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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by The Association of Citizens Civil Rights Protection "Manshour-e Parseh", a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Role of Civil Society in Development

The social activity of citizenship in the form of social structure after the Second World War among the countries involved in the war had a wide emergence. Social organizations are spontaneous organizations created by people and are considered one of the pillars of the development of current societies. In recent decades, such civil institutions have had an unprecedented growth in different societies, especially in developed countries social civil organizations with a wide range of duties have become powerful actors in the national and international arena.

Most of the experts in the social fields believe that the hatred and fear of the world wars caused the nations, in line with the modernization of their country, to realize the necessity of participation in the matters related to them and with their organization, in the form of structured groups in the direction of development. Their country should take a step and thus institutionalize the type of cooperation and interaction with the government and supervision of governance with social participation in different dimensions. Because one of the ways to achieve development is to make the system more efficient and do things better and be more effective in activities.

By examining the history of civil institutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran, it seems that there are few institutions that have been able to survive and continue in the social structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran; these challenges have their roots in the facts governing the behavior of Iranians and the traditional obstacles in the society. In terms of behavior, the most important challenge is caused by the spirit of individualism among Iranians, while even the elites of the country are suffering from this problem.

Of course, some of the traditional people's institutions, such as religious groups, have infiltrated the governance structure and have appeared. But it seems that the main problem regarding modern social civil institutions is their continuous presence; As such, in the Iranian system, the necessary preparation for the acceptance of such social institutions by the government is very weak.

One of the main obstacles to the Islamic Republic of Iran's development is the non-acceptance of NGOs as social partners of the government, which originates from our historical deprivation in following a rational path in various social fields.

With the official recognition of civil organizations and NGOs, we can expect that there will be a space for people's participation in the most extensive form in the society, but because the government has not found the space and opportunity to participate in NGOs as an organization and has not given the rule to their main mission which is Indeed, it was the organization and participation of the people, or it was forgotten, or there was no opportunity for it to be realized. For this reason, NGOs soon forgot their original mission and mostly either found a charitable approach or went after the achievement of specific goals defined by the government.

Since the activities of NGOs include those activities that without having the motivation to earn profit produce goods and services, they mainly provide services and the general citizens benefit from them. They must be non-governmental, non-profit and non-political.

The existential philosophy of social organizations is voluntary participation of the people, which is done out of interest, not coercion.

Among non-governmental, non-profit, non-political activities, we can mention all kinds of associations that are related to people in various fields.

In civil organizations, human dignity is one of the indicators of behavior in these institutions.

Human dignity is a term that can be considered as a person's innate value or worthiness that emerges with his human nature and is formalized as a legal philosophical basis in the entirety of human rights. Such dignity is inherent and indivisible.

Human dignity can be examined from two dimensions: inherent dignity and acquired dignity. Inherent dignity is a privilege that is given to human beings from the moment they are born, regardless of the geographical place and historical time in which they are born, as well as religion, culture, language, race, nationality, ethnicity, status, kinship, and only through human status he is assigned.

In fact, the inherent dignity of human beings makes people use their freedom and existential abilities to seek innovation in different aspects of society. The basis of human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is also their inherent dignity. The principle of human dignity strongly forbids looking at people as tools, and because of the inherent equality of human values, it relies on the existence of value and trust in all human beings.

It should be noted that organizations are generally founded by people who have gathered for a specific purpose. An organization can work in different social dimensions to solve society's problems in local, national, regional and international dimensions.

The more the number and variety of organizations in the society, the more the relationship between people increases, the awareness, knowledge and experience of the people are improved. Once, the measure of progress of societies was only their per capita income, such that the higher their per capita income was, the more advanced the society was.

Therefore, in this situation, these oil-rich countries were the best. But now it can be strongly said that the country that has more people's organizations has more progress because the cooperative civil institutions provide the conditions and platform for the development of that country by strengthening the social capital.

On the one hand, civil society is not naturally compatible with one-sidedness, and on the other hand, it has a balancing behavior between the government and the people, and is often defined as cooperation and understanding instead of conflict.

In addition to these, the relationship between the civil institution and democracy is such that it explains people's participation in affairs, participation in work and acceptance of responsibility for decision-making, or criticism for responsibility, is one of the new tools of the progressive world and civil society.

In such societies; Instead of ruling and ruling in the form of the powerful, the government serves the people and fulfills its legal duty without hypocrisy and is placed in the position of ruling. In such a situation, the rules of relationships are replaced and thus doing things only for a specific and illegitimate individual or group is not feasible. In developing countries, due to the weakness of the democratic movement, popular organizations also suffer from a structural weakness.

Strengthening and creating the necessary conditions for the continuation of the correct and effective process of social organizations can lead to the basic and sustainable development of the systems. In today's Iranian society, such institutions can cause the development of social participation and healthy activities in this field, of course, the condition is to achieve the desired functions of civil institutions, the legitimacy of the government and not to block the work process of civil society.

It can be concluded that NGOs can be influential if they are first defined based on the needs of society and formed by people, and in this way they face fewer obstacles from the government and pay less money; Secondly, the basis and standard of treating them should be international laws, in such a situation that they can show their real work and have a continuous and long-term activity so that they can achieve the tasks that are expected of them.

In the current situation, the creation of NGOs is a basic need for the Islamic Republic of Iran, different from cumbersome bureaucracies, and considering that the expansion of democracy is always insured with the presence of the people; Therefore, this period of time is considered a historical situation.