efforts at mass atrocity prevention, and so forth. Sharing evidenced based research about what can mitigate the risks of atrocities, disseminating and discussing lessons learned from specific cases, to thinking through how to institutionalize such atrocity prevention work is surely worthy of such multistakeholder initiatives.

A related challenge in this space is how to organize a grassroots movement around the idea of prevention. International movements like Save Darfur have made significant headway, so why is it proving difficult to get similar traction around a concept that would “Save Darfur” and also many other potential humanitarian catastrophes before they happen? Is the idea too broad? The success of global efforts to combat climate change suggests that broad movements can still work at the grassroots level.

Finally, to access the publication “***Multi-Stakeholder Processes for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: A Manual***”, please visit: <http://www.preventiveaction.org/>).

The manual explores the viability, options and experiences of multistakeholder processes from the perspective of civil society organizations working to prevent conflict and build peace. It is a critical assessment of the multistakeholder approach that seeks to answer a number of key questions: What practical considerations do CSOs need to bear in mind when they initiate or participate in such processes? How can we make these processes more efficient and productive? When is it better not to engage in such a process? It includes a number of examples and case studies, as well as tools and templates that can be useful in designing such a process.

- 3) ***Report from the University of Denver / U.S. State Department workshop on "Creative Multilateral Organizations"***: Two contributors (Deborah Avant and Jason Pielemeier) shared the report from the May 2016 workshop, held on Washington, D.C., on “Creative Multilateral Organizations. To receive a copy, please write to: Jason Pielemeier <jpielemeier@gmail.com> (questions and feedback are warmly welcomed).
- 4) ***Some lessons from the UN Global Compact***: The UN Global Compact is an example of a multistakeholder initiative that works to align the private sector around a set of 10 Principles to promote responsible corporate behavior in all areas and regions of company operations. The UN Global Compact’s Ten Principles are derived from: the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), the [International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#), the [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#), and the [United Nations Convention Against Corruption](#).” Companies who join the Global Compact do so in a voluntary basis. The Global Compact does not supersede any laws and is not a policing entity. While the major function of this multistakeholder initiative is to promote responsible business and to support companies in implementation, the fact that it remains a voluntary initiative can prompt tension amongst stakeholders who seek greater level of oversight in company actions.

The commitment that companies make when they join the Global Compact is to their stakeholders at large- and the Compact provides a platform for companies to share information on the implementation of their commitment. The main area for integrity measure is the annual Communication on Progress (COP) that companies commit to submit detailing their work in the implementation of the Ten Principles. If a company fails to submit such report twice in a row, they become delisted. Over its history, the UN Global Compact has delisted over 4000 companies and is now also implementing a similar policy for non-company participants (i.e. NGO’s, academia, etc.). Currently there are roughly 8,500 business participants and 4,000 non business—only governments do not formally join the Compact.

Regarding the early phases of multistakeholder action and the potential re-framing by new events, the UN Global Compact has experienced this with the post 2015 agenda. A few action points to ensure there was a successful evolution included: 1) ensuring that the private sector had a voice in the two-year consultation process prior to 2015; 2) promoting the new development agenda and engaging companies in the historic year; and 3) now, in 2016, ensuring that responsible business (i.e. the 10 Principles) remain at

the core of a company's commitment and that as an addition they find opportunities to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals and measure their impact.

Conclusion: The Future of Cooperative Multistakeholder Action in Global Governance

The rich presentation of examples, insights, and concrete recommendations from this seven-week e-Consultation demonstrates that cooperative multistakeholder action represents an increasingly common, varied, and highly impactful set of goal-oriented relationships in global governance. By creatively and flexibly employing the resources, ideas, networks, and political support of a diverse range of actors—from within civil society, states, the private sector, media, and international organizations—toward a complex and jointly shared purpose, cooperative multistakeholder action also signifies an innovative approach in the early 21st century toward addressing global collective action problems and toward providing global collective goods.

On the one hand, new kinds of multistakeholder coalitions have the potential to elevate, empower, and safeguard sustained contributions by non-state actors. At the same time, as several e-Consultation contributors referenced, repression of civil society groups is now a worldwide problem that merits an urgent and global system-wide response. Through the well thought out and “ground-truthed” recommendations shared by e-Consultation participants, many of the tools and strategies for effective and cooperative multistakeholder action exist fortunately. Alongside several related workshop reports and background papers, these recommendations, based on deep historical knowledge and experience, will be featured in the broader project's practical guide on ideas, methods, and practices for enhancing multistakeholder engagement in global governance.