

peacebuilding operations was the international factor and the role of outsiders. During the cold war, governments took a greater interest in developing countries. This in turn tended to support state structures, structures that are critical for the security of individuals.

Gebremariam also said there was a need to raise the relationship between state and society. Specifically, it was necessary to tap into society and indigenous knowledge, such as the wisdom of the elders that exists within societies. The pattern of intervention that has marked the post-cold war international system has tended to undermine the state and thus overlook the indigenous capacity of local actors who in turn must assume greater responsibility for many things including security.

Panel Three: Role of non-governmental organizations and the media

Cyril Ritchie, Chair, Steering Committee, World Civil Society Conference 1999

Mark Hoffman, Lecturer in International Relations, London School of Economics

Shauna Sylvester, Executive Director of the Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society

The third panel examined the role of nongovernmental organizations and the media.

The first presentation was from Cyril Ritchie who began by taking issue with the use of the term 'nongovernmental' organization and proposed instead the notion of civil society. He noted the ongoing development of civil society organizations – both local and transnational – and their increased relevance to the peacebuilding process. These organizations exist because ordinary citizens decide to get together, to consult, to mobilize concern or resources, to address an issue, to advocate for government action, to exchange experiences, and/or to build capacity. They are derived from inherently positive motivations. That is why the concept of civil society and civil society organizations is the more favoured term.