

The Joint Statement correctly identifies the need for institutional channels of participation by civil society.<sup>29</sup> However, the document also reflects an inherent tension between two potentially conflicting requirements to effective reporting and monitoring, *i.e.* adequate resources, on the one hand, and autonomy vis-à-vis the public authorities, on the other hand. NGOs facing the issue of resources must find ways of developing an adequate capacity for monitoring and reporting, without losing their autonomy in the process. How this potential conflict is resolved is likely to have a significant impact on the effectiveness and credibility of civil society participation.

A key factor affecting the capacity of civil society institutions to participate effectively in the monitoring and reporting process is the availability of adequate technical resources. Effective reporting and monitoring requires a judicious selection of reference materials.<sup>30</sup> It also calls for advocacy skills and for legal, social and/or scientific expertise.<sup>31</sup> Finally, monitoring and reporting requires a good working knowledge of the UN system. NGOs with limited resources may experience difficulties in meeting all of these requirements. Other factors, such as occasional organisational weaknesses, or the fragility of certain grass-roots organisations, may further compromise the capacity of NGOs to conduct effective monitoring and reporting.<sup>32</sup>

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même que celle des entreprises en matière de reconnaissance et de protection des droits économiques, sociaux et culturels des Québécoises et Québécois à la lumière de la *Déclaration universelle* et de ses principaux instruments d'application et de conseiller à la fois les gouvernements et parlements et les citoyennes et citoyens sur les redressements à opérer." Joint Statement, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> The Joint Statement refers to economic and social rights only. However, civil society participation should be encouraged *per se*, as a matter of public policy. It should therefore apply to reporting and monitoring under any international human rights instrument.

<sup>30</sup> L. WISEBERG, "Information et documentation relatives aux droits de l'homme", in *Manuel relatif à l'établissement des rapports sur les droits de l'homme*, *op. cit.* (note 19), p. 27.

<sup>31</sup> In 1998 the NGO Global Forum pointed out the need for additional fields of expertise, especially in regard to financial analysis: GLOBAL NGO FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS, *Final Document* (<http://www.hri.ca/vienna+5/final-report>), p. 22.

<sup>32</sup> The same weaknesses may also impact on NGO interaction with the UN: SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, *op. cit.* (note 6), para. 34.