

# 3 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

## 3.1 Introduction

*Catherine Barnes*

One of the aims of many peacebuilders is to mobilize political support for constructive action to address conflicts and their causes. NGOs have a crucial and ever increasing role in contributing information, arguments and energy to influencing decision-making processes. They can directly address policy makers and address those who, in turn, influence them.

Civil society actors can make an important contribution by identifying overlooked problems and policy gaps, analyzing issues and recommending solutions. In short, they can identify the central agenda of issues that need to be addressed in responding to a conflict situation and dealing with peace and security issues more widely. Civil society groups can analyze the situation, formulate recommendations, develop policy options and engage in policy dialogue to address conflicts. They can also mobilize advocacy campaigns to generate political will amongst decision-makers and implement strategies to achieve the desired results.

These capacities can be directed towards influencing both government policy and national legislation. While CSOs can lobby government and parliamentarians to introduce new laws that either address the causes of conflict or create mechanisms for managing conflict more peacefully and effectively, it is more common for them to engage in policy processes with relevant government ministries.

Government officials and CSOs can engage in a number of collaborative processes for developing policy frameworks and developing action plans to implement them.<sup>13</sup>

1. Conceptual exchange, learning and analysis of problematic issues and possible solutions
2. Formulating the overall direction of policy and specific policy objectives
3. Strategizing and planning specific measures to implement policy

4. Awareness-raising, advocacy and lobbying to generate the political conditions necessary for a new policy agenda to be adopted and implemented.

There are numerous ways in which civil society engages governments and vice versa. Broadly speaking these engagements move along the continuum provided at the end of the previous chapter; they are also contingent on the prevailing culture, administrative and otherwise. Thus, joint consultation and policy building follows a highly structured path in the case of Germany. It is very formal and proceeds cautiously in Japan, while in the United Kingdom cooperation is very close. A very interesting case is provided by Mongolia, where a poorly resourced but ambitious government and an equally ambitious civil society find common ground in the promotion of a single issue: the creation of a nuclear weapons free region in northeast Asia.

### **Policy development in the UK and DFID**

In the United Kingdom, specialist NGOs are often at the forefront of identifying policy challenges. They undertake public awareness raising to generate pressure for a government response and engage in policy dialogue with relevant government officials, parliamentarians and civil servants to promote awareness of the issues and recommend steps to address them. In its policymaking processes, many government departments will in turn consult with relevant NGOs in advance of preparing policy papers and then hold public consultations when those papers are in their draft stage before they are revised and adopted by the government as official policy. For example, when DFID developed its Preventing Violent Conflict<sup>14</sup> policy paper in 2006-07, it held an initial consultation roundtable with peacebuilding NGOs to brainstorm ideas. It then opened up to a public consultation eliciting ideas for how DFID, and the UK government more widely, should address its three policy goals: putting greater emphasis on preventing violent conflict; improve the effectiveness of responses to violent conflict; making all DFID's development work 'conflict-sensitive'. While the government ultimately decided the contents of the policy, civil society organizations made substantive inputs into its content.

### 3.2 Japan: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NGO Joint Public Series Cooperation

*Meredith Joyce*<sup>15</sup>

**Japan does not have a strong tradition of civil society/government cooperation. But mutual understanding is growing, as both sectors work together in new ways to prepare Japan's contributions to a few United Nations forums.**

Despite its large population and industrialized economy, Japan lacks a strong tradition of civil society organizations, particularly apparent in fields related to peace and security. The Japanese government has traditionally viewed civil society organizations as being in opposition to the state – as ‘anti-government’ rather than ‘non-governmental’ groups. This has prevented much significant cooperation and interaction between governments and civil society organizations, and contributed to a situation where civil society remains weak, and the political will to engage with civil society even weaker. Despite recent political upheavals the Japanese public still generally holds the government in esteem. This has led to a situation with very few platforms for interaction and cooperation between CSOs and government.

This case is particularly true for peace-related CSOs. While organizations working on environmental and developmental issues have grown in scope and influence over past decades, it is only since the 1990s since CSOs have grown to have a real voice in relation to peace. Issues such as peacebuilding and security are seen by the government as state issues, and therefore only

government-supported organizations are encouraged to be active in such international arenas. This has led to a particularly significant lack of cooperation and dialogue relating to these issues.

#### **Outline of Public Forums**

As a step towards filling these gaps, various Japanese GPPAC member organizations have organized a series of Public Forums with the joint sponsorship of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). These forums provide a rare opportunity for dialogue between the government and civil society, and have taken place five times since 2005. The coordinating CSOs are the Citizens' Centre for Diplomacy, Japan International Volunteer Centre and Peace Boat (regional secretariat for GPPAC Northeast Asia). Government level coordination has been carried out by the United Nations Planning and Administration Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Recent participation from the private sector in the form of the Global Compact Japan Network has also added a new dimension, despite their as yet small numbers.

The primary goal of these public forums is to shape Japan's policy priorities relating to the United Nations, with input not only from the government but also from NGOs, the private sector, UN agencies in Japan, and embassies based in Tokyo. Concrete objectives include action at the General Assembly / Security Council level (such as adoption of resolutions), and creating impact upon UN bodies in which Japan plays a leading role, such as the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA), the Human Security Unit (HSU) and the Human Rights Commission (HRC). These public forums will be the initial step toward the development of an ongoing structure for CSO input, for example in the shape of an annual consultation.

The public forums feature plenary sessions as well as smaller workshops and symposiums, and provide a space for opinion exchange between NGOs, international agencies, government officials and members of the general public. Each forum has attracted around 200 participants.

13 Policy frameworks may consist of a set of principles, a list of priorities, and a menu of possible actions to address the issues concerned. A policy may be accompanied by a set of operational guidelines that indicate how the action plan is to be implemented.

14 Available at [www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/preventing-conflict.pdf](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/preventing-conflict.pdf)

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Workshops at each forum focus on the four themes of development, peacebuilding, disarmament and human rights, along with a major overall theme for each session – the most recent being climate change. This focus serves as a common meeting point for the parties and such engagement therefore serves as an indirect method for CSOs to raise issues regarding Japanese foreign policy and Japan’s international role. While the public forums take place only twice a year, there is continued contact throughout the other months, with regular visits to and meetings with MOFA, creating a wider process beyond the individual events.

### Results

The public forums have had several concrete outcomes, including recommendations for the Outcomes Document of the Millennium +5 Summit, held September 14-16, 2005 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The forums, officially co-sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, served as a comprehensive policy consultation prior to the Summit. Further, at the UNGA Informal Interactive Hearing with Civil Society at UN Headquarters in June 2005, Akira Kawasaki of Peace Boat (and also the coordinator of the Public Forums) presented recommendations entitled “Demilitarize Security and Develop Non-Violent Ways.” The recent focus of the forums on human security, a topic of key concern for both CSOs and the Japanese government, has also led to significant opportunities. A particular indication of the importance of these public forums is demonstrated in Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura’s address at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, where he notably said that the Japanese government “values exchange with corporations, academics, NGOs and various other actors in public forums, while at the same time cooperating with the UN Global Compact.” ([www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/state0709.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/state0709.html))

### Better understanding

The process leading up to the forums, along with the challenges encountered along the way, has in itself been of great importance for building and improving relationships between government and CSOs. Given the traditional relationship between CSOs and the



*Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NGO third public forum, 2005*

government in Japan, a tendency for Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials to feel that NGOs are in direct opposition to the government has been evident. Indeed, some officials have gone so far to view this collaboration as a device for CSOs to gather more ‘ammunition’ to be used against the government. Yet this ongoing cooperation, with common goals, has provided a time-consuming yet highly meaningful opportunity for CSOs to demonstrate the potential for a complementary rather than oppositional relationship to be developed.

A further challenge has been the vertical and very compartmentalized structure of the government. While CSOs aim to work horizontally, collaborating with several organizations working on interrelated issues, government officials have focused on issues directly within their official field of responsibility. In practice, this means that Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucrats rarely involve other ministries, even where their portfolios are perhaps more appropriate (for example in regards to environmental or trade related issues). This leads, among others, to a lack of official engagement in fields for which MOFA has no designated division, such as peacebuilding. MOFA has also tended to steer away from including politicians in the process, viewing their involvement as a pressure rather than as adding value. Furthermore, the position within MOFA of the UN Planning and Administration Division and its related divisions is relatively weak. No government budget,

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beyond the provision of a venue, is provided for these, which has led to further challenges in implementation.

While this compartmentalization of divisions can at times lead to difficulties, the opportunity to understand these structures and the government's working mechanisms has also been very important. An understanding of these structures also enables CSOs to approach the government in a more strategic manner. For example, in the case of the recent situation in Burma, CSOs have been able to use the knowledge of governmental mechanisms strategically, to ask for a roundtable with a variety of government stakeholders, including divisions relating to both human rights and Southeast Asia. Similarly, MOFA divisions which deal with related issues and yet had thus far been operating totally separately have been brought to the same table through the public forum process. This has provided a space for discussion between different divisions on comprehensive policy directions.

#### **Better cooperation and constructive dialogue**

Similar to the government's compartmentalization of issues, CSOs have also tended to have a more single issue-based approach. These forums have also succeeded in bringing organizations working on diverse and yet interrelated issues together, giving them more capacity to collaborate. Particularly important for such cross-cutting fields as conflict prevention and peacebuilding, this approach has nurtured a deeper and more diverse understanding on behalf of civil society also. This multilayered approach has also proven effective when dealing with the media.

Considering the short history and relatively weak nature of NGOs in Japan, a culture of constructive dialogue has not yet been nurtured within Japanese civil society. The scale at which civil society activity and cross-cutting activities such as the public forums takes place remains relatively small. Insufficient media attention is a problem, as is the shortage of staff with the capacity to

devote significant time and effort specifically to these public forums and the surrounding process. Finally, differences in evaluation processes between have been a challenge. The dominant view within MOFA is that a certain phrase being included in an official statement submitted to UN can be considered a significant outcome, whereas CSOs tend to place more emphasis on the follow up action and public outreach.

#### **Next steps**

Two public forums are planned for 2008, in February and August. The lessons learned and relationships developed with government through these forums will be an invaluable asset to NGO policy advocacy efforts relating to the 2008 G8 Summit, due to be held in July on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido. The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) is also planned for 2008, and MOFA has explicitly indicated that it also wishes to continue to include civil society in this process. The public forums held on either side of the G8 Summit and TICAD will feed in to the forum process, laying the foundations for a CSO channel of input, as well as leading to greater government willingness to consider and incorporate CSO recommendations and proposals into policy priorities.

Currently, the only official outcomes of the forum are in the form of the chair's factual summary, which is uploaded to the MOFA website reporting on each public forum. As the next step, we aim for the government to adopt and announce brief yet official annual policy papers regarding Japan's UN policy, based on the public forums. An extension of this will be the preparation of an official joint paper, with the collaboration of CSOs and the government. Following the outcomes of the 6<sup>th</sup> public forum in February, TICAD and the Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War in May, and the G8 in July, we hope to present this paper in August, in time for the commencement of the General Assembly in September.

### 3.3 FriEnt: Working Group on Development and Peace in Germany

*Natascha Zupan*<sup>16</sup>

**In Germany, a new infrastructure has been set up around peace and development issues. Government and non-government actors jointly formulate areas – both topical and geographical – of intervention.**

In theory, peace building sometimes sounds like creating a good meal: one needs well- selected ingredients of high quality, an assortment of fine spices, some creativity and of course certain technical skills. In reality, it's different: There is no single cook to decide about the 'right' components, and instead of ingredients to choose, there is a huge variety of organizations, multilateral institutions, state agencies and civil society organizations from the North and South engaged in post conflict societies. Nonetheless, the idea of closer cooperation between different actors, the need for coherent, multi-layered approaches to peace building and the necessity for ongoing reflection and learning are not only widely acknowledged, but fundamental to the peace building discourse ever since it emerged in the early nineties.

Seven German governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the field of development cooperation and peace building came together in 2000 in order to discuss possibilities of closer cooperation amongst each other. One year later, on 1 September 2001, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Church Development Service (EED), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)<sup>17</sup>, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für

Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Misereor / Catholic Central Agency for Development Aid (KZE), the Civil Peace Service Group (CPS) and the German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management in cooperation with the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) founded the Working Group on Development and Peace (FriEnt)<sup>18</sup>. Its main objectives are:

- promoting the role of peace building in the members' strategies and activities
- capacity building
- promoting joint learning against a backdrop of different perspectives and approaches and
- supporting its members in networking and co-operation.

#### **Structure and activities**

In order to meet this goals as well as pool competences and resources, a unique and innovative structure was set up. A Steering Committee comprising one representative of each member organization sets the political guidelines and is responsible for the overall strategic governance of the Working Group.

Additionally, all member organizations have established Points of Contact in order to support exchange and mutual feedback between the member organizations themselves and with the FriEnt team.

The FriEnt team itself is the "melting pot" of the Working Group: Each FriEnt member organization delegates one staff member to the FriEnt team to work jointly on selected countries and issues. They usually spend between 30 and 50 per cent of their working time in their own organizations. The team is headed by a team leader and also comprises a communication manager and a secretary. Three main functions are given to the team. It acts as:

- an information and knowledge gateway;
- a platform for networking and joint learning;
- a resource for advisory services and capacity building.

Hence, the FriEnt team offers several activities to its member organizations and the broader national as well as international development cooperation and peace building community:

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<sup>17</sup> One or two German political foundations have been members of FriEnt so far: Besides the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, which only recently left the Working Group, the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung participated in the first phase. In September 2007, The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung joined FriEnt.

<sup>18</sup> [www.frient.de/en](http://www.frient.de/en).

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- workshops, country-specific round tables and panel discussions;
- news and background information (newsletter *FriEnt Impulse* and website);
- publications (briefing papers, workshop reports and guidelines);
- training and expert advice on country- and issue-specific strategies, methods and best practices.

#### Identifying common interests and setting the agenda

Ever since the Working Group was founded, the Steering Committee together with the FriEnt team engaged in a process of identifying countries and issues of common interest to all member organizations. So far, the FriEnt team has developed projects and implemented its activities on a range of so called priority countries and topics:

##### Topics:

- Dealing with spoilers in peace processes
- Methods for peace and conflict-sensitive planning, monitoring and evaluation
- Peace building and security
- Prevention within the framework of development cooperation
- Religion, development cooperation and conflict
- Transitional Justice
- War Economies

##### Countries:

- Chad/Sudan
- Colombia
- Israel & Palestine / Middle East
- Nepal

Over time, the criteria for selecting topics and countries and the working methods of the team have been adapted according to the needs of the member organizations and the experiences and lessons learnt. While the criteria of ‘joint interest and needs’ of *all* member organizations and the idea of merging them into one project was crucial at the beginning, it became more and more obvious, that a ‘one size fits all’ approach does not always meet the needs of the different members. Consequently, the team identified countries and topics where at least three members had an interest. It also

started to distinguish between ‘discourse and joint learning’ and the ‘operational level’. Workshops and round tables on priority countries and topics for all member organizations and the wider community are now organized, addressing general questions and providing space for exchange of information and experiences, networking and joint learning. Besides this, FriEnt team members offer advice and capacity building to *individual* members, addressing the specific needs of one organization.

Having laid the foundation for an institutionalized dialogue and co-operation between state and civil society within the Steering Committee and the FriEnt team in the first phase of the Working Group (2001-2004), FriEnt further developed its structure, its communication and outreach and its activities in the second phase (2004-2007); and only recently started the third phase (2007-2010). FriEnt has adapted its activities to the changing political and institutional context as well as the needs expressed by its member organizations. The evolving debate on ‘development and security’ and a ‘governance-approach’ to countries in crisis or post-conflict societies widened the theatre of (state) actors. It also posed new political and practical challenges to aid agencies and peace building organizations. Today, the FriEnt team not only engages with a broader range of national actors, including the military, and international organizations, it also addresses strategic and political challenges within its country and topic specific activities such as dealing with Hamas (Israel & Palestine; Spoiler), regional dimensions of conflict and peace building in Chad/Sudan, or the sequencing of activities/ interventions and cooperation between civilian and military actors in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Agenda setting, providing new approaches and insights as well as raising innovative and critical questions have become more relevant for the Working Group. The FriEnt team, for example, organized a workshop on the Responsibility to Protect and published a briefing paper on the topic.<sup>19</sup> FriEnt also introduced the concept of Transitional Justice to its member organizations and the wider community in Germany. The Transitional Justice

concept fits very well into the FriEnt agenda: it contains different mechanisms (prosecution, truth seeking, vetting / institutional reforms, and reparations); it allows to focus and operationalise peace building activities in post conflict societies and also involves complementarity of different state and civil society actors.

Since 2004, FriEnt's activities focus on specific experiences and challenges, tensions that may arise and courses of action for governmental and non-governmental actors. The team has organized several Round Table discussions, provided training and advise to individual FriEnt Member organizations, and published a FriEnt Briefing as well as a Guidance Paper on Transitional Justice.<sup>20</sup> Within the framework of the international conference Building a Future on Peace and Justice, FriEnt widened its international network and cooperated with the BMZ and the Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF) – Swisspeace in organizing two workshops on the nexus between development and transitional justice as well as justice mechanisms and the question of legitimacy.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Lessons learnt**

A couple of lessons on state – civil society cooperation in peace building can be learnt from the specific structural set-up, working methods and processes of FriEnt:

##### *1) Time, patience and creativity needed*

An institutionalized dialogue, consultation and co-operation mechanism like the Working Group needs time to build trust and mutual understanding, patience from all actors to deal with errors or misunderstandings, and creativity to find solutions to problems in an ever changing, dynamic context.

##### *2) Nothing is 'for free'*

Neither the continued facilitation of joint processes or co-operative activities, nor the provision of relevant information, expertise and advice or the identification of new topics, questions and challenges are 'for free'. A cooperation mechanism like FriEnt does not need too much resources for its activities, but it needs experienced staff members, who are able to transfer theories into practical approaches, who follow up processes over a longer period of time and who are flexible to adjust activities according to the needs.

##### *3) Providing new ground for reflection*

Because of its multi-institutional composition, the Working Group and, more particular, the FriEnt team can create space for an open and critical reflection about given peace building paradigms, approaches and practice. The state-civil society partnership on equal footing allows members to reflect about their role and perspectives vis à vis the other actors.

##### *4) Being close to practice*

The multi-institutional structure of the FriEnt team creates a unique focal point for different processes and discussions. Working within their institutions and the team, each staff member can channel relevant activities, possibilities for co-operation, practice and needs oriented questions into both directions, i.e. via FriEnt to the other FriEnt members and the wider community.

<sup>19</sup> The report on the workshop is available on:

[www.frient.de/downloads/R2P-Workshop%20Documentation\\_2006.pdf](http://www.frient.de/downloads/R2P-Workshop%20Documentation_2006.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> The FriEnt Briefing For the Sake of Peace... and the FriEnt Guidance Paper Transitional Justice and Dealing with the Past can be downloaded at: [www.frient.de/en/topics/justice.asp](http://www.frient.de/en/topics/justice.asp)

<sup>21</sup> The studies and expert papers commissioned for the workshops as well as the workshop report are available on:

[www.frient.de/en/topics/publications.asp?Thema=Transitional%20Justice](http://www.frient.de/en/topics/publications.asp?Thema=Transitional%20Justice)

### 3.4 Mongolia: Blue Banner cooperation with Mongolian government

*Jargalsaikhan Enksaikhan*<sup>22</sup>

**The Mongolian government wants its part of the world to become free of nuclear weapons. But it lacks resources and has other priorities too. So it avails itself of the services of a local NGO to help promote this part of its foreign policy – and a real partnership is born.**

Blue Banner is a Mongolian non-governmental organization established in 2005 to promote nuclear non-proliferation and Mongolia's initiative to turn the country into a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ)<sup>23</sup>. It is independent from the government or any of its agencies and does not depend on nor receive instruction or any financial support from the government. It believes that the government of Mongolia needs to promote more vigorously the policy of establishing and institutionalizing the concept of the single-State NWFZ. It also believes that independent NGOs and think tanks can make useful practical suggestions to the government on the ways and means of promoting the initiative, including the form and content of the future zone. To that end it undertakes special area studies and presents its findings and recommendations to the general public or the government as the case may be.

Blue Banner was established in the spirit of the Mongolian law on the country's nuclear-weapon-free status, which was adopted in 2000. Article 6.4 of that law stipulates that "non-governmental organizations or individuals may, within the mandate provided by the legislation, exercise public oversight of the implementation of the legislation on the nuclear-weapon-free status and submit proposals thereon to the relevant State authority".

The organization's policy making body is its governing council that consists of seven members, including a former head of state, a professor, two human rights activists, one student, one former ambassador and one research worker. Two of the members are females with vast experience in the non-governmental sector.

#### **Blue Banner's international activities**

Since its establishment Blue Banner has undertaken a number of studies on the best ways to raise awareness of still hidden nuclear dangers and promote Mongolia's initiative at the national and international levels. To this effect, a number of promotional materials and studies aimed have been published in the Mongolian, English and Japanese languages for free circulation. At the international level it organized a number of meetings to address the issues of ensuring national security by political and legal means, promoting the concept of establishment of single-state NWFZs and of a North-East Asian NWFZ. Thus in May and June 2007 Blue Banner, together with other national and international NGOs, organized two regional meetings in Ulaanbaatar. The first was GPPAC Northeast Asia's meeting focusing on issues of civil society support for the Six-Party Talks for a regional peace mechanism, and promoting North-East Asian and single-state NWFZs.

The second meeting (IPPNW<sup>24</sup>/North Asia) focused on promoting the establishment of a Northeast Asian NWFZ. For that purpose experts on and authors of various draft treaties on the issue were invited to participate. The two regional meetings adopted sets of recommendations that raise awareness of civil society organizations on the need to support more vigorously the Six-Party Talks, and on taking practical steps to invigorate the process of establishing additional NWFZs in the world, especially in Northeast Asia and supporting Mongolia's efforts to institutionalize its single-state NWFZ status.

#### **Cooperation with the government**

Especially the second set of recommendations was meant to provide support for and encouragement of the efforts of the government of Mongolia in

<sup>22</sup> Ambassador Enksaikhan Jargalsaikhan is director of the NGO Blue Banner, based in Ulaanbaatar, as well as the former Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations (1996-2003). He has published extensively in the areas of the developing nuclear landscape in Asia, as well as Mongolia's Nuclear Weapon Free status and the legal and political roles and perspectives of small states.

<sup>23</sup> The initiative was made by the president of Mongolia in September 1992 at the United Nations General Assembly.

<sup>24</sup> International Physicians to Prevent Nuclear War

institutionalizing its single-state NWFZ status. Since the establishment of Blue Banner, a number of regional meetings have adopted statements in support of the Mongolian government's efforts to institutionalize its status. These independent and yet practical efforts of Blue Banner have been duly noted and appreciated by the Mongolian government.

In the spring of 2006 Blue Banner officially proposed to the Mongolian government (to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to jointly undertake a study on the implementation of the law and, if needed, make recommendations on concrete additional measures that would help fully implement the law. Mindful of Blue Banner's constructive approach to the issue of Mongolia's single-state NWFZ, the Ministry agreed to the suggestion.

Based on the above agreement in principle, Blue Banner proposed to the Foreign Ministry to set up an inter-agency working group and review implementation of the major provisions of the law. It also proposed a concrete methodology of assessing the implementation. Agreeing to such a suggestion, the minister of Foreign Affairs established an inter-agency working group<sup>25</sup> and invited a representative of Blue Banner to join the group as an equal partner. Blue Banner agreed and participated actively in the working group's work, including by making suggestions of a procedural and substantive nature connected with the review of the implementation of the law. It took an active part in every stage of the review process, including preparing the inter-agency working group's assessment and its draft report.

In recognition, the foreign minister's report on implementation of the law mentioned Blue Banner by name. The 7 point recommendation of the minister's report includes a suggestion to undertake such

monitoring on a regular basis. It was decided that the next report, to be undertaken in 1-2 years, should identify the most effective methodology of monitoring implementation of the law and present the recommendations thereon to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Standing Committee of the State Great Hural (parliament) for their guidance and follow-up action. It was agreed that Blue Banner would, as before, take an active part in identifying the most effective methodology and in monitoring the implementation of the law.

#### **Reasons for government cooperation**

The Mongolian government has many unresolved issues that it must address without delay. Though institutionalizing Mongolia's single-state NWFZ status is considered as a priority issue, the government cannot address it fully, due to other 'urgent' issues of the day, including foreign policy issues. That is why it feels that its objective could be met to some extent by the support and cooperation of CSOs. Hence the government is inclined to work with such organizations. A gesture of good will on the part of CSOs, in this case on the part of Blue Banner, created the necessary climate of trust and cooperation.

Blue Banner believes that a good, open working relationship, and not unfounded hostility or subservience to government authorities, have established the basis for a mature and fruitful relationship with government authorities. In this case the government's foreign policy goal as set in its national security concept and government priorities coincided with the goal of Blue Banner. This provided a good objective basis for useful and practical cooperation against the background of the climate of trust and mutual need. Furthermore, Blue Banner's expertise and the experience of its members (i.e. added value) were useful for the government to tap into and thus promote the initiative at the national and international level. So, when the Foreign Ministry prepared a draft trilateral treaty (between Mongolia, China and Russia) on providing security assurances to Mongolia in connection with its nuclear-weapon-free status, Blue Banner played an important role.

<sup>25</sup> The inter-agency working group consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, Ministry of Fuel and Energy, Ministry of Nature and Environment, Ministry of Defense, Nuclear Energy Commission, State Specialized Inspection Agency, National Emergency Management Agency, General Intelligence Department, Customs General Administration and of Blue Banner.

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#### **Results**

Blue Banner's contribution to promoting the foreign policy agenda of Mongolia is being duly appreciated by the government. This can be seen by the fact that when the Ulaanbaatar focal point of GPPAC/NEA held its regional meeting in May 2006 in Mongolia, Blue Banner, one of the members of UB focal point, received political and other forms of support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other agencies. This support was evident from the fact that the state secretary for Foreign Affairs personally attended the opening of the regional meeting and addressed the participants, while the vice-minister met with representatives of the GPPAC/NEA and exchanged views on issues of interest to the participants of the meeting. Practical support by the government was expressed in its agreement for the regional meeting and the reception to be held at the premises of the Foreign Ministry for a very reasonable fee. Though it is a minor detail, but for an NGO that does not receive government funds such gestures acquire special meaning. The ministry also helped Blue Banner by providing a simplified procedure for foreign participants in acquiring Mongolian visa upon arrival.

#### **Next steps**

Mongolia has not yet been able to institutionalize its single-state NWFZ status. The political situation in

Northeast Asia, especially on the Korean peninsula, does not permit individual countries to proceed immediately to the establishment of a Northeast Asian NWFZ. All these create the objective necessity for the government to work with Blue Banner and other similar organizations to work closely, and vice versa. The immediate goals are to work jointly on preparing a methodology and guidelines for reviewing implementation of the law and promoting Mongolia's single-state and Northeast Asian NWFZs.

#### **Challenges to cooperation with government**

However, such cooperation with the government does not mean that it would always be smooth. Even if the ultimate goals are in general identical, on such issues as ways and means of attaining the goals, the exact nature of the single-state zone, the form of security assurances that need to be obtained from the immediate neighbours and from other nuclear-weapon States, issues of nuclear waste, etc., there will surely be differences. The CSOs would most probably aim higher in the goals than the government, while the latter would surely try to play safe and lower expectations, or use some of its leverage for other immediate foreign policy purposes or tasks. That is natural. In any case what would be needed are mutual understanding, mutual trust and respect, and spirit of cooperation.