

Supranational Political Opportunities As a Channel of Globalization of Political Conflicts. The Case of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹

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Contentious politics is undergoing a process of change. Many instances of protest testify to this change. We all have in mind the deep involvement of environmental organizations from all around the world in the 1992 Rio Conference or that of feminist and human rights organizations in Peking in the world conference on the condition of women. More recently, we have witnessed the extraordinary mobilization against the use of landmines. This campaign has mobilized hundreds of organizations from virtually every continent. In the same vein, the decision taken by the French President Jacques Chirac to resume nuclear weapons testing in Mururoa has provoked the reaction of many organizations in different parts of the world. A further sign of this change is the spread of transnational social organizations (see Smith et al. 1993) in various countries. The case of Amnesty International, World Wild Fund (WWF) or Greenpeace are but the most known examples. These organizations are not only creating mobilization structures in different countries, but are also organizing world campaigns on specific issues, campaigns held in all the countries where the organizations are present and which mobilize thousands of people.

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The transnationalization of social movements and the globalization of protest issues take different forms and go through various channels. Among the factors that intervene in these processes, we can mention the transformation of the media system, the nature of certain type of issues which have consequences on the planet level, the transnationalization of the economic system, etc. Of all the factors that leads to the globalization of political protest, one seems to be particularly important: the presence of political authorities on the international level. In this chapter, I will argue in this chapter that the existence of supranational power centers, such as the European Community and the United Nations, offers new political opportunities to social movements. With the emergence of supranational power centers, social movements, which address their demands mostly to powerholders, find new targets to defend their interests. One of the major consequences of the targeting by social movements of that political level is the globalization of their political conflict.

In his influential work, Tilly (1986, 1995) has stressed the role of the state in the long-term transformation of political protest. He has shown how the formation and the consolidation of the French national state, spanning span over four centuries, has had a tremendous impact on contentious politics, which shifted from the local to the national level. Before the emergence of a truly national politics, contention was addressed to local authorities, was poorly organized and grievances had a local character. With the development of states, contentious politics underwent a process of nationalization. The shift of political opportunities from the local to the national level had an impact on protest issues - with the overshadowing of local interests by national ones - and on social movement organizations, leading to the emergence of the national social movement. Following the way paved by Tilly, who points to the shift from local to national collective action, we can hypothesize that the creation of

supranational political structures leads to an analogous transformation of protest from the national to the international level. The emergence of new political opportunities on the international level brings about a radical change in the nature of protest, which tends to globalize, as well as in the structure of social movement organizations, which become transnational in scope.

To illustrate this process of globalization of protest, I will discuss one particular supranational institution - the United Nations (UN) - with regard to a specific political conflict - the rights of indigenous peoples. The UN is an interesting case, because it is a supranational political structure that has tried to incorporate organized sectors of the civil society in international negotiations. Starting from its creation, and more clearly since the Rio Conference, the number of social movement organizations allowed to participate in UN activities has grown year after year. In addition, their role in such activities is gaining in importance (Hofner 1990, Mawlawi 1993, Uvin 1995, Willetts 1982). Social movements have thus been able to take advantage of new opportunities which has considerably broadened their means of action. The example of indigenous peoples provides us with a good ground for illustrating the process of globalization of protest. During centuries, the resistance of indigenous peoples against invaders who pillaged and destroyed their ancestral cultures has been eminently local. At the beginning of the colonization process they tried to resist by taking up the arms. Then, they tried to negotiate their survival with local *caciques*. At the end of the 19th century in several countries and more recently in others, the indigenous issue began to nationalize (Labrousse 1985, Lecaillon 1989, Schulte-Tenckhoff 1997). After a long-standing work of organizational build-up, indigenous peoples began to address their demands to national states, often helped by religious organizations. Due to a lack of national political opportunities, especially in

non-democratic regimes, indigenous social movement organizations have reoriented their protests towards the UN. By challenging the UN, the indigenous political conflict has gradually transformed and globalized. Despite the heterogeneity of the situation of the indigenous populations, the variety of their grievances and the different basis of exploitation and forms of violence they face (Schulte-Tenckhoff 1997), the issue has globalized thanks to a large extent to the opportunity of addressing their protest to the UN political structure.

In order to understand this process, I will proceed in two steps. First, I will ascertain whether the UN offers social movements real political opportunities to protest. To answer to this question we have to do it in two parts and see, on the one hand, whether the UN is an actual center of power to which movements can address their demands, and, on the other hand, single out the opportunities provided by this power center. Secondly, I will discuss some mechanisms of globalization of protest. More precisely, I will examine how the globalization of political conflicts occurs when the latter are expressed by social movements within this supranational political center. The case of the rights of indigenous peoples will use as an illustration of these two points.

The United Nations: A Political Opportunity for Social Movements?

The extension of the national state system, the world military order, the world capitalist economy, and the development of the international division of labor are seen by Giddens (1989) as the major factors of globalization in modern society. He remarks that these four processes "mark an overall movement towards one world" (1991: 66). The globalization of modernity brings about structural changes in society which we can observe on different levels. For instance, globalization has led to the

emergence of communication structures such as electronic means of communication, of economic structures such as multinational companies, international financial networks and cross-national economic spaces and of political structures, mainly the development of power arenas on the supranational level.

The emergence of supranational power centers, such as the NATO, the GATT, the European Community and the UN, is one of the consequences of the globalization of society. These structures appeared in the 20th century and have to manage the globalization of modern society. In other words, they have to regulate problems shared by the nations belonging to these structures. The supranational political centers mentioned above display several diversities. The most striking difference pertains to the question of sovereignty. Some supranational political structures imply a loss of sovereignty for the national state - the European Community, to some extent -, while others do not provoke a loss of the national prerogatives of states - the UN and the NATO, for example. In the latter case, each state keeps almost full autonomy. Hence, we may ask whether these types of political structures are real power structures. Our first question, then, becomes: Is the UN a political power structure where social movements can address their political demands?

If we follow Weber's definition of power, we will have some trouble to define the UN as a center of power. Gathering since World war two almost all the countries of the world in order to manage common problems which, at the end of the war, were related to international security, the UN is a place or the negotiation among national states where political decisions are taken and where the institutions try to implement such decisions as well as to control their implementation in every state. In short, the UN decides, implements, and sanctions. Nevertheless, this institution does not fit Weber's definition of power because it does not have real coercive power. In fact, the

UN as a political power center is much looser than national states. First, the means of implementation and, above all, sanction are very poor. Most of the time, sanctions are simply moral and never, or almost never, coercive (Willems 1990). Secondly, as I have pointed out, national states remain totally sovereign. They are free to choose whether to negotiate or not and to sign universal declarations as well as international treaties. Moreover, they are completely autonomous with regard to the implementation of international norms (Donnelly 1986).

Despite all these limitations, the UN remains a political power center where decisions, most of the time involving every country and every citizen, are taken and where normative rules are elaborated. In this respect, we can distinguish between three roles of the UN. First, the UN is one of the political forums where international regimes are elaborated. The UN offers a deliberative space where national states can build an international regime, that is, governing arrangements that affect every participant in the negotiation by creating norms and procedures that regularize their behavior on specific arenas (Keohane and Nye 1977). Second, for various international regimes, the UN plays an active role by controlling the implementation of these norms of behavior. International human rights are a good example of this type of regime elaborated within the UN and now largely regulated by this actor (Donnelly 1986). Finally, the UN has the power of initiating or stimulating the creation of normative rules. For instance, it played a crucial role in the starting of the constitution of an international ecology regime. The same occurred with the elaboration of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Children and, most important for our discussion, the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Being a center of political negotiation between states, controlling the implementation of international norms or regimes and giving the input to the elaboration of international normative rules, the UN is also a center where organized groups of the civil society address their demands and challenge its decisions. More precisely, social movements may challenge two types of authorities: the entire UN structure or its single components, that is, national states. On the one hand, the UN is a structure where decisions and norms are elaborated at the global level and have consequences for the whole planet. Thus, when they challenge the UN administration, social movements also challenge these global decisions and norms. On the other hand, the UN is also a forum in which all national states are present. Thanks to the mediation of this structure - which gives states and their contenders opportunities to meet - the organized civil society can also challenge specific governments. In this case, social movements challenge national decisions by relying on international rules.

Nevertheless, because of the limitations of the UN as a power center mentioned above - weak implementation and sanctioning capacities as well as the prevailing state sovereignty -, the national level remains a crucial target of social movements. The formation and consolidation of the national state, as Tilly (1986, 1995) has pointed out, was coupled with a shift of popular contention from the local to the national level that resulted in a loss of power by local authorities². The same did not occur on the international level. National politics remains crucial and the UN has to be considered only as a parallel center of power where social movements can address their demands, but it does not replace the national structures of power. Social movements take advantage of supranational opportunities for protest without neglecting the national ones. Therefore, we may speak of a multi-level game played

² Specifically in centralized states such as France and obviously to a lesser extent in federal states.

by social movements. They mainly address their demands to their national authorities, but they also use supranational arenas to articulate their political conflict in order to develop international normative frameworks constraining the behavior of their own government. The use of this *two-level strategy* by indigenous peoples is relatively well developed in certain countries, specifically in democratic settings. For instance, in order to improve their situation, a large number of North-American organizations of indigenous peoples address their claims both to their national state and to the UN.

Although it is not the most important center of power, the UN can nevertheless become the only single political opportunity for certain movements. This occurs in two distinct situations. First, when there are no political opportunities on the national level and social movements must hence use other channels. Of course, the UN is not the only supranational structure to which social movements can address their demands, but it becomes one of the most important alternative channels when there is no opportunities on the country level. Social movements in non-democratic countries are usually those that tend to articulate their grievances to this supranational political power, as in the case of various indigenous peoples organizations before the wave of democratization in South America. Second, protests that raise threatening issues - those pertaining to the core interests of the state - generally face unresponsive authorities (Kriesi et al. 1995). In this case, social movements take advantage of the existence of supranational political opportunity structures. In authoritarian regimes but also in democratic countries, protests by the indigenous peoples are seen as a threatening political issue. Numerous indigenous territories, not only in North and South America, but also in Australia and partly in Africa, are rich in raw materials such as gold, oil, coal, precious wood, etc. They generally represent an important resource for the state. In addition, with its stress on political autonomy and self-

determination, the indigenous peoples conflict is related to the question of national sovereignty, which is obviously a very threatening issue for the national state.

Actual Political Opportunities

The UN is undeniably less powerful than national states. However, and for the reasons mentioned above, it is a supranational political power center to which social movements often address their demands. Now we have to make one step further to see what are the actual opportunities offered by the UN to social movements. Drawing from the political process approach, we can determine to what extent the UN represents an opportunity for the mobilization of social movements. In order to assess the degree of openness of the UN political structure towards challengers, I will use the theoretical framework elaborated by Kriesi et al. (1995). They stress three main dimensions of political opportunity structure (POS): the *institutional structures* of the political system determine the degree of formal access of a political system; the *prevailing strategies* traditionally adopted by authorities to face political contention define the degree of inclusiveness of authorities towards movements; and the *configuration of power* determines the possibilities for social movements to establish alliances with established actors within the political system. Let us examine each dimension with regard to the UN political structure.

Formal Institutions

From an institutional point of view, the UN political structure offers challengers formal access. Since the very beginning, the UN is formally open to social movement organizations. Article 71 of the UN Charter forms the legal basis for such access. The UN General Assembly quickly realized the importance of collaborating with actors

from the civil society and called upon its Departments to develop these relationships³. Nevertheless, it is only in 1968 that Article 71 was really implemented. This implementation concerned only one specific arena of the whole UN structure, the one dealing with economic and social questions, namely the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Neither interest groups nor social movements are granted access to the other five major UN structures (the International Court of Justice, the Trusteeship Council, the Security Council, the Secretariat and the General Assembly). Thus, formal access to the UN is still rather limited. Moreover, the power of both interest groups and social movements once they have gained access is also limited, for they have only a consultative status. This status allows them to make oral and written statements during meetings - in commissions, sub-commissions, conferences, and working groups⁴ -, but does not give them the right to vote, that is the right to participate in political decisions. This prerogative is reserved to states.

A third limitation to formal access to the UN concerns the type of organizations allowed to claim consultative status. Social movement organizations are not only required to work in the economic and social field (education, health, human rights, culture, science, technology, and related matters) and to conform to the spirit, purposes, and principles of the UN Charter, but they also have to be present in more than one country. In other terms, only transnational social movements organizations can benefit from the consultative status that allows them to address their political

³ General Assembly Resolution 13 (13.2.1946).

⁴ There is several categories of *consultative status* (category I, II and III) which are more or less restrictive in the practices of lobbying. Nevertheless, the great majority of SMOs have the most favorable status (category I). See Willets (1982) for more details.

demands. Formally, all other organizations do not have access to the UN and must therefore challenge this structure from outside.

Although formal access to the UN is rather limited, the intervention space of transnational social movement organizations is broader than it appears at first sight. The ECOSOC is an important structure within the UN. It is the principal authority for the discussion and elaboration of norms with regard to economic and social questions (including human rights) that have an international character. The scope of the ECOSOC action is then very broad: it has to produce studies and make formal recommendations in its two areas of concern in order to assure the respect of human rights all over the world, coordinate the work of the UN special agencies, organize world conferences on specific topics (such as the Rio Conference on environmental questions, the Copenhagen conference on social development) and elaborate norms and universal declarations (such as the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Children, the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

To be granted formal access to the ECOSOC opens up many doors within the UN and represents an important opportunity for social movements. First, those who have access can directly challenge the elaboration of norms and international regimes. Second, except on security matters, almost all questions treated at the UN are discussed in the ECOSOC. Third, access to the ECOSOC gives also access to all the conferences organized by this structure and to all the special agencies of the UN, such as the High Commissioner for Refugees and the UNICEF, but also more powerful agencies such as the GATT and the International Monetary Fund. Despite the limitations mentioned above, we see that formal access for social movements to the UN covers various issues, many protest fields (ecology, human rights, economy,

health, technology, etc.) and gathers different agencies which transnational social movement organizations can target with lobbying strategies.

Informal Strategies

Informal strategies broaden considerably the political opportunities provided by the UN to social movements. Traditionally, the UN administration was relatively favorable to the intervention of transnational social movement organizations. Most of the time, it facilitates the access to its political structure by broadening the categories of organizations that can claim consultative status and making their lobbying easier once they have been admitted within the UN. In certain policy areas, the UN grants consultative status to social movement organizations that are not transnational. This is the case of indigenous organizations. It also allows movements to participate in conferences that are not formally open to them. That was how the preparatory phases of the Rio Conference were open to several organizations (Finger 1994). Moreover, the UN administration facilitates the work of social movements in many ways, for example by offering financial support to organizations that cannot attend UN commissions or working groups for practical reasons, by publishing newsletters of UN-related organizations in order to spread their work and improve the communication between them, by creating special offices giving administrative support (e.g., translations, typing reports) to the organizations, by offering spaces where they can work, meet, and prepare common statements.

Two main reasons can help us to explain the UN inclusive attitude towards social movements. First, in order to elaborate programs and normative frameworks, the UN administration has a tremendous need of resources. As many authors have pointed out, social movements are important reservoirs of resources, mainly in terms

of knowledge (Breyman 1993, Haas 1990, Haas 1989, 1992, Mawlawi 1993, Rosenau 1993). Therefore, they often provide the UN administration with specific knowledge in various policy areas (health care, environmental protection, informal economic sector, development aid, etc.)⁵. Most importantly, many social movements are an important source of practical knowledge. They have grassroots knowledge generally lacked by UN administrators and experts. We could mention a number of examples showing how the administration has often relied on the competencies and knowledge of organizations to promote programs and elaborate norms (e.g. in the fields of environment, torture, children's rights, women's rights). A particularly relevant example is the one of the indigenous peoples. When the UN, under the pressure of human rights organizations, began to pay attention to the indigenous question in the late fifties and more seriously in the late seventies, there was no UN expert on this topic. Human rights organizations first and indigenous social movement organizations later on began to provide valuable knowledge concerning the violation of these specific human rights. The complexity of this question, due to the overlap of many distinct policy areas such as citizenship, economy, environment, social matters, human rights, etc., and the diversity of the situation of the various indigenous peoples with regard to their colonization history, their geography, their patterns of integration within the national community, etc., place social movement organizations in a strategic situation within the UN structure. The UN administration, especially now

⁵ Several reports written by organizations are published before those of the UN and are usually used by UN experts. For instance the Annual report of the International Service for Human Rights often forms the basis for the work of UN experts on human rights (Journal de Genève 15.5.1995). This occurred during the preparatory phase of the Rio Conference, when organizations provided many documents on environment that became a crucial resource for the administration in charge of writing proposals for the states (Finger 1994).

that their financial resources are shrinking, cannot send UN experts in all the regions of the world where indigenous peoples live. Moreover, since several years, the UN administration has realized that the more reliable and accurate knowledge is provided by the indigenous peoples organizations themselves, for they know much better their situation than UN experts who spend only short time in indigenous areas.

The second reason for the informal inclusive strategy adopted by the UN administration is linked to the diffusion of normative frameworks elaborated within this political structure. Social movement organizations are seen by the administration as valuable allies for the diffusion of UN declarations, resolutions and other norms in national states. They may also become helpful for the implementation of UN norms. States are formally in charge of implementing norms, but often they are not successful in accomplishing this task because they do not want to apply the norms in their own country or they lack the capacity to implement them. At this stage, social movement organizations can function as channels for the diffusion of UN norms. As the Vice General Director of the UN in New York, Nitim Desai, said about the role of the organizations lobbying the UN structure: "They increase the credibility of the United Nations and allow to spread more widely the decisions taken and, above all consciousness is accelerated by the multiple relays of the civil society: this is different than simply reaching state ministers...".⁶ In fact, organizations are better in diffusing UN norms on the local level than most national states. They usually do not have implementation power, but they are effective in spreading information about the existence of norms that are useful to the population for whom they have been created. Indigenous peoples organizations play a fundamental role in this respect. Organizations participating in UN working groups on indigenous peoples spread

⁶ Journal de Genève (15.5.1995).

information about resolutions and other norms which is in turn used to challenge national states when they do not respect resolutions that they have signed. Thus, social movement organizations are seen by the UN administration as crucial to its work and, as Nitim Desai has pointed out, as an important source of legitimization of these work.

While the UN administration adopts an increasingly inclusive strategy towards social movements, the organizations are also very active in informally expanding their political opportunities within the UN. Since they began to challenge the UN political structure regularly in the late seventies, social movement organizations have acquired experience. Now they know better the functioning of this complex structure and they have created a new space for their lobbying activities. In doing so, they have overstepped the limited formal opportunities by developing other ways of influencing political decisions. Starting from a consultative status, most organizations play nowadays a propositive role. They draft resolution proposals, Universal declarations and other types of UN norms. They also give a political meaning to UN world conferences, for instance by helping to set their agenda or by influencing the work during the preparatory sessions. The Rio Conference is a good example of this new role (Conca 1995, Finger 1994), but the same occurs in many other fields. In the indigenous peoples area, human rights and indigenous peoples organizations have taken on an increasingly important role within the UN, as their number grows year after year and, above all, as they play a more propositive role. Since the start of the negotiations on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, they orient the declaration by drafting it in collaboration with the UN administration, though the process is very slow.

The combination of the willingness of the UN administration to incorporate the organizations into negotiation processes and the willingness of many organizations to be incorporated has produced a considerable increase in the informal role of social movements (Bailey 1985, Finger 1994, Hofner 1990, Mawlawi 1993, Willetts 1982). Thus, the informal strategies of the UN administration have greatly expanded the supranational political opportunities for social movements.

Configuration of Power

The third dimension of POS proposed by Kriesi et al. is the structure of political alliances. At the international level, this dynamic dimension of POS should not be seen as the configuration of political parties, but as the configuration of states. For practical reasons, not all the national states are present in every UN structure. They are elected for a certain amount of time⁷. The degree of acceptance of social movements and the scope of opportunities for lobbying depends on which states are elected. Some states are more open than others depending on the problem at hand, for some issues are more threatening than others (Kriesi et al. 1995). This holds true for both the national and the international level. For certain questions, national states become social movement allies by facilitating their lobbying, by signing resolutions drafted by organizations, by diffusing their reports, by orienting political debates so as to favor the organizations, by exerting pressure on other states, etc. But when threatening issues are concerned, they may display an opposite attitude and try to do their best to exclude the challengers by reducing their speech time, by excluding the more radical organizations from international conferences, by asking for the right of censorship on statements written by organizations, etc.

⁷ For instance, in the ECOSOC 54 states are elected for three years.

For the indigenous peoples issue, which is a threatening issue for most of the states where indigenous peoples live, these states usually try to narrow the space for intervention as well as the lobbying activities of organizations. Brazil is a clear example. In contrast, other states, like Germany for instance, have tried to facilitate their lobbying. Moreover, state alliances with the indigenous peoples has changed over time and vary according to the specific grievances that gave rise to the challengers' demands. For example, some states support indigenous organizations on cultural rights (e.g., the right to speak their own language, to practice their religion, etc.), but not on the right of self-determination. Thus, depending on the issues at hand, the configuration of states is more or less favorable to indigenous peoples.

Generally speaking, we can say that the UN offers great opportunities to organized groups of the civil society to address their demands. First, it gives formal access to several social movements by granting them consultative status. Second, its administration adopts an increasingly inclusive strategy towards social movements, which expands considerably the opportunities for the action of social movements. The UN administration has great autonomy because the representatives of national states are not regularly present in the UN. Therefore, the functioning of this supranational political structure is the responsibility of the UN administration, which drafts resolutions, sets the agenda of conferences, working groups and commissions, prepares universal declarations, etc. In this preparatory work, the UN administration usually provides social movements with a broad action space, and this more and more clearly year after year. Third, the configuration of states may expand or narrow the opportunities for the action and lobbying of organizations.

Indigenous peoples organizations have seized these supranational political opportunities and, starting from the late seventies, they have challenged the UN in

order to improve their conditions of living or their survival. In 1953, the International Labor Organization published a study on this topic. In 1957, it adopted a convention and made a recommendation on the protection of indigenous and tribal populations which was the first international legal tool to protect the rights of these peoples (United Nations 1992). Nevertheless, apart from this first international law, nothing had been done in favor of indigenous peoples within the UN until the late seventies. Human rights and indigenous peoples organizations were the first actors to put this issue on the UN agenda (Schulte-Tenckhoff 1997, United Nations 1992). In 1977, they organized the first international conference on this topic. The UN administration offered a space for social movements to organize this special event, which pulled together only actors from the civil society. After this event, the organizations with consultative status continued to pressure the UN in order to formally introduce this issue in the political agenda. In 1981, human rights and indigenous peoples organizations set a second international conference, similar to the first one, where they formally asked the UN to integrate the issue in its agenda and to begin to work on the elaboration of legal devices for the protection of indigenous peoples. Responding to this formal demand, in 1982 the UN created a new human rights structure: the working group on indigenous populations.

This working group is a subsidiary organ of the Sub-commission on human rights and hence is integrated in the ECOSOC. It is composed of national states - most of them dealing with indigenous populations within their national space -, international governmental organizations, UN experts, human rights and indigenous peoples organizations that meet once a year before the Sub-commission. A facilitating process of integration of indigenous peoples organizations has been elaborated by the UN administration. Indigenous peoples organizations do not need a consultative status

to attend working group sessions, most of them are not transnational organizations and most of them receive financial means from the UN which help them to attend the working group sessions. Thanks to the facilitated access to the working group, the participation of social movement organizations is very important. They are by far the largest group of actors in this annual meeting⁸. Moreover, the configuration of states has sometimes facilitated the lobbying by indigenous peoples organizations, mainly in the working group sessions. For instance, sessions in recent years were held under the responsibility of Chile, resulting in a rather favorable setting for the conflict concerning the indigenous peoples.

In addition to facilitating and encouraging the dialogue between indigenous peoples and their respective national state, the working group has two main goals. First, it reviews national legal tools pertaining to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples. Second, it has to develop international legal devices concerning the rights of indigenous peoples, which were lacking before. The most important task, in this respect, is the elaboration of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The entry of indigenous peoples conflict in the UN supranational political structure has led to the globalization of this conflict. Next I will discuss how this process could occur.

The Mechanisms of Globalization of Political Conflicts

One of the main consequences of the incorporation of social movements into supranational power structures is the globalization of their political protest. Their grievances, which are local or at best national at the outset, globalize when they enter the UN. They leave the specific community, region or national boundary within which

⁸ In recent years, they formed more than 80% of the actors attending the meeting (ECOSOC 1994a).

they took origin to reach the whole planet. How does this process of globalization occur? What are the mechanisms of the globalization of protest? Two main mechanisms lead to a broadening of political conflicts. One concerns the *input level* and refers to the structure of political demands, whereas the other concerns the *output level* and refers to the normative frameworks which are produced and implemented after the negotiations have taken place.

Consensus Formation and Transnational Networking on the Input Level

When social movement organizations challenge the UN supranational political center, they have a double structure of political demands. On the one hand, they challenge specific national states that violate international rules and try to force them to conform to standard behaviors (Tolley 1989). On the other hand, they influence the elaboration of international norms by drafting international conventions and universal declarations. The first type of social movement actions does not lead to the globalization of protest because the organizations remain constrained by national particularisms. In contrast, the second strategy leads to the globalization of protest because the organizations overstep national realities by elaborating global rules in their areas of competence which have to be applicable in every state. In the latter case, the globalization of protest results from two processes: consensus formation among challengers and transnational networking among organizations.

The globalization of protest takes place on the discursive level through the elaboration of collective frames (Melucci 1996; Snow et al 1992). Social movements must overstep national particularisms in order to be able to draft international norms and universal conventions in collaboration with the UN administration which will be ratified by national states. Starting from particular cases, about which they spread data

and knowledge through oral and written statements, organizations begin to elaborate a common framework for their demands. Together, challengers build a collective frame of attribution, interpretation, and action that allows them to contribute to the elaboration of international norms. Following a process of communicative interaction similar to that described by Habermas (1987), challengers try to frame their protest in global terms through a series of discursive acts with the aim of finding compromises or even consensus that allow them to speak with a common voice. After an important work of harmonization and elaboration of common frames, specific interventions by social movements organizations are transformed into "universal" rules applicable to everybody. The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Children is a clear example of this process. Other examples include the elaboration of norms about environmental protection, women's rights, racial discrimination, etc.

Issue theorization by social movements requires organizational arrangements between them. Challengers defending the same political issue must be in contact with each other. The elaboration of consensus needs an important exchange practice. Both inside and outside the UN arena, before, during and after UN events, and both formally and informally, social movements that challenge international norms work together and develop a strong international exchange network. Thus, transnational linkages between organizations form the second element of the globalization process on the input level. Such exchange among contenders is facilitated by the supranational political structure. The UN does not only provide a place where social movements can challenge national states and international norms, but it also offers an opportunity for organizations working in the same field to interact and to develop transnational linkages. As we have stressed above, the UN administration facilitates the creation of

transnational linkages between organizations by offering spaces where they can meet, exchange information and experiences and organize protests.

National and transnational challengers often meet for organizational purposes prior to UN events. For instance, before the World Summit held in Rio in 1992, social movement organizations set up a number of events in order to elaborate common action frames and to intensify the development of transnational mobilization. The highest point was the Kari-oca Conference, a parallel conference to the official one that pulled together contenders coming from all the continents and dealing with the problems set at the official meeting. This tight collaboration between social movements concerned with environmental issues was largely helped by previous linkages between organizations within the UN structure. Thus, thanks to the mediation of the UN, transnational networking is intensify not only through the integration of new challengers, but also through the integration of geographical and cultural diversity.

Issue theorization by social movements and transnational mobilization structures are crucial to the formation of a common view on specific topics in the international public arena and increase the chances to influence the elaboration of international norms. First of all, if every single organization tries to influence the elaboration of norms with its framing and its own propositions, the UN administration tends to exclude them. The UN has to develop universal frames and cannot take into consideration regional and national particularisms when it aims to develop international regimes. Secondly, as Haas (1989, 1992) has pointed out, only organizations that share similar views on the origins of the conflict, common ideological frameworks and common goals can have a significant impact on the elaboration of international norms. "Epistemic communities" (Haas 1989) must

display consensual knowledge to be influential. Finally, organizations are weaker when they work alone. Although the UN is rather favorable to social movements acting within its arena, the latter are far from being the most powerful actors therein. Therefore, challengers must share common projects and be as unified as possible if they want to be successful.

Consensus formation and transnational networking are dynamic processes. Organizations do not always find consensual arrangements from the beginning. These processes usually need time and are not always stable. The case of the indigenous peoples mobilization provides us with a good illustration of that. The basic compromise found by indigenous peoples organizations with regard to the elaboration of the Universal Declaration took more than fifteen years. Let us examine in greater detail how it took place.

Human rights and indigenous peoples organizations, which provided the UN with an important cognitive tool from the moment they put this political issue on the UN agenda, were at first addressing the supranational institutions with very heterogeneous demands and grievances. When they intervened in the working group, in the Sub-commission, and in the Commission on human rights, they presented their specific realities as well as their particular grievances which are as heterogeneous as the groups themselves. The demands of the Yanomami from Brazil, the Aborigines from Australia, the Maori from New Zealand, the Zulu from South Africa, the Khanty from the Philippines, etc. varied very much. Among the problems that have threatened and still threaten these populations are the militarization of their land (e.g., in Brazil and the Philippines), displacements of their population (e.g., in several countries in Africa), invasions of their territory aimed at extracting raw materials (e.g., in the United States and Australia), violence against indigenous leaders (e.g., in Indonesia

and Guatemala), cultural and archaeological pillages (e.g., in Kenya and Australia), depredation of their medical knowledge (for most of indigenous peoples living in rain forests), slavery (e.g., in Brazil and Guatemala), acculturation of children through their integration in national schools (e.g., in Canada and Japan) and so forth.

When they began to challenge the UN political structure, indigenous peoples organizations were forced to harmonize their demands within a common framework. The work of issue theorization and the development of collective frames of attribution, interpretation and action began with the first international conference held in 1977 and went on until the nineties. Consensus was very hard to find. First, as I said, indigenous peoples organizations face very distinct problems and realities. Second, they face cultural diversity. Indigenous peoples organizations are coming from all around the world and frame their situation through very different cultural codes. Third, each organization has a different degree of awareness of their problems. Some come from a long-standing fight, while others entered the public sphere only recently (Schulte-Tenckhoff 1997). Finally, in several regions indigenous peoples organizations are fighting against each other (e.g., in Amazon). Consensus is obviously more difficult to reach there.

Despite all these difficulties, consensus formation was stimulated by the urgency of the situation of the indigenous peoples. Most of them live in conditions of precarious physical integrity and many of them are now disappearing. Furthermore, consensus was instrumental in the bargaining with national states which are, for the most part, not willing to make concessions. To be able to bargain with such powerful actors, indigenous peoples organizations were forced to unify and to speak with a common voice.

The elaboration of consensus took a long time and often looked like an unstable compromise. However, indigenous peoples organizations found a way to find a consensus along the line of *self-determination*. Every indigenous peoples wants its autonomy to be granted and aspires to enjoy the right to decide by itself about its future. After having found a common framework, the organizations have developed the central lines of consensus so that every contender can recognize itself and view its specific grievances under this common and global framework. In particular, consensus was found along four main lines: the *respect of their rights* (political, economic, social and cultural rights), *territorial integrity* (demarcation and control of their land), the *preservation of their culture* (the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs, as well as the protection of their cultural, intellectual and scientific property) and *physical integrity* (protection against genocide or other acts of violence) (ECOSOC 1994b). These four points were shared by every indigenous population coming from all the continents.

The globalization of protest on the input side was also brought about by the creation of transnational mobilizing structures. An international network of organizations working on indigenous problems began to develop starting from the 1977 conference and was largely strengthened by the political opportunities provided by the UN. The need to prepare UN events (working groups sessions, sub-commission and commission meetings) forced the organizations to meet in order to elaborate common strategies of action. These transnational structures pulled together indigenous peoples organizations, but also human rights and environmental organizations.

Transnational mobilizing structures take two main forms: organizational and discursive. The organizational form develops thanks to conferences and working

groups. These meetings gather all the organizations working on the indigenous peoples conflict or only small groups dealing with specific topics (environmental questions, territory demarcation, cultural, intellectual and scientific property, etc.) or representing specific regions (indigenous peoples living in rain forests, on seacoasts, etc.). All these meetings are aimed at elaborating common frames and intensifying the transnational networking among organizations. Many of these transnational events are transformed in permanent organizational structures. For example, the Iquito Conference held in 1990, which saw the participation of indigenous peoples and environmentalists, gave birth to the "Indigenous and Environmentalist Alliance for an Amazon for Humanity". Similarly, the Penang Conference held in 1992 led to the creation of the "International Alliance of the Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests". The second form taken by transnational networking structures consists of the elaboration by transnational networks of common statements and charters aimed at creating a stable consensus on specific issues. Examples include the "Iquito Declaration" (1990), the "Kari-oca Charter on Territory Environment and Development of Indigenous Peoples" (1992), the "Charter of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests" (1992) and the "Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (1993).

In sum, the indigenous peoples conflict has globalized thanks to the development of transnational mobilizing structures. Many organizations coming from different continents and cultures are now linked to each other. Their relations, which were clearly underdeveloped during the seventies, grew considerably during the eighties and nineties.

International Norms and Their Implementation at the Output Level

The result of the bargaining process taking place within the UN supranational political structure is the creation of international norms. The creation of these norms and their implementation constitute the second mechanism leading to the globalization of political protest, a mechanism located on the output level.

International norms concern every nation and person in the world. States are morally invited to follow a universal legal frame and to adapt their national laws to the international standards. International norms tend to create global rationalized cultural roles and rights. The elaboration of the human rights regime is a good example (Donnelly 1986). While the Human Rights Charter was mainly elaborated by Western countries, with cognitive and normative tools borrowed from the European culture, every state and citizen is nowadays subject to this international norm. Every state has to or should respect it even if the Charter does not really fit the cultural background of some nations. A similar process occurs when social movements succeed in imposing their political issues and in placing it into international normative frameworks. Every state and community is then subject to the issue raised by social movements. This is all the more evident when organizations put on the UN agenda new political issues such as children's rights or indigenous peoples' rights. In the former case, challengers obtained a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Children and, nowadays, states that have ratified the Declaration, have to take into account what was once a social movement issue. Every nation has to conform to this new international standard and the implementation of international norms leads to the globalization of the children's rights issue. Every country must adapt to the same standard with regard to children's rights: the one put forward in the UN Charter. Thus, the simple fact of implementing UN normative frameworks on the world scale leads

to the globalization of conflicts, particularly so when they integrate social movement grievances.

The implementation of UN normative standards on the national level is carried by various actors, mainly national states, but also the UN administration and social movements. All these three actors contribute to globalization. While national states must or should adapt their national legal framework to international norms that they have ratified, the UN administration has to control the implementation of norms by means of their experts. As I said, its control means and, above all, its sanctioning means are quite weak. Finally, social movement organizations also play a role in the implementation of UN norms, specifically by controlling this process. They control whether national states respect the UN resolutions they have signed as well as the implementation of Universal Declarations. When the implementation is incomplete or absent, they challenge the UN by asking national states to fulfill their international obligations.

The globalization of conflicts on the output level is mainly due to the implementation of international frameworks, but also to the diffusion of information concerning such international frameworks. The UN administration contributes to spreading information, but social movements and the mass media are the key actors here. Social movements have important connections on the international level, but have grassroots structures mainly at the national and local levels. They thus become a key actor in the diffusion of information about the elaboration of international norms for grassroots organizations which do not have the opportunity to be present on the supranational level. In this respect, social movements represent a crucial mechanism for the diffusion of international norms, a mechanism resulting in the globalization of norms that they have contributed to put into international frameworks. To go back to

Nitim Desai's comment quoted above, we can say that social movements allow for a wider spread of UN decisions. However, one should not neglect the important role played by the mass media in the diffusion of new international norms and hence in the globalization of political protest. The presence of the mass media in every conference, working group or commission facilitates the globalization of conflicts by making them visible to national communities. The mass media also publicize new international norms and decisions, as well as UN world events. For example, media coverage of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Children was extremely important, much like it was for other world conferences such as the Rio Conference on the environment, the Peking Conference on women's rights, the Copenhagen Conference on social development, etc.

To summarize, the creation of international normative frameworks, their implementation within national states and the diffusion of information about these normative frameworks represent the output side of the globalization of protest. The indigenous peoples conflict has globalized through these mechanisms. When human rights and indigenous peoples organizations began to challenge the UN, they used the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other normative frameworks, such as the International Human Rights Covenants, in order to develop specific norms on the indigenous peoples question. The seventies witnessed a juridical blank on the international level concerning this particular issue. Thus, under the pressure of social movements, the UN administration has designed new normative tools in order to fill this juridical gap. After more than ten years of intense negotiations, a specific space for the protection of indigenous peoples was created within the human rights regime. In addition to various resolutions, in 1992 the UN administration began to draft the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, jointly with indigenous

peoples organizations. This project, which should be terminated before the end of the indigenous peoples decade, will lead to the most important normative tool for the protection of indigenous populations,. Nevertheless, even before the end of the elaboration and implementation of the Universal Declaration, signs of globalization of the indigenous peoples issue can already be seen. The elaboration of this normative framework has been preceded by a number of intermediary norms, particularly in the form of resolutions. Moreover, the elaboration of the Universal Declaration came along with several symbolic events such as the Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1992, the International Day of Indigenous Peoples in 1993 and the Decade for Indigenous Peoples.

The resolutions have formed the first step in the implementation of global norms on the protection of indigenous populations. Indigenous peoples organizations rely on these normative tools to challenge national authorities, but also the UN political structure, in order to force the states to respect the resolutions. Every year, social movement organizations intervene in the Human Rights Commission in order to report about states that do not respect specific resolutions and the Universal Charter of Human Rights. The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will be an additional element in their political struggle, but also in the globalization of the issue through the implementation of a normative framework. In addition to controlling the implementation of normative frameworks related to indigenous populations, indigenous peoples organizations, together with human rights organizations, diffuse the information about the elaboration of the supranational norms that regulate state behavior towards grassroots organizations. Moreover, the UN administration, social movements and, certainly to a larger extent, the mass media all contribute to the globalization of the indigenous peoples conflict through the diffusion of the symbolic

event mentioned above, but also of conferences at least partly related to the conflict, such as the Rio Conference. In particular, media coverage was instrumental in spreading the indigenous peoples conflict worldwide. With the adoption of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the globalization of this political conflict largely arising from the civil society will surely globalize further on.

Conclusion

The globalization of the political conflicts carried by social movements occurs through two interrelated processes, presented in figure 1. The first mechanism intervenes when social movements address their political demands at the UN supranational political structure. Challengers must frame their conflict in a common and consensual frame and build transnational mobilizing structures. This process, located on the input level, is crucial for the internationalization of a political conflict and for the reduction of national particularisms. This first step gives social movements an opportunity to put an issue on the UN political agenda and to force the UN administration to develop normative frameworks related to a given conflict. The second mechanism of the globalization of conflicts carried by social movements, located on the output level, concerns the implementation of international norms and their diffusion. Once a normative framework elaborated through a process of negotiation is in place, all the states that have endorsed it must implement the international norms.

Figure 1 about here

Tilly (1986, 1995) has stressed the dramatic transformation of the political conflicts carried out by social movements that has accompanied the formation of the national state. He was referring to the nationalization of contentious politics. With the creation of supranational centers of power in the second half of the 20th century, we observe a new qualitative change of political conflicts. Although it is too early to speak of a deep transformation of protest, for a change of this type needs time to unfold and the formation of supranational political structures is a recent phenomenon, we can nevertheless see the signs of an ongoing transformation of several instances of protest. In these instances, the existence of opportunities on the supranational level has led to the globalization of the conflicts carried by social movements through the elaboration of common frames, the creation of transnational mobilizing structures, the elaboration of international regimes and the implementation of universal norms and decisions.

The conflict over the rights of indigenous peoples has served here as an illustration of the transformation of protest. Since the mid eighties, this formally national protest is globalizing. It is becoming a global political conflict whereby most indigenous peoples are interconnected and collaborate for the elaboration of a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The linkages between these peoples and the elaboration of a collective frame leading to the globalization of the protest issue were largely made possible by the political opportunity offered by the UN. This supranational power center provoked a shift in the nature of the indigenous political conflict. From local and national in scope during the seventies, this conflict became international and global during the nineties, after it was integrated in the UN political agenda. Through this example, we can see that the use of supranational political opportunities by social movements leads to a transformation

of political conflicts, in the sense of a globalization of political issues. However, although the creation of supranational political structures offers social movements new political opportunities, their emergence does not overshadow, at least for the time being, the opportunities given by national states. We should rather speak of a two-level game: movements take advantage of both national and supranational opportunity structures in order to reach their political goals.

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