

approach is likely to be more sustainable and cost-effective in the long term."¹⁴ Those NGOs involved in the initiatives discussed under the short-term strategy need to work with the local people in the countries where peacebuilding is occurring. Civil society actors need to be trained so that they can continue the work of existing NGOs, or establish organizations of their own. Such training would entail such things as particular professional skills, how to establish an organization, how to run an office, how and where to request funding, how to interact with other NGOs and how to interact with inter-governmental organizations. In many cases, NGOs already recognize the importance of civil society to sustainable peace. Medecins sans Frontieres again serves as an excellent example. Not only does this organization participate in relief efforts by delivering emergency medical assistance, it also provides training to local personnel.

In mobilizing civil society NGOs must take some precautions. They have to be careful that they are not empowering any one group at the expense of others. Similarly, they must also endeavor to create a working atmosphere with less ethnic tension than in the rest of society if ethnic tension is a concern. More specifically, collaboration among civil society actors needs to be encouraged. Furthermore, NGOs working within a country must minimize conflict and competition with other NGOs. The second component to a long-term strategy may help toward this end.

The second critical component of a long-term strategy concerns the development of an organization to oversee the work of NGOs and civil society organizations in specific countries. This would help to coordinate their activities and could serve as a resource which the organizations could consult for information, help and to learn of the activities of their counterparts: "you cannot coordinate properly when you do not know what your counterpart is doing, or vice-versa."¹⁵ There are various proposals made for the development of such a coordinating institution, however, due to the constraints of time and space this paper will focus on the example offered by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The OSCE has been working closely with NGOs since 1975. At the OSCE Budapest Summit in 1994, a formal relationship between the OSCE and NGOs was established. At this time, OSCE missions were requested to appoint an NGO liaison to work with the NGOs in their respective areas.¹⁶ Included in this new arrangement was increased access of OSCE documentation, seminars and workshops for NGOs. This organizational mechanism is useful as it allows NGOs and civil society organizations increased access to training and resources. It also facilitates networking and provides them with a contact which they can consult to determine the activities of other organizations in their region. This has the potential to help to reduce some of the consequences that result as a lack of organization.

It should also be noted that such a relationship is also beneficial to the OSCE. Through regular contact with NGOs the OSCE can be well informed of the activities of NGOs and civil

¹⁴*Beyond Bungee Cord Humanitarianism*, Pg. 82

¹⁵Alvaro de Soto and Graciana del Castillo, "Obstacles to Peacebuilding," *Foreign Policy*, Pg. 75

¹⁶Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Study on the Enhancement of NGO Participation*, Vienna: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, September 1995. Pg. 3