The Non-Governmental Organizations and Track Two

Albert Jer-Fu Lin, Ph.D.
General Secretary
Association of National Peace, Security in Taiwan
Taipei, Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

This paper has been written based on the recent trend that in the long run conflicts should be resolved, even transformed through institutional changes, rather than the traditional approach of managing them. Proposed is a different model of bilateral relationship between NGOs-Track II in their “tri-sector partnership-plus” on humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and development-aid programs, directly or indirectly associated with intention or wish to mitigate the current conflicts due to inequality and injustice, involving NGOs, Track II, and the aid giving governments in a three-way partnership with four sets of specific interactive tools incorporated throughout the whole processes from the stage of program inception to execution and final evaluation as integral parts of these programs. The full participation of all parties of the aid program recipient peoples, communities or governments of those countries as an integral team member, designated as “plus”, of these collaborative programs is essential and is a necessity in formulating the common goals of conflict alleviation and transformation leading to eventual institutional changes and state reforms. The alliance by these four actors for the development-aid and conflict alleviation programs, based on a well defined specific program mandate with consensus on common value and strategies, adoption of theses interactive tools, mutual understanding and cooperative style of operations, and unambiguous division of labour and respective roles played, will ascertain their genuine success with full benefit to the peace with justice, and security of all members of program recipient peoples, communities and countries through enhancing of their respective soft power and alternative defense capabilities. A simple expression of “plus program(s)” would be used throughout this paper whenever referring to the development-aid and/or conflict transformation programs involving these four actors.

A metaphor has been entertained. Section I presents an overview, Section II reviews the NGOs with some information on Taiwan’s NGOs, Section III reviews the Track II for its potential role with some reference to CSCE/OSCE and CSCAP, Section IV introduces four sets of interactive tools and describes briefly how they may interplay, and the last section concludes with a positive note of hope and possibility of active complementarity of NGOs and Track II for a world of peace with justice and with much lesser violent conflicts.
I Introduction

Human history abounds with conflicting situations for their basic survival initially against nature and the wild predatory animals, then against one another for better environment among the tribes. As the human race progresses in its civilization and divided into races, ethnics of different land, colour, languages, traditions and histories, we find more excuses, reasons, regulations, and principles to complicate the conflicts of different sizes and degrees of severity. Solutions to these conflicts have ranged from by force, coercion, persuasion, to negotiation with policy changes and have resulted in new relationship among the conflicting groups, communities, and states through peaceful means of negotiated settlements, through coercive settlements, and through civil and/or international wars with extravagant prices paid in terms of casualties and destruction to the environment (1, 2). If the consequences were not judged to be just, fair, and acceptable to the parties directly involved in the conflicts, the seeds of future conflicts may simply remain dormant for a while. Modern governments would be tasked heavily to deal with these conflicts and to meet the human needs created by progresses made and various natural and man-made disasters happened.

Governments may not be able to resolve all these existing or potential conflicts with the legislated power and financial resources, and may find partnership with appropriate NGOs necessary. NGOs are integral components of the civil society in a democratic society with vision and mission, devoted leadership and ample volunteer resources. An additional inclusion of Track II teams would be needed to expand it into a tri-sector partnership, if the operations are international in scope.

A simple metaphor may be useful. Take the desired, post conflicts, transformed community, society, state, or international relationship as a picture to be created through puzzle pieces. Two members of partnership, NGOs and Track II as trusted catalytic artists with knowledge, skills and manpower to share, would have: to listen attentively to what kind of picture the (program recipient) owner wants; to uncover the sub-theme, shape, size, and colour of each piece of puzzles; to investigate the combined resources available in terms of manpower, their willingness to offer and commitment to the creation of each piece contributing to the whole picture; and to encourage and invite the future owner as the main participating creator or as one of the co-creators. The progress may be too slow, cumbersome, and full of trials and errors in the eyes of seasoned artists. However, the recipient peoples, communities, or countries would be the genuine collective owner with dignity and pride for their
own creation, a masterpiece in its own right, while they would acquire the skills, taste, and self-confidence in future creation, either a brand new or a revised one as their taste and artistic sense change and skills improve.

It is essential to share a possible ideal picture, in the metaphor, of the post conflict transformed relationship among the peoples, within the communities or society, or between or among states. After thorough listening of peoples’ cries and suffering, and understanding of the situation through first hand observation and reasonably comprehensive investigations, IF the consensus based mandate of this tri-sector partnership were made: with the resolution and/or transformation of conflicts and the subsequent building of democratic community, society or state with justice (law and order, balance of rights and duties), with equality, compassion and harmony (based on civil society built, mutual respect and understanding, multiculturalism), with vitality (constant renewal of civil society and social institutions, and with culture of non-violence and peace-building in contributing to the human security, four sets of interactive tools needed for social changes or transformation are:

2. Third Party Neutral (TPN of Canadian Institute of Conflict Resolution, CICR and Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada) (4).
4. Civilian-Based Defense (CBD, Albert Einstein Institution, Boston, USA) (6).

Hopefully, these tools would be accepted after sweeping sessions of discussion, negotiation and persuasion, the consequence through these conflict transformation and state reforms will be of tremendous and lasting impacts. The NGO teams would required thorough training in using and sharing of these tools with the program recipient communities and with full understanding and support of the remaining partners.

However, the reality of the present world is far from being ideal. There are few countries of a simple nation state in composition left in the world today, and the phenomena of societies and states being enriched by the existence of multi-ethnic compositions are rather common. The richness and complexity of ethnic compositions, a blessing or a curse, have largely been caused by migrations of peoples due to the natural disasters, such as famines, floods, earthquakes, typhoons, hurricanes, wars, violations of human rights, economic forces of push-and-pull,
forced migration. If the imbalances among the three elements of love, justice and power for social changes were not rectified and the subsequent causes of conflicts were not dealt with through thoroughly researched means of their management, resolution or better still transformation within reasonable time, the conflicts may complicate the situations and result in more serious socio-econo-political problems of injustice, inequality, exploitation, oppression, discrimination, poverty, unemployment, regional disparity, ethnic conflicts, loss of identity and of social stability, civil wars, break-ups of states or even international wars.

The NGOs in many democratic countries have played very important and necessary traditional roles with reactive strategies in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and reduction in conflicts through development programs in partnership with government and/or business sectors both domestically and internationally in the past. However, the world has not yet been transformed radically that much with their precious contributions through traditional or liberal models, and, thus, the inclusion of the above interactive tools would be essential on both the domestic and/or international operations, referring to the bi-sector partnership of NGOs-government or tri-sector partnership of NGOs-Track II-government-plus. For the latter case, precautionary measures should be taken with sensitivity to socio-cultural and political taboos, and to unintended intrusion into domestic affairs and sovereignty issues, based on the Westphalian Treaty of 1648, of the program recipient countries.

I had the opportunities of promoting and facilitating these value-added and non-traditional interactive tools for relevant programs in Taiwan with mentors from Canada and USA in collaboration with the design, planning, and much appreciated financial support from the Taiwanese communities in Canada, Taiwan and USA since early 80’s. The democracy is still very young and tender with various existing conflicts in Taiwan. We are suffering from the loss or fear of losing identity, deep-rooted conflicts, and ethno-centralism from long held hegemonic structures, the chaotic order in the legislature and the constant external threats from China. We have used and are still planning to use these interactive tools to consolidate the democracy, to strengthen building of harmonious civil society with multiculturalism, and to complement the defense strategies for both national and human security with Civilian-Based Defense. The incorporation of these tools into all future programs, both domestic and international, involving NGOs in cooperation without, and with Track II for international operations will facilitate conflict transformation and institutional state reforms as preventive measures.
II THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are legal entities, such as associations, societies, social organizations, foundations, charitable trusts and not-for-profit organizations, organized under a particular legal system, which are NOT a part of the government. The term of NGOs has been commonly used by the World Bank, national, and other transnational organizations in reference of Non-Governmental and Not-for-Profit Organizations to their operations of development programs and their advocacy. The main goals of NGOs are to be actively involved in issues and projects of public benefit and of mutual benefit through operations such as humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, rescue, suffering and poverty alleviation, environmental protection, provision of basic social services, engagement on community development work, and their advocacy.

As the society progresses and becomes more pluralistic and the nation revolves toward the welfare state, more of the social functions and services would depend on NPO-NGOs sector to provide some of the needed improvements in the quality of life of those disadvantaged as well as the society and environment in collaboration with governmental organizations or agencies. NGOs operate on the principles of Not-for-Profit and non-governmental, and on the bases of limited financial and manpower resources of donations, grants, and volunteers. NGOs have been motivated to accept these noble missions to make up for the deficiency and disparity created, though not intentionally but may be by default, by the public and private (business) sectors. In order to meet the goals and accomplish the mission set out by the NGOs, Peter Drucker (7) emphasized the importance of leadership and management of resources and skills, of formulating feasible objectives with strategies and plans, of establishing donors network, of securing more supporters, of facilitating NGOs’ stable development, of paying regular attention to the changing environment, and public relations.

The number of NGOs in Taiwan has grown substantially from the 1980’s. The growth of social and charitable groups divided into a dozen categories had increased from 821 to 3,729 from 1988 to 2000 (data from Ministry of Interior, 2001) (8). Himalaya Foundation categorized Taiwan’s Foundations by mission and purpose with a total of 3,014, with lion’s share of 70.5% by culture and academic, followed by charity and social welfare with 15.9% in 2001(8). The Harvard team of Sagawa, Lin-5
Shirley, and Eli Segal categorized the types of Business and Social Sector Partnership in terms of models of Philanthropic, Marketing, and Operational Exchanges in their book: Common Interest, Common Good, by Harvard Business School Press, 2000 (8). For NGOs programs in Taiwan, some of them have tried the approach of institutional changes such as Post 921 Earthquake programs of Recovery Process and New Campus Movement involving tri-sector partnership of NGO, corporation, and government. MOFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) has record of 1075 registrations of NGIO (Non-Governmental International Organizations) in 2004. Lifting of martial law (1949-87) and democratization have unleashed vital energy of Taiwan’s NGOs. Whether they would be well equipped and willing to incorporate these interactive tools in their future conflict resolution/transformation related ventures, both domestic and international, will remain to be seen. However, the new impetus acquired by Taiwan’s NGOs can facilitate in the accepting the new challenges emerging on both the domestic and international horizons with vision and zeal. Their new venture into the international arenas may be handicapped due to the lack of their pertinent international experiences and the use of these interactive tools.

The cost-effectiveness and efficiency of NGOs operations depend on their approaches taken and organized state of their organization. Yet, all organizations do go through stages of infancy, adolescence, prime, maturity, aristocracy, atrophy, and even death. It is, therefore, vital for them to build in regular sessions of open space to renew and re-spirit their organizations (5).

III THE TRACK II

During the precarious military stand-off of Cold War period of, when each camp with formidable arrays of deadly killing machines and weapons of mass destruction displayed, ready to pounce at each other within minutes of short notice, and non-compromising ideological positions held across the Iron Curtain, the clock of the world annihilation under the weight of balance of terror was ticking away toward the deadly midnight.

During a lull in Cold War period of early 1970’s, USSR proposed a Conference for Security Cooperation in Europe, motivated by their desire to have the outcome of
this conference in recognizing the new borders of post World War II reality. Finland was able to give it a neutral twist and the west insisted in including the USA and Canada. The Council of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) started as the Helsinki Process and culminated in record as the Helsinki Accord in 1975. It was restructured as Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the 1990’s.

CSCE operated with the innovative principle of “consensus-minus-one” in consensus, through which the state under scrutiny can be excluded from the political decisions. Their concerns on security and cooperation include: arms control and negotiations, and military confidence building measures, transparency and inspection on demand. The progresses made were evident from:

(1) Harmel Report of NATO on what were needed for defense and for détente,
(2) Palme Commission Report on common security,
(3) Willy Brandt’s “ostpolitik”, emphasizing openness, reconciliation and cooperation, and
(4) The break-through talk between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev at Reykjavik, Iceland.

The principles of Helsinki Accord applied were loose, but comprehensive. One of the compromise agreements made is that the national borders can not be changed by violent means, but mutual peaceful consent. Another interesting feature of the Helsinki Conference in methods was the use of baskets such as: the principles of security; the concerns for economic relations (with the implication that market economy can stimulate democracy, which in turn can promote peace); human rights to allow freedom of movement of persons, information and ideas (the west’s reasoning is that democracies do not fight one another militarily); and the follow-up conferences held to ensure that promises made would be honoured. Its structure was further strengthened by having:

- summits for heads of states or governments
- a council of foreign ministers, with a troika of foreign ministers headed by chairperson-in-office
- a permanent council in Vienna with a general secretary
- supplemented by a council of government representatives
- an economic forum
- a parliamentary assembly, etc.
In 1993, Louise Diamond and Ambassador John McDonald published their revised edition of “Multi-Track Diplomacy – A Systems Approach to Peace” (9) by the Institute of Multi-Track Diplomacy, Washington, D.C. They have classified the approach to peace into nine tracks of: Track One – Governmental; Track Two – Non-governmental Professionals; Track Three – Business and Commerce; Track Four – Private Citizens; Track Five – Research, Training and Education; Track Six – Advocacy; Track Seven – Religion; Track Eight – Funding; and Track Nine – Public Opinion. Although it helped opening up our minds to complexity of the web and of task which we have to face on building peace, it would be an awesome task to coordinate these loosely connected tracks, in a cost-effective way, on an urgent common cause for peace making and building at a particular locality.

In the Asia-Pacific region during the early 1990’s, attempts to launch organizations and operations similar to CSCE as a Track II Forum were tried and resulted in the being of CSCAP (Council of Security and Cooperation in Asia-Pacific) by ASEAN countries, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, USA, and Canada. The initial membership proposed was open to all countries and territories in Asia-Pacific region and to leave the membership door open for East Timorese and Taiwanese to join and to facilitate solutions to two immediate security-cooperation issues on Taiwan and East Timor in this region. However, CSCAP, under the leadership provided by ASEAN countries, was not able to take up these security issues fully, but delegated this authority to ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

In order to preserve and enhance the peace and prosperity in that region, ARF (10) faced significant shifts in power relations, difficult task of forging a consensual approach to security issues, unresolved territorial disputes, the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait. Their gradual evolutional approach was divided into three stages:

Stage 1: Promotion of Confidence Building Measures
Stage 2: Development of Preventive Diplomacy Mechanisms
Stage 3: Development of Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms

Although ASEAN had played a pivotal role within ARF during these some ten years of evolutionary stages, both CSACP and ARF have not been quite innovative as CSCE in adopting the principle of `consensus-minus-one” and concept of baskets in resolving difficult regional security issues in more effective ways. The presence of major military powers, Japan and China, and the superpower-USA might have
intimidated ASEAN and ARF to tick to the rule of consensus. The evolutionary approach taken by ARF has not resolved the territorial disputes in South China Sea, nor facilitated in reduction of the tension in Korean Peninsula and Taiwan Strait.

As an integral member of the tri-sector partnership-plus and incorporating the interactive tools for conflict transformation and state reforms, Track II team members would have to exert their full professional skills and knowledge, eloquence, application of their connectedness to facilitate in establishing a consensus based mandate with institutional changes and state reforms with these interactive tools. In this sense, our Track II teams may be closer to being as “Track One and A Half” in future role play.

IV  The Operation and Principles of Collaborative Partnership

As stated in Section II, well managed and highly spirited NGOs would have sufficient manpower and financial resources either through donations or grants, and the management skills needed. If their projects will be involved in institutional changes and/or state reforms as an integral component of the conflict transformation, then their close partnership with Track II team will become indispensable, while the inclusion of government is necessary for the financial inputs. The genuine full participation of the program recipient peoples and communities directly related to these programs and ventures will ascertain both their sense of ownership of the projects and of justice to the transformed conflicts, and their desire of sustainability for peace built collectively thus far. The building of lasting peace with justice through conflict transformation involving NGOs and Track II requires four sets of interactive tools as mention in the Introduction. The details of the tools will be presented in this section.

1. The Empowerment through organizing people

The goal and objective of any conflict resolution or transformation should be the realization of justice as perceived and felt by the peoples, communities, and the peoples involved with love, respect for human dignity and human rights, building of mutual trust and harmonious civil society. The means is through application of the power. Power can be defined in social science as the ability to take action. In
physics, power is defined as the rate work is done or the energy is consumed, depending on either it is referring to the output or the input power. However, there is an interesting connection between these two branches of science, i.e., social and natural, here.

However, power $P$ (a scalar quantity) can be defined as the work, the scalar or dot product of a force (a vector quantity $\mathbf{F}$) being applied and the displacement (another vector quantity $\mathbf{s}$, but path independent) caused over a given time, $t$, which can be re-formulated in their relationship of power as the scalar product of the force, $\mathbf{F}$, applied and the velocity as a vector $\mathbf{v}$, acquired with a factor of cosine of the angle theta, $\theta$, between the force and the velocity, as indicated by the following formula,

$$P = \mathbf{F} \cdot \mathbf{s} \div t$$
$$P = \mathbf{F} \cdot \mathbf{v}$$
$$= F \mathbf{v} \cos \theta$$

The trigonometry tells us that this cos $\theta$ has a range of values from +1.00 through zero to –1.00 as this angle increases from zero through 90 degree (at right angle to each other) to 180 degree (in opposite sense of direction) and thus, has a special connotation for social science here. The angle $\theta$ represents the angular relation between these two vector quantities, referring to the degree of the people or communities identifying themselves with the value-based cause chosen for the issues or willingness to participate in affecting the desired changes. It implies that Power (rate of social changes) depends on the product of the force (cohesive social force) applied and with either the displacement (social change) made over time or the velocity, (the rate of social changes resulted). The factor of cos $\theta$ can play a decisive impact on the resultant rate of social changes through the degree of social cohesion, the organized state of the peoples and communities and the sense of justice through conscientization, and their sense of ownership of these programs.

This CUT program (3) for empowerment has four components: social issue analysis, value/ideology reflection, model for strategy planning, and steps in social action plan.

(1) Social Issue Analysis

Issues should be chosen with full participation of the peoples, or communities affected, based on their urgency, concreteness, non-divisiveness, and winnability within the organized collective capability and explicit willingness to act through
non-violent means after thorough process of conscientization. Identify all the pertinent actors involved in this issue, collect relevant information and data on these actors’ goals and value, their proposed solution and concrete methods applied, the power and chance to attain their goals, through interviews conducted and their publications studied. A comprehensive analysis of all actors involved would facilitate in our presenting the existing power distribution on the chosen issue in the form of a snap shot taken in a tug of war between two antagonistic sides of pro and con on the issue. The picture, thus, would reveal itself in the outcome of the issue before any appropriate social action is taken under the present situation and will uncover some insights leading to avenues for potential actions needed to affect the issue for the desired social change. It is similar to a patient presenting his/her physical pains to a medical doctor. The doctor would diagnose the pains with the help of various instruments to conduct examinations and tests. The more thorough and detailed are the tests and examinations, the more precise the diagnoses would be, therefore, the more accurate and cost-effective would the delivered treatment be in restoring the patient to his/her holistic conditions physically, psychologically, and socially.

(2) Value/Ideology Reflection

The empowerment programs of effecting social changes has three associated elements of “Justice, Love and Power” to facilitate in rectifying oppression, exploitation, inequality, and injustice, which inevitably lead to conflicts. These conflicting crises can be transformed into opportunities for social changes and new culture, if thorough value and/or ideological reflection processes were conducted before taking collective non-violent social actions. Unfortunately, the struggle to resolve or transform the ensuing conflicts through collective actions may not always result instantly in a peaceful and fair resolution or transformation of the conflicts. It is, therefore, important to set roots for their actions taken deep in the collective value system of why(s) and how(s) to resist effectively the possibilities of cooption as well as the harsh crunching persecution. It is assumed that each of us would have a personal value perspective and the empowering consciousness of its relationship to our actions – past, present, and intended. The value perspective can be shared and developed individually or collectively. The steps needed for the process are:

(a) Identify what is the issue, who are the victims, and what is the pain?
(b) Explore why is this important to you, how does it affect you, what are the feelings raised to the victims and in you?
(c) Identify the emerging patterns of “value statements” and “should statements”.
(d) Identify the sources or origins of “value statements” and “should statements”.
(e) Explore all approaches other than the original action or concern.

(3) Model for Strategy Planning

Once the power structure, the present solutions, the concrete methods, their strategies applied of all the pertinent actors have been thoroughly analyzed, the associated Problem Possibility can be identified with clarity. The actors can be classified into groups according to their present methods/strategy of pro, con or neutral on the issue, followed by their respective model of present strategy, the evaluation, what is needed to achieve the problem possibility, the proposals for action, and the priorities accorded.

(4) Steps in Social Action Plan

During the course of series of social actions taken, it is rather easy for the parties to be so immersed in resolving the issues that they lose sight of the ideal/dream, which triggered their original motivation and collective action. Therefore, it is useful to remind their ideal/dream, followed by clearly spelling out long range goal setting with its Ideal Problem Possibility and Action as well as with those for short range goals. The methods for itemized social action options leading toward short range goals can be comprehensively entertained with details at this stage. A Schedule for Timeline can be constructed in a matrix format with “Who” would be responsible for “Which Item(s)” with the accorded priority for the ”What Action” to be taken at/by an agreed “Target Date”. The Evaluation of steps taken for the social action plan can be conducted in two different ways. One is designed for regular reviews and coordination of the progresses made for planned actions, and the other for the evaluation of the final campaign. For successful campaign, a celebration for the victory would be appropriate to demonstrate the People Power and to share their joy of being empowered, thus, people can be motivated to take on greater issue with self-confidence and available resources enriched, even on those problems involving social structure changes. If the actions failed in meeting the expectations, an honest and thorough reflection should be called for to review mistakes made and weaknesses throughout all of the steps on analyses done, value reflected, strategy modeled, actions executed and manners, timing chosen, or team work, before their next venture to try again or scale down the action in preparation for easier issues.
This approach of empowering the people in organizing themselves for a taste of their legitimate power through their own effort and available resources with or without an hired organizer, who would be willing “to think with and work with” the people, is not only essential in overcoming the gap between the ideal goal that people dream about and the existing state of powerlessness, of hopelessness, of exploitation, and of the conflicting situations, but also in enhancing the hard won People Power and the self-confidence in their struggle for democracy and in its consolidation through non-violent collective social action.

2. The Third Party Neutral

In the animal kingdom the disputes and conflicts are settled mostly by the shear size of the force with some individual tactics combined. For those in the wild kingdom with social class structures and organizations, their solutions to disputes and conflicts would be resolved with the combination of force size, strategies, organized state, and the coordinated collective actions taken and sustained.

Our societal organizations are even more complex with additional factors such as value and ethic systems, sense of justice, identity, religious faith, emotion, and history, of much higher intelligence level, as well as the ability to collect data and information, to analyze them, and to reason. We can imagine the human complexity by adding these to the possible settlement, resolution and transformation of the seemingly inevitable disputes and conflicts among peoples, communities, and states as well as the heavy burden of tasks of managing, resolving or transforming the conflicts in countries of emerging democracies where the remnants of hegemonic structures linger on.

We would have to be sensitive to and be aware of the cultural differences in expression and resolution of conflicts, for instance in Taiwan and the western society. Most quarrels between neighbors would be conducted directly between the parties in privacy or in court in the west, while in Taiwan they would take the arguments or shouting matches to the streets in open to the annoyance of the neighbors or even the passers-by with possibility of seeking sympathizers to strengthen each side’s own position. In societies, where the propensity and tradition of resolving the conflicts between/among communities or ethnic groups through words, dialogues, negotiations and non-violent means are weak, the alternatives of relying on organized action of protest and force may prevail, resulting
in the escalation of confrontation.

Sources of conflicts are many folds. The injustice and inequality related to the rights to clear water and air, cultural and social rights, rights to education, health, and civil and political rights, etc. The inequality in opportunities related to employment, housing and welfare services is another aspect. There are intimate relationships among the above rights and people’s interests and needs, of personal, community, societal, and national on their survival, status, and prestige.

The levels of and attitudes on conflicts among the parties can range from “wait and see” to a “zero sum” mind set of active consolidation of position, alliance making, preparation for confrontation or show-down through legal means or use of force. This force used may vary from bull force, out of proportion, to various hi tech weapon systems with great lethality, speed, accuracy to those of mass destruction.

The common non-violent means used in resolving conflicts have been by the processes of reconciliation, mediation, arbitration and judgment through the intervention of third parties. A program involving facilitation, mediation, conciliation, and reconciliation through third party neutral (TPN) with four modules, TPN 1 – 4, has been designed by a team at CICR (The Canadian Institute of Conflict Resolution) and shared in Taiwan since 2002. Some 200 participants have completed the TPN – 1 training in Taiwan. A Conflict Research and Study Center at the Chang Jung Christian University will be established with the cooperation of Saint Paul University in Canada, in 2005.

Conflict resolutions may be: power-based through conciliation or violence with possibilities of individuals and ethnic groups may be sacrificed as escape goats; right-based through words, deeds or legislative acts of the courts or governments; or interest-based through direct negotiation to accommodate the sharing of power and in redistribution of interests and benefits. However, the approaches to transform the conflicts through institutionally structured changes and legislated state reforms with preventive capabilities would require greater effort, longer duration and even changes in culture. The potential interactive agents are the NGOs for domestically related conflicts and would expand to embrace the active inputs of Track II teams for internationally associated conflicts through remedial development-aid programs with the grants from the governments in a tri-sector partnership.
3. Open Space Technology

NGOs are quite similar to all organic bodies in having potential life cycle consisting of stages of conception of new vision, birth, infancy, adolescence, prime, maturity with fruits, aristocracy, early and late atrophy, and death. For the organic bodies of human being, only limited artificial interventions can be introduced to manipulate some of the stages through organ transplanting without affecting the quality of life. However, the life cycles of the NPOs/NGOs (Non-Profit Organizations/Non-Governmental Organizations) can be substantially re-spirited, re-vitalized, or re-organized at the right time at various stages not only to prolong the life, but to improve the quality of life in accomplishing the mission and in realizing the vision. Death of organizations can be overcome by resurrection, albeit at much higher price.

The Open Space Technology can provide cost efficient method for engaging medium to large size groups in collective transformation, unleashing pent up passion, unleashing of creativity and innovation, and creating opportunities and space open enough for re-spiriting, revitalizing, and transforming the organizations. These Open Space sessions can be built in on regular intervals in the life of organizations as preventive measures or conducted to deal with complex and conflicting urgent issues without known answers.

The Open Space has Four Principles and A Law of Two Feet:

- Whoever came are the right people.
- Whenever it starts is the right time.
- Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.
- When it’s over, it’s over.

The participants are of two feet (A Law of Two Feet) and are free to come and go or to hop from one session or group meeting to another like butterflies in hosting with additional information and/or data or like bumble bees in pollinating the flowers with ideas instead of pollen, thus contributing to bearing of fruits and seeds.

These sessions with specific topics run on passion and responsibility of the participants. Their passion motivates him/her as a right person to be at the meeting capable of proposing a topic in answering one of the chosen themes related to the issues, inspiring him/her through the decision making process for things to be done.
with responsibility. Each topic based group can post the summaries of notes taken of their discussion and decisions made and to be shared with or for inputs from members of other groups or any subsequent inputs from their own initial members. Sufficient time should be allowed for the participants to read all the topics with notes and comments on the posters, before requesting them to put marked stickers on those topics most vital in answering the theme. Then focus the collective energy on the topic with priority based on the number of stickers by composing an action plan consists of Topic Name, Initiator, Participants with What Action to be taken by Whom and by When. The Action Plan can be further enriched through suggestions and support offered by other participants. All Action Plans and reports should be documented and sent to the sponsor and participants for needed follow-up actions.

4. Civilian-Based Defense (CBD)

The Westphalian Treaty of 1648 had laid down the foundation of the supremacy of national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states. This has been beefed up subsequently by the concepts of national security and national interests. Many armed conflicts of various sizes and durations have been fought in the names of protecting the national sovereignty and territorial integrity, national security and national interests, eventuated, for example, in astronomical democides of 170 millions from 1900 to 1990 (1) and horrendous destruction to both the human civilization and our Mother Earth over the centuries. Dan Smith reported that there were 118 armed conflicts worldwide from the start of 1990 to the end of 1999, involving 80 states and two para-state regions, and resulting in the death of approximately six million people (2). The advent of modern science and hi-tech further compounded the sophistication and efficiency of the killing machines instead of deterring the warring parties to pursue their goals with numerous human tragedies.

However, these efficient machines of mass killing and destruction can be turned on for invading other countries or against their own people when their governing legitimacy is challenged. The means to curtail this maddening trend is rather limited and unconvincing to most people at best currently. The alternative approach of Civilian-Based Defense (CBD) is the applications of various means of non-violent action with different combination of non-violent protests, persuasion, non-cooperation and non-violent intervention advocated by Gene Sharp and others since 1960’s.

With advance research, education, and training, well designed CBD programs can be
adopted as a defense strategy or a complementary component of the defense strategy for both the national and human security, and applied in tandem with armed defense or alone in deterring the military adventures of the invaders or the usurpers, and defeating them in attaining of their objectives through non-cooperation and political defiance. Some two hundred methods can be targeted at the very source of political power of the invaders or usurpers.

(1) The Source of Political Power

All political powers needed to sustain the governance, which transcend all cultural barriers and traditions, are based on following six elements:

(i) The ruler’s legitimate authority to govern. The denial of this authority would prevent the establishment of the new government of oppressors.

(ii) Human resources. Without the provision of human resources from many individuals and organizations, the economic and political systems would fail to operate in sustaining the illegitimate ruling structure.

(iii) Skills and knowledge. Certain expertise with special skill and knowledge are of vital importance to establishing a new government. The degree of their support or cooperation could precariously affect its survival.

(iv) Intangible factors. The oppressors’ illegitimate and immoral authority may erode due to the refusals to cooperate and renouncing of the oppressors’ authority by the standard bearers of the communities. These would in turn change the people’s traditional habits of obedience and loyalty to authority.

(v) Material resources. Their supplies to the oppressors may be severed or reduced by economic boycotts and labour strikes from the production of raw materials, transportation of manufactured goods and personnel, means of communication, to the management of material and human resources.

(vi) Sanctions. When the authority has lost the potency of sanction against those defiant non-cooperators, the oppressors’ days of survival would be numbered. The impacts of well organized and timely massive non-violent actions of non-cooperation and political defiance may snowfall to crush the oppressors into disintegration.

(2) The Feasibility of CBD as a Defense Strategy

The feasibility of the strategy of CBD as a complementary component of national and human security or as an alternative to traditional military defense depends on the
following factors:

(i) The state of research, analyses, knowledge and intelligence of all the pertinent strengths and vulnerabilities of both one’s own country and those of the potential adversaries on all of social, cultural, economic, political and military aspects.

(ii) The degree of determination and social cohesiveness to resort to military means in settling the international conflicts through invasion or defense.

(iii) If the defense strategy is going to adopt the non-violent means of CBD, then it would call for a thorough preparation of advance programs of education, training, familiarizing, and organizing of all civilians on:

(a) the principles of non-violent actions,
(b) the methods of maintaining the disciplines, and
(c) the training of people on CBD skills and methods in non-violent actions involving protests, persuasion, social non-cooperation, economic non-cooperation of boycotts and strikes, political non-cooperation, and non-violent intervention, amounting to a total of 198 methods.

If these methods were applied, in formats of tandem or combinations, effectively and timely with flexible scales and frequencies in concerted ways on properly chosen issues, the defenders can deny the invaders and/or usurpers in achieving the objectives of military, political, economic or social in nature. The CBD is not a panacea. It is not cost free either, except that it would be substantially lower in terms of costs and destruction incurred. The basic training of non-violent skills may contribute to fostering the culture of non-violence and peace with justice as well.

The strategies of CBD were applied by the Norwegians during the World War II Nazi occupation with some impacts. Swedish parliament enacted a bill to adopt Non-Violent Resistance, a form of CBD, to complement the national defense strategies in 1986. Yet, the late Dr. Johan Joergen Holst, the Minister of Norwegian National Defense, had some difficulties in incorporating the essential of CBD into their Defense White Paper in 1991 (12). However, CBD was more forcefully applied against the Soviet troops by the Defense Minister of Lithuania, Dr. Audrius Butkevicius, during their struggle to restore independence in 1989-91 (13). The feasible contribution of CBD is the reduction in violent conflicts, potential applications of non-violent means in both deterring and defeating the invaders and usurpers from succeeding in establishing illegitimate authoritarian governments.
Through the empowerment program, people can secure basic human rights, improve justice, peace, equality, freedoms and democracy; through TPN to build multicultural civil society with NPOs, NGOs and other social institutions; revitalized their organizations through the Open Space Technology, and to foster culture of peace and non-violence as well as to complement the national security and human security through well prepared CBD program. These will contribute to the soft power (14) of a nation, which lies in her ability to attract and persuade and resides in three sources composed of:

- culture: both of high in terms of literature, art and education and popular in terms of mass entertainment, universal values and cultural policies,
- political values: championed such as democracy, human rights, rule of law, peace, justice, and equality
- foreign policies: with legitimacy, moral authority, and compassion.

The soft power of each nation can be promoted, instead of competing one another with hard power. The soft power of NGOs of a given country may reinforce that country’s foreign policies or contradict. The professional strength, persuasive power and connectedness of their Track II teams as well as the close coordination and collaboration among all three members of the tri-sector partnership-plus with full participation of the recipient peoples, communities may become crucial.

V The Conclusion

Various natural disasters, violations of human rights, and practices of injustice and inequality lead to conflicts of different severities among different communities or ethnic groups in the societies and states or between/among states. Without appropriate and timely conflict resolution or transformation, they may aggravate into violent societal confrontations, civil wars, or even international wars. The state in charge of organized government may in many cases not be the right party or may lack sufficient manpower to be directly involved. The government may delegate the authority and provide adequate financial assistance to NGOs as an active partner in a bilateral partnership to resolve, or transform these conflicts. If these conflicts are transnational in nature, active participation of Track II team would be beneficial in the format of tri-sector partnership-plus composed of NGOs-Track II-government and the aid recipient peoples, communities, and states.
In negotiations leading to conflict resolution and transformation, both domestically and internationally, the roles of neutral third parties, composed of NGOs and Track II team, are essential in ensuring the quality of and in speeding up the negotiation processes, as well as in facilitating the eventual conflict transformation through full participation and ownership of these programs by recipient communities.

Conflict transformations through social changes and/or state reforms are possible if the conflicting parties were conscientized and invited to take part in realistic analyses of the causes, and potential consequences and price to be paid of continued conflicts as active participants into the collaborative partnership composed of NGOs – Track II – government-plus programs with reason, wisdom, and wish for the lasting peace with justice prevailed. The formulation and practice of this kind of collaborative partnership with four sets of interactive tools may not be easy. Yet, it is worthy of our serious consideration as a collective venture.
References:


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