

Building bridges with partners, within or outside the human rights movement, is a necessary step towards overcoming the problem of resources. Bridge-building may take the form of networking, and the sharing of information, expertise and advocacy skills, between NGOs.³³ Partnerships with non-state actors in the institutional sphere may also be looked for. In the past, NGOs have benefited, for instance, from individual contributions by experts and academics. Formal research and training alliances between NGOs and the academic community may help institutionalise that contribution in the future.³⁴

Co-operation with human rights commissions is a further way of building bridges with potential partners.³⁵ In Canada, human rights commissions are concerned chiefly with the application of domestic human rights legislation. However, their mandate is, in certain cases, broad enough to include the possibility of assisting civil society in monitoring and reporting on the implementation of international standards. Typical assistance measures include analysing the legal implications of a human rights treaty,³⁶ giving access to documentation and/or research facilities, and publicising a commission's views on the compatibility of laws, policies and programmes with international standards.³⁷ A significant scope for co-operation between NGOs and human rights

³³ GLOBAL NGO FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS, *op. cit.* (note 31), p. 22.

³⁴ The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) has recently established a programme to foster research alliances between universities and the community movement. This type of programme may provide a framework for institutional co-operation with NGOs.

³⁵ The UN has identified monitoring compliance with international human rights, and reporting thereon to civil society, as one of the activities that can be undertaken by national human rights commissions: U.N. COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, *General Comment (No 10) on The Role of National Human Rights Institutions in the Protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, (Economic and Social Council Document E/C.12/1998/25, 10 December 1998), para. 3(f).

³⁶ See, e.g.: COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE ET DES DROITS DE LA JEUNESSE, *Analyse de certaines revendications du mouvement étudiant en fonction du Pacte international relatif aux droits économiques, sociaux et culturels* (P. Bosset, Research Department), 22 August 1997.

³⁷ See, e.g.: COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE ET DES DROITS DE LA JEUNESSE, *Mémoire à la Commission de l'économie et du travail sur le Document de réflexion sur le travail des enfants* (M. Coutu, Research Department), March 1998.