Introduction.

It is now five years since our group began its effort to respond to the emergence of “failed states” as a significant research and policy issue. A prominent result of the efforts of our workshop community is that we are placing “failed states” in an ever more expansive context. Because of limitations of space we will illustrate this observation with only four examples from the papers presented at Workshop IV in Florence in 2001.

1. Christopher Clapham wrote: “...the idea that the whole world is actually controlled by states has never been anything but a reassuring fiction, classically expressed by the demarcation of maps in solid blocks of colour, corresponding to the territories of designated states.” (Clapham, 2001, 1)

When Sierra Leone "state" came under armed challenge in early 1990s, "there was no state, in the sense of an institution concerned with the provision of public goods. Instead, there were a set of essentially private operators, using the mythology of statehood as one of a collection of resources, along with management of the diamond market and control over parts of a fragmented military, through which to achieve personal goals of survival, wealth and recognition." (Clapham, 2001, 7)

2. Hans-Joachim Spanger quoted Charles Tilly: “Most of the European efforts to build states failed. The enormous majority of the political units which were around to bid for autonomy and strength in 1500 disappeared in the next few centuries, smashed or absorbed by
other states-in-the-making.” (Tilly, 1975, 38-39) Spanger then concluded that “It may be due to this legacy of short memories that today talk is predominantly on state failure in the Third World…” (Spanger, 2001, 3)

3. Hans-Henrik Holm perceived that the “international system is moving towards a higher state of disaggregation ... consisting of regional policy networks, global issue networks and various policy sites ... What has been insufficiently recognized in the analysis so far, is that what seems to be a confusing and ad hoc based set of policies may in fact be creating the foundation for a new type of order: A Disaggregated Order.” (Holm, 2001, 1)

4. Ann C. Mason observed that “what has been described as a “power shift” away from the state - up, down, and sideways - to substate and nonstate actors as part of the emergent world order also involves a relocation of authority. “ (Mason, 2001, 9) She supports this statement with anecdotal evidence from Colombia. “Displaced populations and victims of political violence now routinely bypass the Colombian government and attempt to take their appeals directly to the U.N. High Commissioner on Human Rights (UNHCHR), the International Red Cross, and Amnesty International.” In a recent stand-off with the state, about 6000 campesinos insisted on the presence of the local representative of the UNHCHR in dialogues focused on ending the stand-off. (Mason, 2001, 19)

These brief quotes indicate that paths followed in our inquiries have led us into complicated networks of issues and actors that involve not only states and inter-state organizations, but also a diversity of other actors, including civil society organizations and local governments.

In my contributions to our workshops I have of necessity drawn on the three main topics of my research - the UN System (with special interest in civil society involvement), world relations of local communities, and peace research - in an attempt to attain insight on how these fields of knowledge might offer insight useful in coping with problems presented by “failed states”. Facilitating this effort has been the marvelous education on “failed state” that I have gained from other workshop participants. Not surprising is that initially there was a conceptual gulf between my papers and those of colleagues specializing in “failed states” issues. But more recently, as documented by the quotes above, there has been an increasing linkage and overlap between my conceptual world and that in which “failed states” are placed.

On the Road to Perceiving Complexity

Although it may seem that I am reiterating the obvious, as we broaden our analytic perspective, it is important to explicitly recognize the ways in which analytic oversimplification of the world has placed limits on our understanding of world relations, including “failed states”. Two major dimensions of this simplification, illustrated in the four quotes that opened this paper, are (1) lack of historical context and (2) failure to place states in the context of a diversity of other actors, both those acting within and across their borders. With respect to the first dimension of oversimplification, as an increasing number of scholars have focused on the “failed-states” phenomenon after the end of the “Cold War”, there has been a tendency to imply that the state system is confronting a totally new phase in its history. But, as has often been the case with other apparently new social phenomena, e.g. the role of civil society in world affairs, we are now being informed by scholars that “state failure” is nothing new.

In one of our opening quotes, Hans-Joachim Spanger has reminded us (Spanger, 2001, 3) that as early as 1975 Charles Tilley wrote: “Most of the European efforts to build states failed. The enormous majority of the political units which were around to bid for autonomy and strength
in 1500 disappeared in the next few centuries, smashed or absorbed by other states-in-the-making.” (Tilley, 1975, 38-39). Thus, as we approach the current upheaval in the state system, we must take care to place these events in the dynamic history of the creation and demise of states, a story vividly illustrated in any historical atlas.

Regarding the second dimension of simplification, we must always recognize that state borders have been drawn because some feel the need to place boundaries on human activities and movement. But these boundaries always seem arbitrary, and often unnecessary, to those who have been freely crossing these boundaries and desire to continue to do so. Thus human life on this planet has always consisted of a dialogue between those who feel the need to draw boundaries and those who feel the need to cross them. (Koslowski, 2002) At the same time, there are always many who would prefer to draw different boundaries. As already quoted, Christopher Clapham helpfully reminds us that “…the idea that the whole world is actually controlled by states has never been anything but a reassuring fiction, classically expressed by the demarcation of maps in solid blocks of colour, corresponding to the territories of designated states.” (Clapham, 2001, 1)

Much confusion has resulted from use of the terms state, nation, and nation-state as synonyms. Thus the term international is widely used when it would be more explicit to use the term inter-state. The imprecise use of these terms has contributed to a widely oversimplified view of states. Most states are actually multi-nation states. Application of the term nation-state to their state by leaders of states and their supporters, frequently reflects a political aspiration rather than a fact. (MacIver, 1999, 3) Thus there have long been what some “failed-states” analysts now refer to as “quasi-states”. And there have long been numerous multi-state nations. Visibility of this diversity has been enhanced by inquiries focusing on “failed states.” Certainly careful use of the terms state, nation-state, multi-nation state, international and inter-state by scholars would have helped us to avoid much confusion in identifying what is meant by the term “state”. One advantage would have been avoidance of a tendency to declare certain entities “failed states” that had never really become states. Scholars studying “failed states” have usefully developed typologies of states that include terms such as fragile states, failing states, shadow states and collapsed states.

Fixation on the state has not only limited capacity to adequately recognize the perennial flow of natural and human phenomena across all borders. At the same time, it has limited ability to take into account the diversity of natural and human worlds to be found within the borders drawn by creators of states. Some human groups within the state border feel no identity with the so-called "nation-state", and others may be only marginally aware of its existence. We must bear in mind that people have identities and loyalties to a diversity of territorial units that range from local to global, and also are involved in a diversity of organizations that transcend territorial units. Failure to recognize these complexities is often reflected in unrealistic assumptions employed in use of the term sovereignty. It is obvious that all territorial units have limited sovereignty because the boundaries of so many public issues - environment, drugs, poverty, etc. - range across a number of territorial units. Acquiring sovereignty essentially means acquiring control over one’s fate. Therefore, it is important that those seeking sovereignty decide exactly which aspect of their fate they wish to control and which territorial boundary is relevant to this specific aspiration.

Finally, growing awareness of the complexity of world relations is responsible for the emergence of the term global governance which “affirms an encompassing trend of authority being relocated in multiple directions. The Westphalian or territorial state system is no more
than one form or element of contemporary global governance. ... [The global governance concept] is a perspective on global life, a vantage point designed to foster a regard for the immense complexity and diversity of global life.” (Hewson and Sinclair, 1999, 7) One implication of this perspective is that it is no longer assumed that the state offers a model for world government. Instead, as I see it, global governance is emerging out of the intersection of efforts to cope with a complicated array of problems that are tending to extend to ever wider borders. Thus global governance is a dynamically evolving process that is continually emerging out of the “laboratories” of human experience.

**Basic Propositions Underlying this Paper**

Before proceeding further, it should be helpful to the reader to have a succinct summary of propositions underlying this paper:

1. The territorial boundaries of nations and states have always been dynamically changing. (Even before 911 A.D.)
2. Territorial boundary changes of nations and states have frequently resulted in disruptive conflict and violence.
3. As the speed of global linkage (travel, migration, trade, investment and communication) has increased, the speed of demand for nation and state boundary changes has increased.
4. As the speed of global linkage has increased, global standards for self-determination of peoples and human rights of individuals have emerged.
5. In response to speed in global linkage and emerging global standards, knowledge useful in preventing disruptive conflict and violence has emerged.
6. Disruptive conflict and violence created by inevitable demands for change in territorial boundaries of nations and states can, and should be, prevented through long term peace building.
7. Emerging global governance is revealing an ever wider array of involved actors in need of knowledge that can illuminate for them potential roles that are available to them.

**Identifying Potential for Coping With “Failed States”**

As we search for potential for coping with “failed states” it is essential that we remember that there is an inevitable dialogue between efforts to draw and implement state borders and human trade, travel, migration, investment, and communication that crosses these borders. Out of this dialogue emerge new human identities and public policy issues with new borders. These changes will result in demands for change in state borders and for changes in the functions of specific states. The goal of our search is to discern ways to cope with these inevitable changes, and resulting challenges to states, before they result in serious disruptive conflict or violence.

As we search for potential for coping with these challenges we quickly become aware that recognition of the complexity of world affairs broadens both the array of actors that must be considered in our inquiry and the array of actors who are in need of the results of our analyses. As has already been explained, our effort will be limited to three fields of inquiry, the UN System, world relations of local communities and peace research. In order to attain focus for this brief effort, we have chosen three prominent dimensions: values, knowledge and roles. We will offer only a few examples of each:

I. Emerging global values:
   1. Self-determination of peoples,
   2. Human rights of individuals.

II. Expanding competence to prevent “failure”: 
1. Growing knowledge about prevention,
2. Proposals for new UN offices and competencies.

III. Providing roles in global governance for new territories and groups:
1. Nations and peoples,
2. Global governance initiatives of local authorities.
3. Civil Society (social movements and NGOs)

As we report on our search for potential for coping with "failed states" it is important for readers to bear in mind that most of the items that we will present are based on actual efforts of a diversity of actors. For the most part these actors have not permitted the state centric view of the world to prevent them from perceiving, and implementing, alternative options for achieving control over their fate. Thus, although we shall report on future proposals that flow out of the experiences of these actors, for the most part we will describe the performance of existing actors. No doubt many feel that many of these actors are not significant. But, we nevertheless report them in the spirit of Kenneth Boulding: "Anything that exists is possible."

1. Emerging Global Values

Two emerging global values, self-determination of peoples and human rights of individuals, are motivating widespread challenges within "failed states" and at the same time are offering justification for external intervention in these states. It is extremely important that we approach the present role of these values with an appreciation of their slow emergence out of widespread political struggles.

1. Self-Determination of Peoples

The largely non-violent dissolution of overseas empires in the late Twentieth Century represents a significant achievement that produced experience and institutions that are relevant to those now attempting to cope with self-determination demands in “failed states”. It is exceedingly difficult to understand why this experience and these institutions have not been utilized in response to more recent demands for self-determination. Have these achievements been forgotten? What other reason could there be?

Responsiveness to self-determination demands in the overseas colonies was reflected in three dramatic steps. First, the League of Nations Covenant signified that a dramatic change in acceptance of overseas colonies was taking place when the victorious states found it prudent not to seize outright the colonies of the defeated states. Instead fourteen territories were made League of Nation Mandates. Although seven of the victors (Australia, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Japan, New Zealand and Union of South Africa) supervised these Mandates, they were required to report to the League and to justify their treatment of peoples in the territories. The UN Charter built upon League practice by establishing a Trusteeship Council responsible for ten Trust Territories. Extending the powers of the Permanent Mandates Commission, the Council was given power to directly receive oral and written petitions, and to send visiting missions, which it did every three years until all Trust Territories became independent.

Second, in Chapter XI, the Charter significantly broadened the United Nations’ concern for overseas colonies beyond that of the League in a Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories. Although only a declaration, it signified escalating nonacceptance of overseas colonies by indicating that all states administering seventy-four non-self-governing territories were obliged “to develop self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of the peoples, and to assist them in the progressive development of their free political institutions ...” In fulfillment of this article, a Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories
was created. Third, in 1960 the General Assembly passed a Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by an 89 to 0 vote, with 9 abstentions by eight colonial powers and the Dominican Republic. Riggs and Plano see this vote as a significant chapter in decline of the legitimacy of overseas empires,

It was an ideological triumph. The old order had not merely been challenged and defeated in the field - its adherents were no longer willing to be counted in its defense. (Riggs and Plano, 1994, 195)

Not many years later all overseas colonies had achieved political independence, thus offering an encouraging example of (1) an incremental redefinition of a basic value, (2) in dialogue among an ever broader array of participants, (3) gradual development of new institutions for implementing this value, and (4) measured acceptance of a new value and new institutions by states having power to hold out against them much longer than they did. The end of overseas colonies stands alongside the victory over slavery as a momentous advance toward more humane governance. At the same time it represents the most fundamental transformation in the state system in this century, although many scholars and policy makers, largely because of their immersion in the Cold War, have lacked the capacity to recognize it.

Nevertheless, when viewed from concern forty years later for the “failure” of many of these newly independent states, this evolving drama of responsive statecraft is immersed in a larger sea of failure consisting of two key dimensions. The first has been the failure of the major Western states to anticipate and prepare for the fact that this phase in the self-determination struggle would most certainly be followed by others. After granting independence to their arbitrary creations, they failed to take into account the broader implications of this successful self-determination struggle for the multi-nation states - and multi-state nations - that they had created, as well as for others throughout the world. The second failure was inability to perceive the importance of the institutions that had been created for shifting self-determination struggles from battlefields to the halls of parliamentary diplomacy. It now seems surprising that leading states have employed ad hoc responses to a new era of self-determination challenges instead of building upon institutions which they had created in the earlier seventy-year struggle. Some scholars and former practitioners, admittedly with hindsight, have advocated this approach.

After laying out a set of standards for evaluating self-determination movements, Halperin, Scheffer and Small then make three proposals for UN oversight of self-determination claims. Two of their proposals focus on the Security Council. The first, building in part on the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, is the creation of a special committee in the Security Council that would include not only members of the Council but also Germany and Japan, as well as other major powers, perhaps from each regional group. The committee would be authorized to monitor self-determination movements and alert the Council whenever a situation appeared likely to escalate into a threat to the peace. “Alternatively, the Security Council could appoint the UN Trusteeship Council as its adviser on self-determination issues.” (Halperin, et. al., 1992, 112)

Their second proposal advocates the development of means for the Security Council to create and deploy, quickly and frequently if necessary, multinational forces, acting under authority provided in Article 43 of the Charter. Heldman and Ratner (1992, 7) also advocate enhanced involvement of the Security Council, advocating that it play a “conservator” role:

Currently the Security Council is the most efficient organ available, and it could probably handle the political and peacekeeping elements of conservatorship, but it has little experience with economic and social matters. The Security Council
could establish a subgroup - not all of whose members need be on the council - to oversee each conservatorship on the basis of a resolution adopted by the council and a budget approved by the General Assembly. (Heldman and Ratner, 1992, 19) They note that these Security Council efforts would have to be accompanied by the development of a management facility in the UN Secretariat. And they warn that “...conservatorships should not devolve into long-term custody.” (Heldman and Ratner, 1992, 19)

The third option suggested by Halperin, Scheffer and Small would transform the Trusteeship Council, which suspended operation on 1 November 1994 when the last remaining UN trust territory, Palau, attained self-government. They would revive it as a modern clearinghouse for self-determination, based on their judgment that “The Trusteeship Council is one of the lesser known success stories of the United Nations.” (Halperin, et. Al., 1992, 113) This would be a forum in which self-determination movements could lodge claims, identify and understand their rights, negotiate with government authorities, establish just administration of their affairs, and peacefully work out realistic political and territorial arrangements for the future. (TC.).

Childers and Urquhart, two former members of the UN Secretariat, also would build on the Trusteeship Council by creating a Council on Diversity Representation and Governance. They succinctly justify their proposal:

The chief recommendation concerns a set of problems arising from the weakening of the post-Westphalian nation-state, from unresolved legacies of the age of empires, and from aspirations of cultural and ethnic groups. These problems are so widespread, yet have received so little sustained attention, that they merit the conversion of an existing and now under-used Organ of the United Nations. (Childers and Urquhart, 1994, 201)

The Childers and Urquhart proposal has four distinctive features. First is strong emphasis on a broad search for the widest possible input of information and ideas for “peaceably accommodating cultural and ethnic aspirations” from a “wide range of specialists and non-governmental wise persons in all disciplines and experiences related to cultural diversity, representation and governance.” Second is its emphasis on the importance of “dialogue in the most open and congenial manner.” Third, it explicitly links the work of the council to UN human rights machinery. Fourth is the proposal that members of the Council, although nominated by states, should “be experts in one or more of the disciplines involved in [the council’s] mandate.” These features do not conflict with the spirit of the Halperin, Scheffer, and Small proposal.

2. Human rights for Individuals
1. Growing Knowledge About Prevention

Slowly responding, meagerly staffed, and inadequately financed interventions, such as those in Kosovo (June 1999), East Timor (October 1999) and Sierra Leone (October 1999) underline the limited support for this extension of global governance by those states most able to
support it. As a result of this style of performance, those supportive of these interventions have been very critical because response has generally tended to come after much suffering and loss of life. Simultaneous to, and interactive with, the extension of practice from only stopping the violence to peace building, has been an exceedingly significant emphasis in current research on prevention. (Alger, 2000; Birkenbach, 1997; Cahill, 1996; Jentelsen, 1999) Here we can only mention a few works in order to exemplify the diversity of these efforts. Kriesberg has offered a valuable foundation for preventive efforts in Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution, 1998. It is Kriesberg’s intent to “develop an empirically grounded understanding of how people prevent or stop destructive conflicts, but instead wage relatively constructive conflicts.” (xiii) This volume challenges those engaged in "prevention" to attempt to devise procedures for clearly distinguishing between potentially violent/disruptive conflicts and those that are constructive. It certainly is necessary to seek the termination of some conflicts, but, in the interest of long term peace, others should be converted into constructive conflicts.

Also offering a valuable foundation for most preventive efforts is research on risk assessment and early warning. Here a significant contribution is Davies and Gurr’s edited volume on Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning, 1998. They are attempting to develop the capacity to diagnose “failures” far enough in advance to facilitate effective international efforts at “prevention or peaceful transformation.” Contributors to this volume examine potential early warning indicators in different situations and attempt to judge their effectiveness according to various models.

Some of the volumes on prevention encompass a wide array of approaches and tools. Lund, in Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy, 1996, develops a broad "preventive diplomacy toolbox" that includes (1) military approaches (restraints on the use of armed force and threat or use of armed force), (2) diplomatic measures (coercive--without use of armed force and noncoercive), and (3) development and governance approaches (promotion of economic and social development, promulgation and enforcement of human rights and democracy, and national governing structures to promote peaceful conflict resolution). This is indeed comprehensive because these three categories embrace more than fifty individual tools. For example, the non-coercive diplomatic measures are divided into judicial or quasi judicial and non-judicial. Included in non-judicial are twelve tools with a diversity of approaches, such as third party mediation, propaganda, and fact finding.

After examining why deadly conflicts occur, the Carnegie Commission, in Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997, distinguishes between operational prevention and structural prevention. Operational prevention strategies range across early warning and response, preventive diplomacy, economic measures and "forceful" measures that include peacekeeping, preventive deployments and a rapid reaction "fire brigade". Structural prevention, employed as a synonym to peace building, addresses root causes of deadly conflict and includes security (from violence), economic well-being and justice. Responsibilities are laid out for states and their leaders, civil society (religion, science, media and business), the UN, and regional arrangements. A concluding section, "toward a culture of prevention", provides tasks for the mass media, religious institutions, and the United Nations.

Very informative literature is now emerging with insight on how aid can more effectively contribute to long term peace building. In Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace--or War, 1996, Anderson asserts that the impact of aid is not neutral. She asks, how can humanitarian or development assistance be “given in conflict situations in ways that rather than feeding into and exacerbating the conflict help local people to disengage and establish alternative systems to deal
with the problems that underlie conflict?” A Bock and Anderson article, 1999, focuses on how aid agencies can defuse intercommunal conflict. Here aid would be used to “inculcate a sense of belonging among a large, more inclusive group” and to “support/strengthen interconnection structures and systems, rather than competitive ones.” (336) Also offering insight on links between aid and peace is Prendergast’s study of humanitarian aid and conflict in Africa. (Prendergast, 1996). He offers ten commandments for avoiding “good intentions on the road to hell”, i.e. providing aid without sustaining conflict.

In the light of the prominent use of religious differences by leaders as a basis for waging conflict and war, research advocating the use of religion as a peace tool is an increasingly important response. (Alger 2002A) Appelby, in The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation, 1999, asserts that religion’s ability to inspire violence is intimately related to its equally impressive power as a force for peace. He identifies what religious terrorists and religious peacemakers share in common, what causes them to take different paths in fighting injustice and the importance of acquiring understanding of religious extremism. Johnston and Sampson, in Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft, 1994, "demonstrate that religion can be a potent force in encouraging the peaceful resolution of conflict.” (vii) After six case studies of reconciliation, the volume concludes with implications for the foreign policy community and implications for four religious communities: Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu and Christian.

This brief overview of only a few examples of growing research on prevention reveals that an array of new “tools” are being identified for coping with conditions that contribute to “state failure.” It is very significant that many of these works are based on case studies of “state failure” in several continents. The diversity of “tools” being advocated range across military, diplomatic, development, judicial, rapidly deployed “fire brigades”, religion, village rehabilitation, and overcoming poverty. They offer a severe challenge, as well as significant opportunities, to policy makers who have the capacity to recognize the dynamic complexity that confronts them, and also have the creative insight needed to identify the potential for peace building that it offers.

2. Proposals for New UN Offices

Emerging out of insights and ideas in works on risk assessment, early warning and preventive diplomacy have also been proposals for creating new activities that would strengthen the response capacity of the UN. Here we will briefly list only six of them.

(1). The Independent Working Group advocates establishing an Early Warning and Threat Assessment Section in the Office of the UN Secretary General. It would "access first-hand reports of internal conflicts and economic, social and humanitarian crises from governments, field representatives of UN agencies, specialized agencies and non-state actors." A significant aspect of this recommendation is that members of the Section would be seconded from UN functional agencies. (Independent Working Group, 1995, 17-18)

(2). Complementary to the first proposal would be Johansen’s advocacy of a UN International Monitoring Agency. Its monitoring tools would include high-altitude aircraft and satellites. It would have capacity to monitor arms agreements, cease-fire lines, economic sanctions and covert operations to manipulate elections. (Johansen, 1998, 103-104)

(3). Of course, early warning would be of little value without capacity to quickly respond. Toward this end, Johansen also recommends the creation of a UN Institute for Mediation and Dispute Resolution, "emphasizing early efforts at conflict resolution" that would mediate conflicts, and provide seasoned expertise to conflict resolution committees in each world region,
(Johansen, 1998, 103)

(4). The need for quick response has also resulted in a number of proposals for creation of a UN volunteer force, including the recommendation for a UN volunteer force of 10,000 by the commission on Global Governance. It is believed that such a force would serve as a deterrent, and that it could be useful in facilitating negotiation and peaceful settlement of disputes. It is carefully pointed out that this force is not seen as a substitute for peacekeeping forces. (Commission on Global Governance, 1995, 112)

(5). Childers and Urquhart recommend a different kind of force, a UN Humanitarian Security Police that would protect UN and NGO emergency personnel, their transport and their supplies. "This force would consist of contributed volunteering national police agreed by their authorities to be on standby for rapid formation and deployment to emergencies whether or not UN military forces may be deployed." (Childers and Urquhart, 1994, 204)

(6). Of course, none of these, and other, proposals for strengthened UN rapid competence to cope with disruptive conflict within states would be feasible without adequate financing. Recommendations for supplements to current assessment of states are levying surcharges on arms sales, on transnational movement of currencies, on international trade, and on international air and sea travel.

These proposals offer informative examples of the manner in which knowledge gained from experience in coping with "failed states" and research on questions raised by this experience, has lead to concrete proposals for developing the capacity of the UN to cope more effectively.

III. Providing Roles in Global Governance for New Groups and Territories

After recognizing the diversity of territorial authorities and national identities that exist within states and transcend their borders, one is challenged to ponder why some tend to view global governance as exclusively reserved for representatives of states. Might it not be possible to respond to the aspirations of some groups within states by assigning them some role in global governance while at the same time maintaining existing state boundaries? Advocates of global governance roles for nations and peoples respond in the affirmative. The growing role of local authorities in global governance also illuminates possibilities.

1. Nations and Peoples

Gotlieb usefully challenges us to broaden our perspective beyond only states when identifying potential means for providing roles for peoples in global governance. He would give nations new legal status in world affairs and membership in organizations whose membership is now limited to states. In an effort to provoke recognition of complexity and develop means for coping with it, he asserts that the “international legal system” needs additional concepts and a richer vocabulary to accommodate the national claims that cannot be expressed within existing state structures.” (Gotlieb, 1993, 45) He advocates a “states plus nations” approach that would permit some external relations for nations while at the same time not undermining the integrity of existing states.

Gotlieb’s notion of “national home regimes” is meant to serve as “a comprehensive response to ethnic claims” while simultaneously maintaining “the integrity and the sovereignty of states” that must cope with claims of national groups within them. Essential would be distinction between the concepts of nationality and citizenship. Citizenship would be derived from the state and nationality derived from the nation. Thus, he could see the issuance of two sets of passports to the inhabitants of a state: national passports to the inhabitants of national-
home areas and citizenship passports to all citizens of the state. Inhabitants of different nations could carry the same citizenship passport. And a common national passport could be issued to persons of different citizenship.

Although administration of this system might be complicated, there is no reason to believe that citizens and nationals could not cope with their dual status. Evidence to support this conclusion is the growing literature on people who take part in life and politics in two states. Recently there have been a number of studies reporting on this phenomenon in the lives of people who have migrated from Mexico and the Caribbean to the United States. For example, Rachel Springer has done a study of migrants from the Yucatan in Mexico to a city in Southwestern United States "who live their lives in both the United States and Mexico." They not only call their relatives regularly, remit money and gifts to family members, and send letters, photographs and video tapes back and forth, but also attend important fiestas and other rituals in their Yucatan town. She cites Robert Smith who reports that natives of Ticuani, Mexico who live in Brooklyn fly to Mexico in order to participate in important town meetings. They do this because "membership in one nation-state does not preclude membership in others." (Springer, 1998, 4) The Mexican government is offering migrants living in the United States the right of political participation in Mexico. But the US does not accept this position.

In his dual passport proposal, Gotlieb goes one step further in proposing that “the international legal community can be broadened beyond states and international organizations. ... Nations and peoples that have no state of their own can be recognized as such and endowed with an international legal status.” Those that are politically organized would be given the right to be a party to treaties and to take part in international organizations. Thus, “peoples organized on a nonterritorial basis” would have a status “similar to states, albeit limited to nonterritorial concerns.” (Gotlieb, 1993, 39) Building on existing procedures for Observer Missions at the UN, these “new forms of participation” could be offered a status of “Associated People of the United Nations.” Gotlieb believes that “this can happen in a manner that, far from threatening the integrity of the states from which they hail, could reinforce their cohesion by providing a coveted outlet for the expression of national sentiments.” (Gotlieb, 1993, 40)

2. Global Governance Initiatives of Local Authorities

Aguirre succinctly states the relevance of this topic to our search for potential:

“...it has become obvious that a wide range of ... autonomous international activities do exist, which are ...legitimated by the day-to-day political responsibilities of local democratic governmental authorities and people’s vital interests. Their multiple voices express, in the international arena, the main contemporary economic, social, ecological, cultural and normative issues of modern democracies, much more clearly than do ‘national’ security or defense bureaucratic spokesmen (the late public servants of classical ‘high politics’ sovereignty issues of states). (Aguirre, 1999, 205)

The state is only one of a diversity of territorial units established for governance and problem solving. States have long collaborated with local authorities within their boundaries in coping with many policy problems The present challenge is how can a complicated array of political units (towns, cities, metropolitan areas, provinces, states, regional organizations, and global organizations) cope with a diversity of problems that have ever expanding boundaries. For example, some environmental problems are worldwide, requiring cooperation that involves all governmental bodies in the world, from towns and cities to global organizations. Other environmental problems may be
limited to a watershed that could be completely within one state or transcend the borders of several states. At the same time, governments must contend with the fact that the multiple identities and loyalties of people often differ from, and transcend, political and problem boundaries. We shall examine five ways in which local interests are being served by direct participation in governance that transcends state borders. (Alger 2002B, 1999)

(1). Participation of Local Authorities in European Regional Governance

The growing involvement of local and regional authorities within states in European regional governance reveals significant modifications of the inter-state system in the homeland of Westphalia. In 1994 the Council of Europe established the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) as a consultative body to replace the former Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities. CLRAE is a bicameral body with a Chamber of Local Authorities and a Chamber of Regions. The two-chamber assembly comprises 306 titular members and 306 substitute members, each of whom is an elected representative from one of over 200,000 local and regional authorities in the Council's member states. Each chamber has a Bureau and capacity to hold its own sessions. "In this way, the regional movement has achieved, within the Council of Europe, one of its greatest aspirations: that of obtaining institutionalized and independently official representation ..." (de Castro, 1999, 101)

The Congress is now on the same level as the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers. Its objectives are: (a) assure participation of local and regional collectives in achieving the ideals of European union, (b) submit proposals to the Committee of Ministers promoting local and regional self-government, (c) promote cooperation between local and regional collectives, and (d) maintain contact with other international organizations, European organizations representing local and regional authorities of member states and associations of local and regional authorities.

Each member state of the Council of Europe has the same number of members in the CLRAE, as they do in the Parliamentary Assembly. Political groupings are required to have members from at least three states. A Permanent Commission, made up of two representatives from each state carries on between sessions of the Congress. According to de Castro, "The CLRAE is the voice of the regions and constituencies of Europe, a privileged place of dialogue which offers the chance to debate common problems, confront experience and express their points of view to state governments." (de Castro, 1999, 100)

Ten years after the development of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, a companion of the European Convention of Human rights, the Congress is joining forces with organizations in other world regions to draw up a World Charter of Local Self-Government. This draft Charter is now on the agenda of international city organizations in regions outside of Europe. In addition, CLRAE is now developing a Charter of Regional Self-Government. The agenda of the Congress includes issues such as inner city development, urban planning, minorities, environment and citizenship. Thus we are witnessing an effort to establish another global norm which in some instances could point the way for satisfying local and regional demands within states without changing their borders.
(3). Transregional Functional Associations

Associations have also been developed among regions in different states who share a common problem as a result of their common kind of geographic location or economic activity. Aygen Aykac (1994) reports that there are over 30 transborder structures linking local and regional authorities in Western Europe. They are involved in an array of issues, such as tourism, education, communications and transport. They include (a) The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, created in 1973; (b) The Working Group of Traditional Industrial Regions, established in 1984, promoting exchange of experiences and forging links between 20 regions with similar industrial traditions; and (c) The Four Motors of Europe, founded in 1988, consisting of the German Land of Baden-Wurtemburt, the Autonomous Community of Catalonia in Spain, the Lombardy region in Italy and the Rhone-Alpes in France. "Considered to be the most active and innovative within their respective states", these regions are sharing experiences with the intent of improving transport, infrastructures and telecommunication and to cooperating promoting exchanges in research and culture. (Soudpe, 1999, 64-66)

These three functional associations reveal that those engaged in specific enterprises and activities within states are not able to satisfy their need for collaborators within their own state, but seem to be able to fulfill this need by developing functional relationships in other states in their region. Again we have examples that suggest that dissatisfactions felt by regions within states might be satisfied through the development of external relationships by these regions while maintaining existing state borders.

(4). World organizations of Cities

At the same time that local authorities are collaborating across state borders in their locality, they are coming together worldwide to work on common problems, to establish norms for local governance and to establish their worldwide legitimacy as significant governmental actors. After first writing that in this effort cities are mimicking the creation of world organizations by states, we discovered that the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA)
was founded in 1913, seven years before the League of Nations. Founded in Ghent, it now has its headquarters in The Hague. Its aims are to promote local autonomy, contribute toward improvement of local administration, study questions concerning life and activities of local authorities and welfare of citizens, promote the idea of participation of the population in civic affairs, and establish and develop international municipal relations. Somewhat similar is the Federation Mondial des Cities Unies (FMCU), founded in 1957, with headquarters in Paris. These two organizations will be merged in January 2004.

More recently two organizations focusing on the problems of the world’s largest cities have emerged. The Summit Conference of Major Cities of the World (SUMMIT) first met in Tokyo in 1985 with the objective of addressing urban problems contributing to the formation of societies suitable for comfortable and safe living. Subsequent conferences have been held in Istanbul and Montreal. With 26 member cities from all continents, its president is Yukiio Aoshima, Governor of Tokyo. A second organization of the world’s largest cities is METROPOLIS, with 65 member cities and headquarters in Paris. Its sixth conference was held in Barcelona in 1999.

Other world organizations of cities are focused on the environment and peace. In 1990 the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives was established through the partnership of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the Center for Innovative Diplomacy (CID). There are 305 members, consisting of cities and a few associations of cities, from all continents. Another organization focusing on ecological issues is the World Conference on International Cooperation of Cities and Citizens for Cultivating Eco-Society which met in Tokyo in May 1998, with 2000 participants from 100 cities in 55 countries. Another organization with a global policy focus is the World Council of Mayors for Peace Through Inter-city Solidarity. This activity was initiated by the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and held its Fifth World Conference, August, 2001, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

There are also many regional organizations of municipalities, such as Arab Towns Organizations (ATO), CITYNET (Asia and Pacific), Eurocities, Red de Associationes de municipios de America Latina, Union des Villes Africaines (UVA), and Union of the Baltic Cities. Recently an effort has been undertaken to coordinate the activities of these global and regional organizations of municipalities through establishment of the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) in Geneva. In April 1998 WACLAC launched a joint effort with the UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), with headquarters in Nairobi, toward a world-wide Charter of Local Self-Government, noting that the experience gained in the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government had been helpful.

(5). Cities in the United Nations System

Surprising as it might seem for an organization of states, there is now increasing involvement of local governments in the UN system. We will briefly describe only two kinds of involvement. The first is involvement of local authorities in United Nations world conferences. Second is WACLAC’s call for partnership with the UN Commission on Human Settlements.

UN Conferences have increasingly offered opportunity for cooperation among a diversity of actors in confronting global issues, including states, local authorities, individual citizens, NGOs, private enterprises and urban organizations. A World Urban Forum, focused on environmental issues of local communities, was convened in Curitiba, Brazil in 1992, one week before the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. In
1994 UNDP organized a “Colloquium of Mayors” in New York City to discuss local social development in advance of the Copenhagen Social Summit. (Schep, et. al., 1995, 46) A World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities (WACLA) was held in Istanbul, in May-June 1996, parallel to the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). WACLA was attended by over 500 mayors and key municipal leaders who discussed and prepared a Declaration for submission to Habitat II. This declaration called on the UN and its member states to recognize and foster the vital role of local authorities in achieving Habitat II’s goals and to frame policies and supporting measures which enhance this role.

At a meeting of the UN Commission on Human Settlements (UNCHS) in April 1997, the World Association of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) attempted to thrust itself into the human settlements activities of the UN system. At an opening plenary the President of WACLAC called for a partnership between WACLAC and the Commission based on these standards: (a) No more “dumping” of responsibilities on local authorities without ensuring corresponding access to resources. (b) Fuller involvement of local government in drawing up UNCHS and other Agencies’ work plans on urban issues, (c) Greater engagement of local authorities in carrying out UN commitments, building on Local Agenda 21 fromUNCED and other programmes with local stakeholders. (d) More support for direct local-to-local exchanges, as very effective mechanisms for capacity building. Then the President of WACLAC, Mayor Burger, asked for these three key follow-up actions: (a) The Commission on Human Settlements to work in partnership with WACLAC to launch a World Charter on Local Self-Government for promulgation by the United Nations. (b) Opening of membership on the Commission on Human Settlements to representatives of local governments, (c) Preparation of a cooperative agreement between UNCHS and WACLAC to provide a framework for joint ventures with its members associations in implementing the HABITAT agenda.

This very brief overview of the growing, but still quite embryonic, involvement of local authorities in global governance provokes many questions. What will be the long term impact on local government worldwide of the Council of Europe’s local self-government initiative? Will the worldwide organizations of cities remain separate and parallel to the United Nations or will they move toward the Council of Europe model, becoming a parallel organ to the General Assembly within the United Nations? Can the movement for local and regional self-government satisfy some of the dissatisfaction that lead to “failed states”? Would it be useful to place some “failed state” issues on the agendas of some of the many international bodies and meetings of municipal authorities? Would this offer an opportunity for educating municipal authorities on early warning and preventive measures?

3. Civil Society (transnational social movements and NGOs)

Most are aware of the burgeoning literature on the world involvements of civil society organizations advocating social change. This growing attention is only partly a result of growing activity. It also is a result of growing capacity to perceive this activity. Relevant here is an observation of Secretary General Kofi Annan at a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Before the founding of the United Nations, NGOs led the charge in the adoption of some of the Declaration’s forerunners. The Geneva conventions of 1864; multilateral labour conventions adopted in 1906; and the International Slavery Convention of 1926; all stemmed from the world of NGOs who infused the international community with a spirit of reform. (UN Secretary General, 1998, 10)
Sociologists use the label transnational social movements (TSMO) for these organizations, while political scientists often use the term non-governmental organizations (NGO) which has roots in the UN System. Our effort here will be to very briefly illuminate the diversity of opportunities that they are offering for involvement in global governance.

In an analysis of nine detailed case studies of TSMOs involved in activities ranging across a number of issues, including human rights, environment, disarmament and law of the sea, I discerned TSMOs performing thirty-one kinds of activities that we summarized in five domains. (Alger, 1997, 262) We will only offer a couple of examples of each type (1) By creating and mobilizing global networks TSMOs create emergency response networks around the world and mobilize pressure from outside states. (2) While participating in conferences of inter-state organizations TSMOs mobilize TSMOs around specific issues and place new issues on agendas. (3) TSMOs facilitate inter-state cooperation by serving as third-party sources of information and bringing delegates to inter-state organizations together in third party fora. (4) Acting within states, TSMOs attempt to harmonize state policies and offer protective accompaniment for persons in danger. (5) TSMOs enhance public participation by increasing the transparency of inter-state negotiations and institutions and providing TSMOs with links to local partners.

Broad insight on the escalating participation of civil society in world politics can be obtained through a broad overview of the involvement of NGOs in the UN System that has emerged primarily out of Article 71 in the Charter authorizing the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to “make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence.” We will briefly comment on seven modes of participation that are listed in Table 1. First, there are now some ninety NGO liaison offices throughout the UN system focused on twenty-six issues that include children, crime, disaster relief, environment, human rights, narcotic drugs, refugees and welfare policies.

The next two items are illuminated by a quick overview of NGO participation at UN Headquarters in New York City, supported by brief examples. Second, NGOs participate in member state decision-making by addressing public sessions, including the General Assembly and the committee on Human Rights. They have participated in panel or dialogue sessions of the Economic and Financial Committee of the General Assembly. They have also participated in private meetings as observers (UN High Commissioner for Refugees), made presentations in private meetings (General Assembly Working Group on Financing Development), and participated in meetings with an officer of a UN body or members of a delegation, as exemplified by an NGO Working

Table 1 Modes of UN Involvement in UN System and Closely Linked Activities

1. NGO Liaison Offices throughout the UN System
2. Participation in Member State decision-making
3. Secretariat relations
4. Participation in special UN Conferences
5. Treaty negotiation and implementation
6. NGO world conferences
7. Second UN Assembly proposals

Third, there is a widely diverse array of modes of NGO collaboration with the UN secretariat, including regularly scheduled meetings, secretariat symposia for NGOs, and secretariat posting of policy papers on the web for NGOs. NGOs participate in secretariat committees, as in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the World Bank Committee focused on NGO involvement in the Bank. NGOs and the secretariat also do joint research and jointly implement and monitor programs. The World Bank and UNESCO have financially supported NGOs and NGOs, particularly in human rights issues, often assert that they are substituting for under funded UN agencies in monitoring fulfillment of treaty obligations.

Fourth, NGOs have participated in UN conferences on specific issues held at various sites around the world. The more open environments at these conferences has had an impact on participation at permanent headquarters in four respects. (1) Building on a tradition that reaches back as far as the 1932 World Disarmament Conference, NGO conferences running parallel to governmental conferences have become increasingly significant. (2) NGOs have become increasingly involved in the preparatory phases of the conferences. (3) Participation in these conferences around the world has contributed to a growing number of NGOs involved in UN affairs and demands of NGOs for liberalizing access to UN proceedings. (4) These conferences have tended to increase the appointment of NGO representatives to state delegations.

Fifth, it would seem that the parallel NGO conferences to UN world conferences has spurred a diversity of NGO independent conference formats. A number have been convened as follow-ups to world conferences with an issue focus, such as the NGO Forum on Social Development held immediately preceding the 37th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development in 1999 and now habitually meet prior to meetings of this commission. These events have led to broad agenda UN conferences. They include the Hague Peace Conference People’s Assembly, the Pilot People’s Assembly (San Francisco, June 1998), Milenio Gathering (Dec 27-Jan 1 2000, University of Peace in Costa Rica) and Earth Citizen’s Assembly 2000/2001. An NGO world conference held October 16-19, 1999, at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, focused on the role of NGOs in the 21st century. It was advertised as the first-ever conference of NGOs to address issues across the whole spectrum of human development.

These developments contributed to the holding of a People’s Millennium Assembly in conjunction with the Millennium Assembly of the UN General Assembly in 2000. Participating were 1350 representatives of over 1000 NGOs from more than 100 countries. It focused on “reclaiming globalization for and by the people” and offered a broad Agenda of Action in pursuit of a “world that is human-centered and genuinely democratic, where all human beings are full participants and determine their own destinies.” Some who organized and participated in this...
event saw it as leading toward item seven in Table 1, a second UN General Assembly composed of representatives of NGOs. Some desiring a permanent second assembly see it as something that will evolve out of ad hoc events into a permanent organization that is formally established by an amendment to the UN Charter.

But a 1999 proposal of the United Planetary Foundation has a much more ambitious goal, the creation of a United Planetary Assembly that would eventually have seven houses. They see the need for a movement that includes “efforts that support both an evolution of the UN and a revolution of the people.” Their evolutionary perspective is clearly stated: “With the increasing involvement of NGOs in the UN, one could say that a prototype of a Citizens Assembly already exists through its structure, yet it cannot be described as a truly democratically elected entity. It is for this reason that we must go beyond the present model to include any and all options.” (Wheeler, 1998)

It is obvious that NGO involvement in UN conferences away from headquarters and new relationships provided by the Internet are having a feedback impact on NGO participation at various UN headquarters. They have greatly increased the number of NGOs involved, broadened geographic representation, and extended the array of policy issues on the agendas of NGOs at headquarters. Also, more flexible rules for NGO participation away from headquarters, has led to demands for the same opportunities at headquarters. Finally, they have also become important "laboratories" in which some NGO leaders have begun to envisage greatly enhanced roles for NGOs in global governance that would even include a Second UN Assembly.

IV. Conclusion

1. Summary

We have argued that the tendency to focus on states has produced an oversimplified view of world politics that inhibits creative response to the challenges presented by “failed states”. This oversimplification has been facilitated by the careless custom of using state, nation-state and nation as synonyms and frequent tendencies to ignore the national diversity within states and the complicated flow of human activities across all borders. Failure to adequately recognize these realities leads to unrealistic sovereignty claims because solutions to a diversity of social problems requires the creation of political authorities that reach to the borders of a problem. Of course, different problems have a diversity of borders. At the same time, we found that a global governance perspective is useful because it realistically recognizes that a diversity of actors complement the roles of states,

The roles of states in global governance are undergoing dynamic change. We have illuminated various dimensions of this change by examples drawn from only three dimensions of evolving global governance: (1) emerging global values, (2) expanding competence to prevent “failure” and (3) providing roles in global governance for new groups and territories. We believe that these insights help to broaden the options available to governments of “failed states”, to those groups within states that are challenging them, and to external governments and organizations that are attempting to overcome the disruptions produced by “failed states”.

II. What Difference Might it Make?

A quick overview of the growing opportunities in global governance for people to control their fate that we have discussed is presented in Table 2. This provides a quick checklist, or tool box, for many involved in activities in “failed states”, including state officials, leaders of a diversity of movements challenging the state, those active in social movements and NGOs and
local authorities and their citizens. Options include again employing learning achieved in successes of the UN Trusteeship Council in developing new UN bodies for coping with self-determination demands. It is important that the possibility of developing new forms for representation of peoples and nations in UN institutions, without changing state borders, be considered. At the same time, all involved have an interest in supporting the development of early warning institutions, in the UN and elsewhere, that may help to prevent disasters before they occur.

All involved must carefully ponder the meaning of the world “sovereignty” when it is applied by a diversity of involved actors, including themselves. People who aspire to exert influence toward the end of controlling their fate must first acquire understanding of the world relations of their daily life, as workers, consumers, members of ethnic and cultural groups, people dependent on the natural environment and people with values concerning human relations. What are the borders of these relationships and of institutions required to cope with issues and problems they engender? Which institutions have the capacity to cope with each of these problems - local community, local region, state, a larger region defined by the problem, ranging from parts of a few states, to many states to the world? Quite often states will have a role to play, but state sovereignty alone rarely enables citizens to acquire control over their fate with respect to a particular global issue.

Those who raise these questions will inevitably come to understand that a diversity of kinds of local governments, social movements and NGOs offer opportunities for personal sovereignty with respect to the “world relations of daily life.” It is important that all understand how local governments, social movements and NGOs are involved in significant global issues and how their activities reach from offices of state governments, to regional organizations to global institutions. Some have already decided, as in the European Union, that they require direct representation in regional institutions and have created the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. Others are proposing a directly elected second UN Assembly. There is a need for more people to become aware of these proposals as they develop their personal approach to controlling their personal fate in world affairs.

Table 2
Emerging Dimensions of Sovereignty:
Growing Opportunities in Global Governance for People to Control Their Fate

I. Emerging Global Values
1. Rights of Peoples
   New Roles for Security Council
   Revitalized Trusteeship Council
   New Council on Diversity Representation and Governance
   Potential UN Representation for Nations and Peoples

2. Rights of Individuals
   Existing Human rights treaties

II. Growing Knowledge
1. Capacity for Long Term Risk assessment and early warning
   Peace Building Preventive diplomacy
   Operational prevention Structural prevention

2. Potential New UN Agencies
   International Monitoring Agency
   UN Institute for Mediation and Dispute Resolution
   UN Volunteer Force
   Enhanced UN Financing

III. Roles for New Territories and Groups
1. Local Participation in Global Participation of local governments in regional governance
   Governance Cross-Border Associations
   Transregional Functional Associations
   World Organizations of Cities
   Roles for Cities in the UN System

2. Social movements and NGOs
   NGO Liaison Offices throughout the UN System
   Participation in Member State decision-making
   Secretariat relations
   Participation in special UN Conferences
   Treaty negotiation and implementation
   NGO world conferences
   Second UN Assembly proposals

Obviously these comments may appear to be excessively utopian to many readers, but I present them not as descriptive of a personally desirable world, but as attributes of an emerging world. Our descriptions of the activities of a diversity of social movements, NGOs and local authorities clearly indicate that they are increasingly active in global governance in response to their recognition of “where in the world they are.” Quite relevant here is the array of organizations that Ann Mason perceived as active in the Colombian situation.

The crisis conditions related to Colombia’s internal emergency have led to a dramatic increase in the presence and scope of external actors, international organizations and third sector entities in Colombia. Doctors Without Borders, the International Red Cross, Amnesty International, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Organization on Migration, have joined the long list of global development, economic and environment organizations already present in Colombia. ... That the Colombian government may consider some of these actors authoritative is suggestive of global political restructuring, (Mason, 2001, 19)

Mason then reports illuminating examples of how some Colombian citizens reach out to these organizations. “...refugees fleeing paramilitary and guerrilla violence arrived in Bogota and instead of seeking government aid camped out in front of the local office of the International Red Cross. ... The broad base of respect and support within Colombian society for the U.N. results in repeated calls by a wide range of members of civil society for the presence or involvement of the UNHCHR in local disputes or crises. .... denunciations by the Colombian
Office of the UNHCHR of military-paramilitary collaboration prompted recommendations to prosecute a number of army and police commanders.” (Mason, 2001, 19)

It is important that we attain concrete understanding of how Colombian citizens came to include the six organizations that she identified in the quoted paragraph above in their vision of accessible political processes for attaining sovereignty over their fate. A few sentences about the involvement of each organization in Colombia, obtained from their web sites, may provoke useful thinking about this question.

Following the establishment of its office in Bogota in June 1998 at the invitation of the government, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) opened three field offices which are close to the borders with Venezuela, Panama and Ecuador: (1) in the northeastern city of Barrancabermeja, an oil port on the Magdalena River near Venezuela, (2) in Apartadó, in the northern region of Urabá near the border with Panama, (3) near the border with Ecuador. Under a 1999 agreement with the Bogota government, UNHCR’s activities in Colombia are aimed at strengthening the local capacity to deal with the country’s huge population of internal displaced people – now estimated at more than 1 million. Nearly 600,000 Colombians are estimated to have been uprooted in the past two years alone, a worrisome trend that is continuing in places like Putumayo where profits from the drug trade are fueling a bloody conflict involving leftist guerrillas right-wing paramilitary forces and government troops. “The program in Colombia, with a budget this year of some $2 million, includes providing technical aid, financial support to the government and NGOs, humanitarian assistance for the internally displaced; advising the military and police on their obligation to provide security for IDPs; advice on contingency planning and early warning for emergencies; and identifying lasting solutions for the victims.” (www.unhcr.ch).

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) office in Bogota, established in 1997, has received and processed hundreds of complaints (e-mail: oacnudh@hchr.org.co) on human rights violations and/or breaches of humanitarian law and taken them up with the concerned authorities. UNHCHR observes the human rights situation in Colombia with a view to advising the Colombian authorities on the formulation and implementation of policies, programs and measures to promote and protect human rights and to enable the High Commissioner to make analytical reports to the Commission on Human Rights. The Office advises the representatives of civil society, non-governmental human rights organizations and individuals on human rights related matters. “Through its visits to the field, it has monitored to some extent, the situation of the internally displaced and has brought to the attention of the authorities imminent human rights violations and/or breaches of international humanitarian law.” (www.unhchr.ch)

The Country Mission of the International Organization on Migration (IOM) in Colombia is in Bogota, with 8 phone numbers, 3 fax numbers and an e-mail address: IOM BogotaOPS@iom.int The IOM is an inter-state organization comprised of 93 states and 26 observer states. Other observers include 17 organizations in the UN System, fourteen regional inter-state organizations, and 30 International NGOs. "With offices and operations on every continent, IOM helps governments and civil society through rapid humanitarian responses to sudden migration flows, post-emergency return and reintegration programmes, ... and training and capacity-building of officials. ...” (www.iom.int)

Through its 17 offices scattered around Colombia, with 220 local employees and 54 "delegates", the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provides emergency
humanitarian assistance. In accordance with the principles that underlie its action, the ICRC maintains regular contact with all the parties to armed conflict. "The ICRC's humanitarian assistance is closely linked to the protection work its delegates carry out all over the country. Their task is to take note – as objectively as possible – of developments and any violations of international humanitarian law that lead to displacement, with the aim of approaching the parties to conflict in a confidential manner and persuading them of the need to show greater respect for humanitarian principles. ' The presence of the ICRC in Colombia is based on a headquarters agreement approved by the congress (Law No. 42 of 1981) and a 1996 memorandum of understanding between the ICRC and the country's government." (conflict.icrc.org)

In Cali, Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF) runs a rehabilitation and violence prevention program in the district of Aguablanca. The program has an international staff of 25 and a national staff of 119. The team assists victims of violence and their families, providing physical and psycho social rehabilitation services. A sexual and reproductive health project for young people in Cali was turned over to the municipal health authorities in late 2000. Two MSF workers continue to do follow-up for women with high-risk pregnancies. MSF teams also run small-scale emergency interventions due to floods, epidemics, or displacements. In May 2001, MSF ran a vector control and epidemiological surveillance program and distributed mosquito nets in the Pacific department of Nariño, which was badly affected by a malaria epidemic. Following a request from Cali officials, MSF supported a diphtheria vaccination campaign in Aguablanca between November 2000 and April 2001. MSF has had a continuous presence in Colombia since its first intervention in 1985 to assist people in Armero, following the eruption of the Nevado del Ruiz volcano. (www.msf.org)

The first page of Amnesty International’s (AI) web site (www.amnesty.org) prominently displays this headline: "Colombia, the time to make the right choice for human rights.” The web site provides extensive reports on human rights violations in Colombia, and reports on AI efforts to get the new president to take initiatives in support of human rights. Suggestions for a letter to President Alvaro Uribe Velez are provided. Readers are also urged to write to the Colombian Embassy in their country after clicking “ here for the address of members and supporters in 162 countries and territories.” AI world headquarters is the International Secretariat in London, with more than 350 staff members and over 100 volunteers from more than 50 countries around the world. AI also has web sites in Spanish (http://www.edai.org), French (http://www.efai.org) and Arabic (http://www.amnesty-arabic.org).

Although Mason does not mention the outreach of Colombian mayors, it is relevant to this paper that the web site of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) now reports that FARC is continuing to intimidate mayors to submit their resignations. Counteracting this threat to democracy Colombian Mayors recently conducted a summit of "Mayors at Risk". The outcome of the summit was that Mayors who have been threatened will continue in their positions and will not resort to resignation. A delegation of Colombian Mayors is calling for international solidarity behind the cause of Colombian local government. The Federation of Colombian Municipalities (an active member of IULA) is now calling on the international community and the network of local authorities in IULA to support this initiative and to foster strategic alliances. (www.iula.org)

In her conclusion Mason finds it necessary to place her observations in this context: ... "my claim that international organizations, NGOs and the paramilitary are viewed as legitimate sources of authority in Colombia is plausible, but not proven.” (Mason, 2001, 20) But she then
offers this challenging insight:

It may be too facile to conclude that just because civil society recognizes other actors as authoritative, the state’s authority is necessarily reduced. This would be a logical conclusion if two actors were in direct competition in a particular issue area. But the reconfiguration for the state that has occurred alongside processes of globalization may mean that certain functions of the state have been spun off to global institutions, in which case issue-specific actors do not compete with the state for authority. (Mason, 2001, 21)

One implication of our findings (summarized in the concluding table) and the insights of Ann Mason (emerging out of her case study) is that the traditional state-centered view of the world is not providing those actively leading challenges to states with the full array of potential options. At the same time, the state-centered view is not providing those who join these movements with the full array of options open to them. We believe that this presents a severe challenge to researchers, educators and the media. People everywhere, including leaders of movements challenging states, are in desperate need for knowledge about “the world relations of their daily life.” This knowledge would lead to understanding of the boundaries of the issues in which their daily life is immersed, such as employment, food, housing, health, environment, etc. With this knowledge they would gain insight on the territorial authorities through which they might seek to fulfill their needs. Certainly sometimes it is their state. But often, depending on the issue, and the specific context in which each individual and movement is located, it is not their state. And often the creation of a new state will not serve their needs. There is an urgent need for researchers, teachers and the media with concern for the challenges posed by “failed states” to make these options visible! What might have happened in Colombia had these options been visible before the “state failed”? Might they have enabled those who reacted too late, to have perceived possibilities for long term peace building much earlier?

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