

2: Communication Governance and the Role of Civil Society: Reflections on Participation and the Changing Scope of Political Action

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Positioning 'Civil Society' on the Global Scene

Literature on global change is expanding, focusing on the multidimensionality of processes, the extension and deepening of social relations in different sectors: economy, politics, culture (Featherstone, 1990; Rosenau, 1992; Held et al., 1999). In this context a *'shifting in the location of authority'* is a crucial change (Rosenau, 1999); a shifting to spaces, where decisions are made, that are more and more distant from the people, making citizens perceive political processes as distant and *'opaque'* (Neveu, 2000).

Global change is therefore producing actions and reactions on the side of 'civil society organizations' that invite us to re-open a discussion on the practice of citizenship in a contemporary world and on the future of democracy, within states as well as beyond them. Civil society is an emerging actor in international politics (Baylies and Smith, 1999; Arts, 2003). Civil society can be considered *'an answer to war'* (Kaldor, 2003). It is being invited to *'actively participate in intergovernmental political processes'* (UN GA Res. 56/183, December 2001).

Dealing with civil society is a priority issue for the United Nations, as demonstrated by the ad hoc panel of independent experts set up by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in July 2003, and chaired by former President of Brazil Fernando Henrique Cardoso, which issued its final report in June 2004.¹ In a very different sense, this is a priority also for the United States administration and its business partners, who have set up an 'NGOwatch' programme to monitor the growing number of lobbying NGOs, which is perceived as a threat to the sovereignty of constitutional democracies (Niggli, 2003).

In this context, a number of problematic questions arise: what conceptions of civil society underline these developments? How should we think of civil society as an actor in global politics? How does it get organized? And ultimately: what kind of power does/can it exercise?

Trans-national forms of organization 'from below' have a long history (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Kaldor, 2003): in different fields, such as environment, human rights, gender, development and peace, relations have developed over time amongst social movements and grass-roots organizations. It is important to notice that the use of new communication technologies and the Internet nowadays sustain such

relations. At the same time, they are strengthened in different ‘spaces of place’: occasions for physical meetings such as the World Conferences convened by the UN; protest events organized on the occasion of high-level political summits as in Seattle, Genoa or Cancun; or autonomous gatherings that set the landscape and agenda for a ‘globalization from below’ autonomously from official events, as in the case of the World Social Forum.

We should consider the political meaning of not-so-visible and yet profound transformations, such as the organizational and communicative competences developed within civil society networks (Keck & Sikkink, 1999; Smith et al., 1997) and their multi-level *modus operandi*. These are two developments that seem to be both a resource for and the result of a growing awareness of their political relevance. Moreover, these actors are in some cases critically self-reflecting, and developing a discourse on the role they should play as global meaningful actors (Leon et al, 2001; Ó Siochrú & Girard, 2003), while mastering their capacity of intervention in global politics.

Assuming that new ‘forms’ of politics, and new modes of political communication (collective and trans-national) are emerging in the global context (Arts, 2003), we believe that all the aforementioned aspects should be taken into consideration in order to develop a better understanding of the possible impact of non-state/public-interest actors on the world scene.

An Interesting Case Study: The World Summit on the Information Society

The UN World Summit on the Information Society² offers a meaningful opportunity to observe and analyse different aspects of the transformations concerning trans-national civil society organizations and their potential impact on global politics, particularly in the fields of communication governance and communication rights.

The first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society was held in Geneva, from 10 to 12 December 2003. This was the culminating event of a long preparatory process, composed of PrepComs and regional conferences, side events and related meetings³: eighteen months during which a number of officially recognized ‘stakeholders’ – governments, international organizations, business entities and civil society – have been involved in debates, negotiations, on-line and off-line exchanges and production of written documents.

The summit aimed at developing a common vision of the Information Society and drawing up a strategic plan of action for concerted developments toward realizing such vision. It also attempted to define an agenda covering objectives to be achieved and resources to be mobilized, within the framework of the UN Millennium Development Goals. The formal output of the process was a *Declaration of Principles* and a *Plan of Action*: texts that have been negotiated during the preparatory process by governmental delegations (with the written and oral contribution of other stakeholders) and adopted on December 12, 2003. The second phase closes in Tunis, in November 2005.

Civil society presence and participation in WSIS has been one of the main novelties in the first phase, which makes it a meaningful case study towards a better understanding of non-governmental actors’ relevance in global politics,

recalling that WSIS was *'the first time (in which) civil society has come together in such diversity and in such numbers from all over, to work together on information and communication issues'*⁴.

Throughout the WSIS process a number of catchwords emerged, among which connectivity, development and digital divide. We suggested elsewhere that 'convergence' should be added as an underlying conceptual nexus:

... convergence not only in technology, but also in policy-making, actors' orientation and in discourse. WSIS has offered a window of opportunity to collectively refine the political agenda for communication, for policy-makers as well as for other 'stakeholders' and scholars. A content-oriented agenda, but also a process-aware agenda, which makes it relevant to focus both on the content issues ... and on the procedural aspects: the overall political outcome that parallels the final written outputs (Padovani, 2004: 187).

According to Seán Ó Siochrú, WSIS has been also the convergence of two strands of debate in the history of communication politics:

One we term the 'information society' debate, taking in the role of information, the Internet and the 'digital divide'. It can be traced to the 1970s but the current manifestation found its defining moment in the mid-1990s. The other we term the 'communication debate', encompassing broader issues of knowledge ownership and use, media diversity and communication. It goes back as far, but its defining moment came in the early 1980s with the MacBride Report of UNESCO (Ó Siochrú, 2004: 203).⁵

Given the focus of the present article, we suggest that WSIS can also be considered as the occasion for the convergence of (at least) two different 'realities' of global civil society.⁶

Converging Realities of Civil Society at WSIS

In reviewing efforts made to re-theorize democracy in the context of globalization, Catherine Eschle (2000) identifies three theoretical approaches to global civil society that have developed in the last decade: that of the cosmopolitan liberals, of which the work by David Held is a well-known example but which also relates to the work of the Commission on Global Governance,⁷ which insisted on the role played by civil society and particularly formally recognized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within it. The second conception is that of global Marxists, such as Robert Cox (1993) and world-system theorists (Wallerstein, 1990). The third one is the approach developed by post-Marxists (Falk, 1987; Lipschutz, 1992) who, inspired by 'new social movement' theory, *'argue for a revitalization of civil society as the core of a new radical democratization project'*. In this last version global civil society appears constituted by diverse trans-national social movement activities, and a crucial element is that it can be considered both *'as a terrain of democratization, with movements seeking to democratize relations within it, and as a source of democratization, with movements located within it seeking to constrain and transform the power of the state system and the global economy'* (Eschle, 2000).⁸

We argue that both the first and third ‘conceptualizations’ of civil society recalled by Catherine Eschle were at work in WSIS. We call the first approach ‘institutional’,⁹ referring to the tradition of relations between the United Nations system and non-state actors, mainly non-governmental organizations (NGOs). A tradition, which – stemming from a state-centric perspective of international political processes – has certainly gained strength in the last decade, on the occasion of UN conferences (Pianta, 2001; Klein, 2004). Yet, such approach is now being challenged by the other, which we refer to as a ‘globalization from below’ approach, thus underlying its prevailing spontaneous character, its networking mode of operation and its ‘bottom-up’ implications.

As far as the institutional approach, the UN has a long history of relation with non-state actors (Ó Siochrú, 2002) that dates back to article 71 of its funding Charter. Rules to regulate interaction with civil society actors were afterwards adopted by ECOSOC in 1950 (Res. 288B) and 1968 (Res. 1296), and redefined in 1996 (Res. 31). The mid-1990s was the time of the growing visibility of NGOs and their growing presence at UN conferences that started with Rio in 1992, and proceeded to Vienna (1993), Cairo (1994) and Beijing (1995). During the Rio conference a first attempt to define the boundaries of the complex reality of ‘civil society’ was carried on through the identification of major groups, including gender, indigenous people, professionals, NGOs; while the Commission on Global Governance was also considering such developments in its investigation and proposals.

In 1998 UN Res. 53/170, speaking about civil society organizations, stated that they could ‘*no longer be seen only as disseminators of information, but as shapers of policy and indispensable bridges between the general public and intergovernmental processes ...*’ This path, together with a growing awareness of the need for a democratization of the UN system through a more open and participatory functioning, led to the recent work of the above-mentioned High Level Panel on UN–civil society relations, and its final output: ‘*We, the People: Civil Society, the United Nations and Global Governance*’ (June 2004).

This institutional approach to civil society landed at WSIS through Resolution 56/183, which encouraged ‘*intergovernmental organization, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector to contribute to, and actively participate in, the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Summit and the Summit itself*’. Throughout the WSIS process the formula adopted was ‘NGOs and civil society’, thus differentiating between the two and recognizing that civil society is something different (and, as the process demonstrated, less defined) than NGOs. Nevertheless we suggest that the underline conception of civil society actors, characterizing governmental delegations and IGOs, remained an NGOs-based one, close to what expressed in ECOSOC resolution 31, where NGOs are described as not-for-profit entities whose ‘*aims and purposes shall be in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the UN Charter*’ operating at national, regional and international level.

But while the idea of a ‘tripartite’ mode of interaction was gaining momentum inside the UN,¹⁰ from the early 1990s with the global emergence of the Zapatista movement, and subsequently even more visibly with the Seattle WTO meeting in 1999, something started to change, not just in the streets of cities like Genoa or

Cancun, but in the media, in common discourses, in trans-national organizations' everyday life, on the Internet, due to the fact that globalization processes were being de-constructed from below and the very legitimacy of international institutions openly put in discussion.¹¹

Building on historical precedents, such as the anti-slavery movement at the end of the 19th century, on the expansion of connections among national social movements in the 1970s (Della Porta & Kriesi, 1998) and on relatively more recent forms of protest, like demonstrations against the World Bank in Germany just before the fall of the Berlin Wall (Keck & Sikkink, 1998), together with a growing awareness and competence in the use of long-distance communication devices, meaningful developments have taken place in civil society trans-national modes of organization. This has led to experiences such as the World and Regional Social Forum meetings, which can be conceived as networks of networks (Della Porta & Mosca, 2004); to local and national gatherings aiming at building alternative and independent visions for globalization processes; to occasions for trans-national connections to be created, experienced, strengthened and communicated.

Interestingly, not only 'traditionally central' issues related to globalization are debated in such spaces. Also an apparently only-for-expert topic, such as communication rights, has slowly gained its place in the agenda. From the 2002 (second) edition of the WSF, communication started being dealt with no longer just in instrumental terms – how should communication and information technologies be used as tools for internal organization and external outreach – but also in substantial terms.¹² The need for a democratization of communication, the implications of convergence in the global ownership of communication and topics such as how should ICT be governed in order to promote a more democratic international system, are all issues that contributed to relate communication and information to the wider 'globalization from below' discourse.

A growing attention posed on communication and information issues, together with the opportunity offered by the upcoming World Summit, allowed a number of individuals and networks, which had been active for years in the promotion of an open and democratic use of 'old' and 'new' communication technologies, to find new motivation and energies to come together and become active inside the WSIS preparatory process.

Thus the 'globalization from below' vision and practice of global civil society also landed at WSIS: a reality which, according to some, has historical and conceptual roots in the NWICO debates of the 1970s (Traber & Nordenstreng, 1992; Nordenstreng, 1999; Ó Siochrú, 2004) and had developed its own networks and strengthened its international visibility in the 1980s and 1990s through loose initiatives such as the MacBride Roundtables, the proposal for a People's Communication Charter or the Platform for Democratic Communication; but also through projects for development cooperation in the field of communication for social change (WACC) as well as through more formalized structures such as the World Association of Community Radio (AMARC) and the Association for Progressive Communication (APC). Overall, the network recently re-asserted its identity through the launch of a Communication Rights in the Information Society campaign.¹³

Furthermore, at WSIS this 'tradition' of mobilization on communication and

cultural issues met with more recent experiences related to the use of ICTs for an 'Internet citoyen and solidaire', with the open source movement, with the fragmented yet very active reality of the digital rights movement, with interesting examples of 'globalization from below' such as the Global Community Partnership.

We can say that Geneva has favoured the gathering of different experiences of social mobilization on communication and information issues, from the most 'ancient' to the most recent, stemmed from the evolution of ICT use among citizens and communities. At the same time WSIS has contributed to a dialogue among associational structures of civil society that are more institutionalized and 'expert' of global processes – such as the CONGO or a number of NGOs that were induced into the process through UNESCO and its own networks¹⁴ – and more spontaneous forms of mobilizations that are the expression of the articulated galaxy of the global movement for social justice. An unprecedented plurality of actors and discourses, of visions and modes of interaction with institutional actors which deserves further investigation. Some 200 accredited non-governmental entities took part in PrepCom1 (September 2002), some 1500 civil society entities have registered in the official civil society website (www.geneve2003.org) and over 3300 participants from non-governmental organizations and civil society attended the first phase of the summit.¹⁵

The outcome of such encounters were not foreseeable at the start: the different experiences and political cultures represented by such a diversified reality could have produced fragmentation and conflict, in developing discourses, elaborating documents and defining political practices; as well as it could have fostered partial convergences or an homologation on the positions expressed by stronger actors. Our analysis, and personal observation, suggests a different result: a meaningful convergence, through a process of collective elaboration, in the respect of the plurality of voices and positions.

Visions and Convergences: Perspectives on Governance

Theoretical conceptions of global civil society obviously draw on the observation of practices that have developed over time. Hence it is important to note, as we have done above, how civil society organizations' praxis in the trans-national environment today presents a plurality of manifestations of formal and informal character, institutionalized relations as well as spontaneous self-organization, habits of dialogue with formal institutions together with strong expressions of contentious politics. Such plurality is a crucial element, since different realities of civil society, their nature and the role they perform, may give way to different perspectives, and possibly praxis, of global multi-actor governance.

At the same time, it is also important to stress the role of discourses: the conceptualization, self-perception and representations that both civil society and other subjects are developing, will contribute to the re-definition of state and non-state actors' role in the international arena.

In our empirical analysis of WSIS we are mainly focusing on the construction of narratives, referring to other authors for an in-depth investigation of internal relations within the civil society sector as well as for the analysis of their interaction with governmental actors (Raboy, 2004; Ó Siochrú, 2004; Kleinwächter, 2004; Cammaerts & Carpentier, 2004). We are interested in the outcome of the

convergence among different realities of civil society in terms of ‘visions’; and therefore we look at two different semantic spaces: that of internal dynamics within the civil society sector and that of interaction with the official process.

Moreover, since Geneva has been the occasion in which different actors, while participating in a process concerning information and communication issues, have also made explicit their understanding of governance processes in a globalized world, we shall focus precisely on the different conceptualizations of political processes that emerge from the documents, within the wider discourse on information and society.

We can summarize the plan of our investigation as follows:

CS convergences @ WSIS	Practice¹⁶	Visions of governance
within civil society	who what how	Lexical-textual analysis of civil society documents ¹⁷ throughout the preparatory process. Focus on ‘governance’ (the who, what and how of global governance within the civil society sector discourse) to evaluate the degree and evolution of internal consistency in a processes that involved a plurality of voices.
CS relation to official process	who what how	Lexical-textual analysis of official WSIS documents together with those elaborated by the civil society sector in two stages of the process: PrepCom 2 and the final summit. Focus on ‘governance’: the who, what and how of global governance comparing official and civil society visions.

We broadly refer to ‘governance’ as a ‘process of interactions among different actors at different levels’ for the definition of rules and lines of conduct (Padovani & Nesti, 2002). Governance has been a constant focus in our investigation of WSIS as a political process and we did not just focus on the explicit use of the term or the specificity of ICT and Internet governance: we concentrate on the ‘inner vision of steering processes’ that can be derived from written texts.

Applying lexical-textual analysis to investigate governance,¹⁸ we have selected and tagged a number of ‘complex textual units’ (CTU) referring to ‘actors’ (actor/s, party/ies, stakeholder/s, country/ies, nation/s, individual/s, people, cities, private sector, civil society organization, but also users, citizens, decision-makers, etc.) and ‘levels’ of political action (national, regional, global, national and international, etc.). Moreover we identified units referring to ‘modes of interaction’ and evaluation (cooperation, benchmarks, consultation/ing, outcome/s, commitment/s, regulation/tory, etc.) and units referring to the ‘quality’ of governance (democracy, democratic, participation/patory, empower/powering, partnership, openness, transparency, representative/ness, competitive/ness and the

like). Actors and levels indicate something about the WHO in multi-actor/multi-level governance, while modes and quality tell us something about the WHAT and HOW of the process.

Civil Society Visions

Focusing on the dynamic internal to civil society, we were initially surprised to realize how little reference to the governance dimension could be found in early documents elaborated by the civil society sector, when analysed in relation to governmental texts, in spite of the efforts made by some civil society actors to contribute in the definition of a model for the multi-stakeholder process from the very beginning. After investigating documents from PrepCom2, in July 2003, we wrote: *'It seems that civil society actors, being mostly concerned with the affirmation of principles and values and with the possibility of widening the WSIS agenda, are not sufficiently focused on how "information_and_communication_societies" should be steered and regulated: very little reference to actors' role is made in comparison to other documents. No specific interest for governance emerges from civil society contributions. We can, probably, expect more indications about regulations and framework to come from civil society actors, in subsequent stages of the WSIS process.'* (Padovani & Tuzzi, 2003)

It was therefore interesting to discover, at the end of the process, that the governance dimension had not just been developed by civil society in the alternative Declaration adopted by the Civil Society Plenary on December 8th: the vision that emerged from that document was also very precise in its determination – about the who, what and how of governance – and sensibly more articulated and comprehensive than the one expressed by the official documents (Padovani & Tuzzi, 2004).

We therefore decided to reconstruct the learning process that led to such changes. We selected all the 12 documents elaborated by the Coordinating /Content and Theme Group of the civil society sector and clustered them according to the seven phases of WSIS.¹⁹

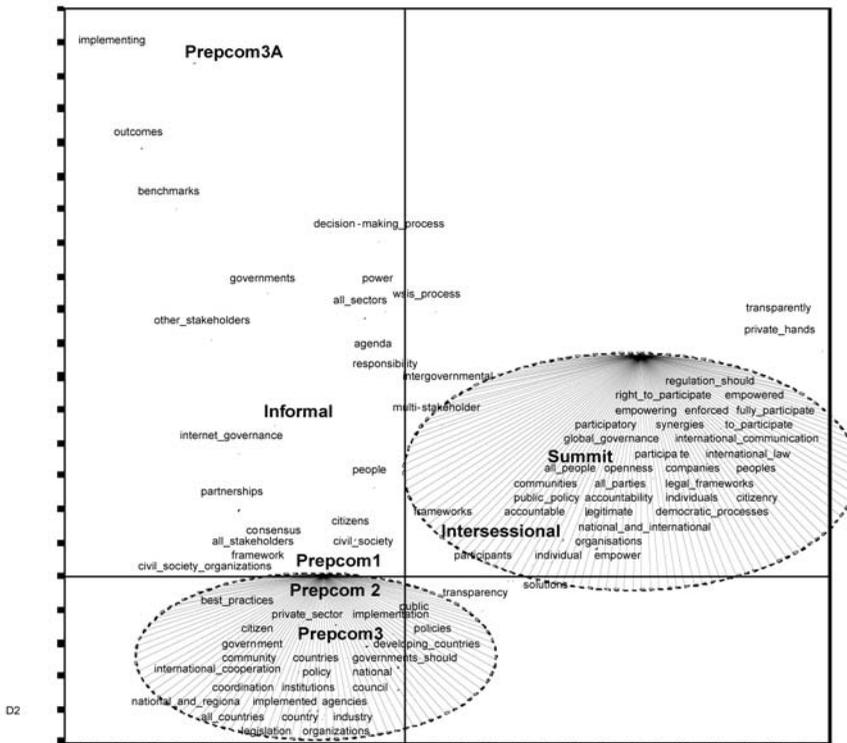
From the entire corpus vocabulary we selected 230 CTUs relating to governance,²⁰ and analyses were made referring to 165 CTUs with frequency above three. Within civil society documents, of all these units only 35 were specific to some phases (relatively more important in comparison to other, yet utilized also in other phases) and 58 were exclusive units (utilized only in specific phases). All other governance units were quite evenly utilized throughout the process in civil society documents. Amongst these: civil society (recurrence: 146), public (80), policies (59), people (57), national (49), citizens (40), implementation (40), governance (39), framework (38), private sector (37), all-stakeholders (32), transparent/transparently (respectively 23 and 23). This means that a civil society vision of governance has accompanied the entire process, presenting different elements – actors, modes and quality – of governance processes. In spite of the plurality of actors, and converging realities of civil society, the governance discourse developed by civil society shows a significant consistency over time, particularly from the Informal meeting (November 2002) onwards. After the first preparatory meeting in Geneva,²¹ therefore possibly influenced by the direct experience of the process, a coherent 'vision' of governance started to emerge from the diversified

realities that gathered around the Plenary and Content and Theme Group.²² The basics of such vision can be found in the Informal meeting document. Here the ‘actor’ element is plural (civil society organizations, all stakeholders); the ‘how’ opens up to issues such as responsibility, partnership, decentralization and empowerment, anticipating themes that became central afterwards; the ‘what’ element also shows a pragmatic approach: mention is made of regulation, best practices, outcomes, enforcement, implementation. Internet governance also emerges as a theme in this early stage.

No exclusive CTUs are found in this phase, which set the common ground for the development of a more articulated discourse. In fact when we look at specific and exclusive units in the corpus we do find variations in the different phases: these can be related to specific events and stages of negotiations inside the official WSIS, to which civil society documents were reacting, but can also be considered as part of a broader learning process of consensus building through which civil society developed its own perspective. This explanation seem to be sustained by the fact that the emerging ‘vision’ from the final document is the most articulated and balanced one; it is also the document in which we find the highest number of exclusive governance units (27 out of 58).

Figure 1 shows the positioning of civil society documents, clustered according to WSIS phases and their use of governance CTUs.

Figure 1: Built on governance CTUs. Positioning of civil society documents, clustered according to WSIS phases; visualization of governance CTUs that most contributed to the determination of the axes



Documents from PrepCom2 are visibly situated in the middle of the graph, which means there are few units that are either specific or exclusive to that document.²³ Nevertheless PrepCom2 is richer in governance language than former phases. As far as the ‘who’ of governance, it shows an unprecedented attention for regional situations and developing countries (least developed countries, developed and developing, regional level, north–south, south–south) but it also introduces the local level of authority (local authority/governments). This can be interpreted as a ‘localization’ and a ‘specification’ of relevant actors, both in terms of institution and in terms of their intervention.

As far as the ‘how’ of governance, democracy and participation, as well as empowerment and decentralization, have gained more importance (through the use of different expressions: participate, fully participate, right to participate). The few exclusive CTUs tend to strengthen the value dimension (democratically, unaccountable); but the ‘what’ is also there, and solutions, legal and regulatory frameworks, commitments are mentioned, together with the first reference to good governance.

PrepCom3 is strongly focused on actors and levels, in their complexity: governments and local authorities, industry and regional and international level are specific to this phase. It is also interesting to see what actors’ units are exclusive of these documents: private sector and civil society, public and private sector, multilateral/international organizations, all indicate a clear awareness of the multi-actor and multi-level nature of governance processes; a vision in which non-state actors are always mentioned together, private entities and public interest groups. This finding goes together with a strong self-reference to civil society operating inside the WSIS process (all caucuses and working groups – African, human rights, Latin America, gender, youth, community media – and WSIS-civil society are continuously referred to); which can be explained by the fact that some of these documents are working papers, in which self-reference to the ‘author’ is recurrent.

No specific unit concerning the ‘how’ of governance is found in this phase, while exclusive are only ‘effectiveness’ and ‘legality’. This does not mean this element is absent; reference to transparency, responsibility and accountability is there, maybe not as relevant as elsewhere. The real novelty from PrepCom3 documents is the explicit mention of the term ‘power’ which becomes central towards the final stages of the process.

The ‘what’ element is also there and pragmatically developed: policy, solutions and regulation go together with best practices, outcome and governance which is declined in different ways: ICT governance, Internet governance and, again, good governance.

In figure 1, the summit declaration is positioned in a space opposite to PrepCom3. This can be explained, again, by looking at specific and exclusive CTUs. As far as actors are concerned it is interesting to note, together with a very inclusive approach (all actors, all citizens, all people), a strong focus on communities and peoples (always plural) on one side and on the international community on the other. This suggests a parallel, implicitly made by civil society, between traditional actors in world politics (the international community composed of states) and non-traditional actors (communities and peoples), which aspire at being recognized. States, governments and countries are still mentioned,

but the relative importance of the international *versus* grass-roots communities seems to stress the contraposition between old conduct of world politics and the new governance, which is needed for the 21st century.²⁴

It is also worth noting that the final declaration is the only text in which civil society is always referred to as ‘global’: the ‘author’ is no longer considering its action as confined within the WSIS process. Global civil society is a strong statement that underlines actors-within-WSIS’ sense of belonging to a wider global constituency. These two elements show that the self-referring tendency of former phases has given the floor to a more comprehensive, and cosmopolitan, understanding of civil society. And global has also become the very concept of ‘governance’ (global governance, ICT global governance).

Few specific units in this document refer to the ‘what’ of governance, if not for a strong reference to international law and regulation, suggesting that decision-making and public policies should be developed within legal regulatory frameworks. Redistribution, reinforcement and reform are exclusive units to this text.

As far as the ‘how’ or ‘quality’ of governance is concerned, two aspects should be mentioned. The participatory dimension, which has accompanied the entire process, reaches its highest point in this document: together with participation, participatory, full participation and the like, we find a stronger ‘right to participate’. This goes together with a second interesting element: not just empower, empowerment and empowering, but the very concept of ‘power’ (which had appeared once in PrepCom3) is utilized three times in the text and exclusive mention is made of powerful and unequal power.

We suggest a connection between these two elements: having been involved in the WSIS process for 18 months, civil society actors developed a clearer (more realistic?) understanding of global civil society involvement in world politics. An understanding that is aware of the difference between being able/invited to participate as a stakeholder and having the possibility to exert some ‘equal power’ at the global level (Cammaerts, 2004; see also Cammaerts & Carpentier in this volume). This would support our belief that the ‘multi-stakeholder approach’ is not yet a model and needs to be defined, not only in theory but in practice, taking into consideration the nature and level of power that different stakeholders can exercise.

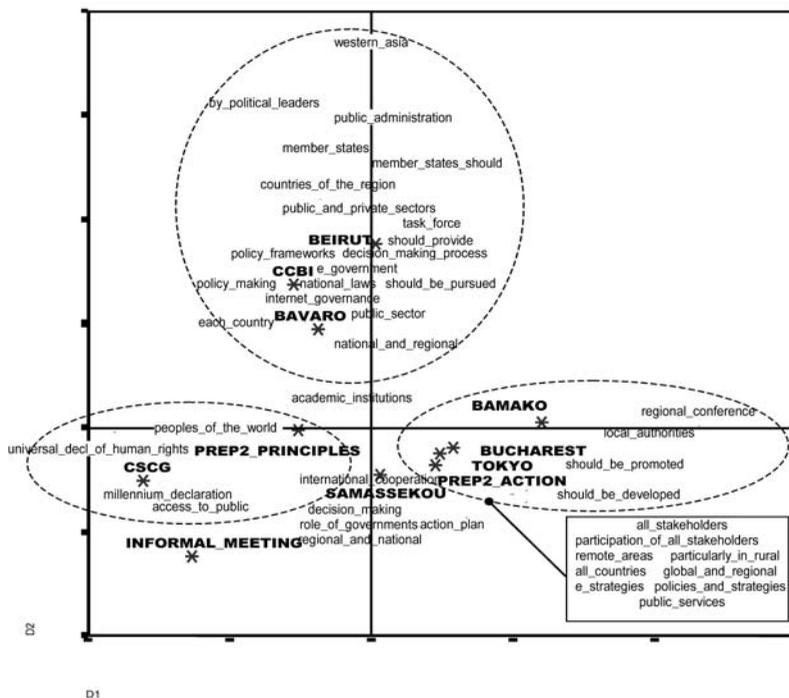
As far as civil society realities convergence at WSIS, we believe that the coherent evolution of a civil society ‘vision’ of governance throughout the process, being the result of a collective exercise participated by a number of different civil society actors, indicates a positive outcome in their convergence: the result of negotiation processes, effectiveness of mechanisms for consultation and consensus-building, capacity to develop a common and agreed upon language. The *Civil Society Declaration* confirms the strong focus on values (transparency, accountability, responsiveness) and norms (legal framework, regulatory aspects), which prove to be a basic common ground for civil society actors.

Civil Society and the Official Process: Comparing Narratives

If we now focus on the relation between civil society convergence and the official process, we can underline the difference between governance visions expressed by

civil society documents and those of the official texts. Building on former analyses (Padovani & Tuzzi, 2003; 2004), we here offer an overview through graphs in which documents are positioned in the WSIS semantic space at PrepCom2 (February 2003) and at the summit (December 2003).²⁵ Again, governance CTUs are visualized.

Figure 2: Positioning documents in the WSIS semantic space at PrepCom2 (selection of texts from different actors: official, regional/governmental, private sector, civil society). Visualization of governance CTUs that most contribute to axes definition. From Padovani & Tuzzi (2003)



In the WSIS space of discourse at PrepCom2, three semantic areas²⁶ indicated different visions about who should contribute (and how) to the definition of a regulative framework for the information society. The official *Declaration of Principles* is being positioned close to the contribution elaborated by the civil society. This can be explained considering the common priority given by the two documents to the value dimension in that stage of the process. In comparison with the language of all other texts, none of the two seemed to express any specific understanding neither of governance nor of the role of actors within it. But the official process actually developed around the right and upper semantic areas, since a compilation of Reports from the regional conferences and a ‘non-paper’ elaborated by the President of the preparatory process were the actual basis for subsequent negotiation. Thus the official process ‘vision’ should be drawn by documents such as the reports from the Bucharest and Tokyo regional conferences and the *Plan of Action* (centre to right area), characterized by sequences such as

From the analysis it becomes clear that the plurality of visions about the information society is also a plurality in governance understanding. All documents refer to at least some of the elements we have selected to identify visions of governance: actors, levels, modes and quality. Here we only recall some findings concerning the official documents and the alternative declaration adopted by the Civil Society Plenary.²⁷

The official documents are characterized by a very specific definition of actors and level: countries are developing, developed, least developed; action takes place at the national, national and international, national and regional levels. Cooperation is regional and international. The regional dimension appears strongly only in official documents, a strong way of conceiving multi-level governance that is not shared by other actors. Stakeholders are important (they are relevant stakeholders, multi stakeholders or other stakeholders) as subjects to build partnership with. But they are hardly identified: no cities and local authorities, little civil society, little communities and peoples; a stronger focus being on private sector, business, firms, SMEs.

Governance is either 'good governance' or it relates to Internet, thus gaining specific meanings. Very little is said about the modes and quality, the 'how' and 'what': a part from a strong focus on competition and competitiveness, we find little reference to democracy or empowerment. Participation is there but it is not central, nor does the idea of regulation or decision-making appear to be central; a generic 'regulatory framework' formula prevails.

On the other side, what characterizes the Civil Society Plenary document is, as indicated above, a very inclusive approach (all actors, all citizens, all parties, all peoples) combined with the emphasis on participation, which is expected to be 'full' more than 'effective' and, as noted above, a basic right. A strong vision of the quality of governance emerges, with reference to actors (decision-makers and international community but also citizens and people, civil society organizations, communities and private sectors); tools that should be developed (agenda, sanctions, regulation, covenants, enforcement, international laws); and the quality of such governance (democratic, legitimate, empowering, accountable, transparent).

We can say that what was already a distance in language and in the conceptualization of governance, between the official process and civil society at PrepCom2, has possibly widened by the end of the process. Convergence among realities of civil society might have contributed to define a common vision of governance within the civil society sector, but it did not contribute to bridge the distance between the top-down/governmental and bottom-up approaches that met at WSIS.

Conclusion

The World Summit on the Information Society has certainly been a complex event; and actors' participation has been equally complex. As far as civil society is concerned, there has certainly been a convergence both in practice and visions, though never a complete one, nor was it desirable. The plurality of actors and positions and the plurality of final documents attest once again the complexity of a

reality, which is too easily labelled as ‘trans-national civil society’ and simplified, sometimes favouring criticism.²⁸

Nevertheless, the articulated organization and self-structuring that civil society actors have developed during the process, were necessary to play a role, and promoted a process of convergence especially among those two ‘realities’ of civil society that have amongst their repertoires of action precisely the organization in/of parallel summits: NGOs and activists from social movements (Kaldor, 2003: 80–81). This link could be understood as the development of a ‘trans-national civic network’ or a ‘trans-national advocacy coalition’; which are defined as networks that connect NGOs, social movements and grass roots organizations (Keck-Sikkink, 1998). Some of these subjects being closer to institutional settings, others more activists, acting together in a form of cooperation where *‘the latter tend to be more innovative and agenda-setting, while the former can professionalize and institutionalize campaigns.’* (Kaldor, 2003: 95)

We believe that two novelties should be underlined in the case of the WSIS. The first one is that civil society presence at WSIS was not in the form of a ‘parallel summit’. As we mentioned, NGOs and civil society were invited to participate and they did so, in the very same physical space as the official summit, making the effort to continuously relate to the official intergovernmental process, while at the same time developing positions and organizing their own channels for exchange and cooperation. If such involvement was satisfactory is a matter for further discussion; nevertheless WSIS has set a precedent in the history of global politics, while showing the difficulties, potentialities and shortcomings of a new approach to global governance.

The second relevant aspect concerns the content dimension. The kind of convergence that took place at WSIS cannot be defined as an ‘advocacy coalition’, since coalitions normally concentrate on single issues. The WSIS process has in fact witnessed the dialogue between activist, hacktivists, grass-roots groups, exponents of epistemic communities, individuals and NGOs, the former being more creative and agenda-setting-oriented and the latter extremely helpful in mediating the formal presence of civil society in the process. All those actors were concerned with the most differentiated issues, from media concentration to open source, from ICT for development to people with disabilities, from technological waste to human rights, from gender issues to indigenous peoples, from global justice to the empowerment of communities through knowledge. A plurality of issues was brought on the agenda since the challenge was to build ‘visions of (information and communication) societies’.²⁹

We therefore believe that not a just a trans-national coalition but a global dynamic of social movement was in action at and around WSIS, an hypothesis that seems to be sustained by the continuity of exchange that have followed the Geneva event through Tunis and is ongoing, at different levels in different forms, mainly but not exclusively mediated by long-distance communication tools.

In terms of visions of governance, and the role of civil society as an actor within such vision, what emerge from our analysis is that in the official/governmental perspective, the governance landscape mainly concentrates on the map of actors and levels: actors (always considered in a ‘macro’ dimension) are specified, countries are declined, levels of action are articulated; while very little mention is

made of the very nature of governance, which would define the role and position of the different actors. They appear as juxtaposed but not interacting. We suggest that the outcome, in terms of governing style, would be an ‘aggregative mode’ of governance,³⁰ in which actors play a role on the same scene though not necessarily building dialogues. This aggregative mode can be thought of as a negotiation in which actors, following different logics of exchange and mediation, participate in policy-making with very different power resources. At the global level, this reflects the long legacy of diplomacy styles. Within WSIS this legacy has strongly informed the official process, thus defining the ‘official multi-stakeholder approach’ as an aggregate of actors exerting different power and playing different roles.

In contrast, the bottom-up perspective that characterizes the declaration elaborated by civil society shows little interest for the mapping exercise. What matters at the grass-roots level, to activists as well as to NGOs, is the ‘how’ of governance: responsiveness and accountability of institutions and empowering participation of actors. This would suggest a more ‘integrative approach’ to governing modes, based on the negotiation of interests (and words), through dialogues that allow each actor to redefine its priorities as well as its identity. This ‘concertation exercise’ implies that specific interests are re-elaborated in order to reach a common consensus. From our findings and observations we can say that it has been precisely an approach of this kind that was adopted within the civil society constituency; and that has proven to be possible within a trans-national political process, though only within a specific sector and not in the interaction with actors of a different nature (governments and IGOs).

Even when considering the number of contributions developed by different civil society groups (figure 3) – which attests of the persistence of a plurality of civil society positions and convergences – what is to be noticed is the fact that all civil society documents are positioned on the same side of the graph, above or below the left end of the horizontal axis. That can be viewed as the semantic area of the ‘how’ of governance, where units that indicate the ‘quality’ of processes define the basics for effective and meaningful participation of different stakeholders.

A final consideration should be made in terms of the ‘impact’ of civil society participation. We suggest that not only the output of the summit – the final documents – should be evaluated, but particularly the outcome, which is the overall political process as a learning space; an evaluation to which we hope to bring a contribution through our reflections. Given our focus on civil society as a global actor, in talking about ‘outcome’ we refer to the different results (some of which unexpected) of civil society involvement. Among these: a contribution in broadening the agenda, a fruitful convergence of different civil society actors, and a continuity of interactions beyond the WSIS process.

To conclude, WSIS has shown the articulation of civil society realities and the multiplicity of networks and connections that can develop from interaction in a common space, which is no longer just physically defined but complemented through long-distance connections. In spite of this complexity, it seems that amongst civil society organizations a strong and shared awareness has emerged: only through the development of a qualitative dimension of governance can a discourse on non-state actors participation in global politics be elaborated beyond rhetoric and actualized. This can no longer be considered only as the result of the

'value orientation' that characterizes civil society. The pragmatic and substantial reference to international laws, legal and regulatory frameworks together with explicit reference to the power dimension suggests that there is more to civil society than 'just value' in its approach to global governance for the 21st century.

Appendix

Lexical-textual Analysis: Presenting the Method

Step 1. Evaluation of Dimensions

The corpus for content analysis is a collection of written texts organized according to a grouping criteria. A corpus is composed of words, which are only sequences of letters taken from the alphabet and isolated by means of separators (blanks and punctuation marks). A word-token (wto) is a particular occurrence of a word-type (wty) in a text. A token instantiates a type (so, for example, the single word-type 'the' has many tokens in any English text), but there are also many word-types that occur only once in a given corpus (hapax legomena). The entire corpus includes a total of N word-tokens (corpus dimension in terms of total occurrences). The frequency of occurrence of a word-type in a document is the number of corresponding word-tokens repeated in the corpus. The list of word-types with each frequency includes a total of V word-types (vocabulary dimension in terms of different word-types) and is the vocabulary of the corpus.

The Type-Token Ratio (obtained dividing the vocabulary dimension V by the corpus dimension N) and the hapax percentage (number of word-types that occur only one time in the whole corpus divided by the vocabulary dimension V) are measures of lexical richness and since a statistical approach makes sense only with large corpora, they are useful to decide if the corpus is large enough. If the Type-Token Ratio is less than 20% and the hapax percentage is less than 50% it is possible to state the consistence of a statistical approach (Bolasco, 1999). From the point of view of lexical richness we can see that short documents always show a rich language, which can be explained through the limited dimension.

Step 2. Lexicalization: From Simple Word-types to Complex Textual Units

In a first phase of analysis only simple word-types are chosen in order to evaluate the dimensions of the corpus. Then we identify a number of complex textual units (CTUs) in the vocabulary and recode the corpus accordingly (Bolasco, 1999; Tuzzi, 2003). Complex textual units are used: a) to increase the amount of information (complex textual units carry more information than simple word-types); b) to reduce the ambiguity of simple word-types (simple word-types are ambiguous because they are isolated from their context of usage).

In order to recode the corpus we need to identify in the documents: all multi-words; all sequences of words that gain or change meaning if considered as a block and, more generally, all sequences that make sense and are repeated several times in the corpus. This operation can be easily performed through the use of Taltac software (Bolasco et al., 2000). Using Taltac procedures we first obtain a list of sequences of word-types repeated in the corpus composed of several thousand of sequences. Since most of them are empty (*i.e.* 'and in a'), redundant (*i.e.* 'cultural

and', 'cultural and linguistic', 'and linguistic diversity', 'linguistic diversity', etc.), or incomplete (*i.e.* 'persons with' or 'countries with economies in') we then select the most informative sequences according to the Morrone's statistical IS index (Bolasco et al., 2000), combining this with a manual control in order to obtain a new list of 'the best sequences'.

The final list of 'the best sequences' is used for the lexicalization of the corpus. This means that, for example, a repeated sequence such as 'countries with economies in transition' is re-written in the corpus as 'countries_with_economies_in_transition' and the sequence is, thus, recognized as a single complex textual unit. After the lexicalization procedure word-types, multi-words, poly-forms, idioms, and repeated sequences (all of which we define as 'complex textual units') appear together in the same new vocabulary.

Step 3. Selection of Complex Textual Units

Starting from the new vocabulary per CTUs and remembering that it contains either simple word-types (*i.e.* 'governance') or lexicalized repeated sequence (*i.e.* 'all stakeholders'), we select a sub-set of CTUs for the conduct of further analysis according to five criteria in a hierarchical order:

- 1) topic textual units. We tag some CTUs in the vocabulary in order to be able to control terms that were of interest for a specific topic useful for a thematic reading of documents (e.g. all CTUs concerning 'governance').
- 2) specific textual units. In order to recognize CTUs that are present noticeably more (or less) in a document than in the corpus as a whole, we use the traditional 'characteristic textual units' method (Bolasco, 1999; Tuzzi, 2003). This simple tool is based on the hypergeometric model and by means of a probability of over-usage it can detect which elements are used frequently inside a document. All CTUs that show a high probability of over-usage for a document (p less than 0,025) can be considered 'specific' for that document, which means peculiar to that document with reference to the others.
- 3) exclusive textual units. In order to assess the originality of a document with respect to others, we select all CTUs that are used in each document in an exclusive manner (they occur only in a document and never in the others).
- 4) repeated sequences. Starting from the list of CTUs that are neither 'topic', nor 'specific', nor 'exclusive', we focus on CTUs born from the lexicalization of repeated sequence, according to the same logic that led to our codification in complex textual units: multi-words, idioms and repeated sequences carry more information and less ambiguity than simple word-types.
- 5) frequency threshold. Since it is not possible to work with all the selected CTUs (still too many), it is necessary to set a consistent threshold and focus the analysis on CTUs with a frequency higher than this threshold.

However to conduct more qualitative and in-depth investigation all the CTUs contained in the vocabulary and also hapax should be considered.

Step 4. Correspondence Analysis

We build a two-ways contingency table with rows named with the selected CTUs and columns named with the grouping criteria (documents, authors, et.) where for each unit we can read in the cells how many times each author/document has used it.

In order to obtain a graphic representation of the contingency table we apply correspondence analysis (Bolasco, 1999). This statistical technique allows to represent the system of relations existing between authors/documents and selected CTUs on a Cartesian plan where each CTU and each author/document is positioned by means of coordinates. Such positioning is fundamental for the interpretation of the solution, because the most important CTUs for a author/document fall close to the author/document.

The entire system of relation contained in the two-ways contingency table can be drawn on a multidimensional graph in which each author/document and each CTU is a point in a hyper-space by means of coordinates. The comprehensive representation would be very complicated. It is therefore better to observe one axis at a time (one-dimensional point of view) or two axes a time (bi-dimensional point of view or dots on a Cartesian plane). Further difficulties derive from the number of CTUs we want to draw. They cannot be all represented on the Cartesian plane at the same time. For this reason we represent only those that are more important for the reading of the solution since they play a prominent role in determining the geometrical setting.

Application of the Method to Documents Elaborated by the Civil Society Sector within the WSIS Process

Step 1. Evaluation of Dimensions

Our corpus is composed of twelve documents written by CS actors and grouped according to the seven phases of the preparatory process of the World Summit: PrepCom1, Informal meeting, PrepCom2, Inter-sessional, PrepCom3, PrepCom3A and Geneva Summit. The corpus includes a total of $N = 53,949$ word-tokens and $V = 4,380$ word-types. The Type-Token Ratio ($T.T.R. = V/N = 8.12\%$) and the hapax percentage (39.57%) allow us to state the consistence of a statistical approach.

The length of the seven clusters of documents is different: the longest is PrepCom3. The shortest is PrepCom1.

Step 2. Lexicalization: From Simple Word-types to Complex Textual Units

Using Taltac procedures we obtained first a list of sequences of word-types repeated at least two times in the corpus. Then we have selected the most informative sequences according to the Morrone's IS index together with a manual control and obtained a new list of over 1,000 'best sequences' useful for the lexicalization of the corpus. The dimension of the corpus after this recoding procedure is $N = 47,464$ occurrences and the dimension of the new vocabulary is $V = 5,023$ CTUs.

Step 3. Selection of Complex Textual Units

We have selected from the CTUs vocabulary a sub-set according to the five criteria (topic textual units, specific textual units, exclusive textual units, repeated sequences and frequency threshold). For further analysis applications we have decided to use only forms with frequency higher than 2 (fixed freq greater than=3), meaning a sub-set of 1,570 CTUs.

Step 4. Correspondence Analysis

We have built a two-ways contingency table with 1,570 rows named with the CTUs and 7 columns named with the WSIS phases. From this contingency table, correspondence analysis obtains six axes and in the graphs we have visualized the first two. Furthermore we have decided to represent separately graphs concerning the governance theme.

All the graphs that are shown represent a percentage of explained inertia by the first two axes higher than 50%.

Notes

- 1 *'We, the People: Civil Society, the United Nations and Global Governance'* (UN A/58/817, June 2004).
- 2 Relevant links: www.itu.int/wsis; www.wsis-online.org; www.geneve2003.org; www.worldsummit03.de.
- 3 Complete reconstructions of the process with insights and related documentation can be found on the official website – www.itu.int/wsis – but also in the Report elaborated by Raboy & Landry: *La communication au coeur de la gouvernance globale* available at www.lrpc.umontreal.ca/smsirapport.pdf.
- 4 Seán Ó Siochrú's speech at the WSIS Plenary, December 11th.
- 5 In order to outline the historical legacy between former international debates on communication issues and recent developments, we have applied lexical-content analysis to the final documents from Geneva (the Official Declaration and the alternative Declaration written by the civil society group) and to the final recommendations expressed in the MacBride Report (1980), with the aim of tracing changes and continuity in language and content (Padovani & Tuzzi, 2005).
- 6 Roberto Savio speaks about 'generations' of global civil society, referring to developments from the early 1990s, and the presence of NGOs in UN World Summits (which can be considered as one of the outcomes of the trans-nationalization of social movements dynamics from the 1970s which focused on issues such the environment, peace and human rights or gender issues); to the Seattle mobilization and follow-ups, from Stockholm to Genoa; to the 'new' World Social Forum environment which is understood as a space of complex dynamics, characterized by a higher degree of autonomy from institutional settings (intervention at the Euricom Colloquium *Information Society: Visions and Governance*, Padova – Venice May 2003). Differently, Mary Kaldor (2003) writes about 'versions' of global civil society, underlying how mobilization phenomena have been referred to over time, since the 18th century, by different subjects (thinkers, institutions, actors from the civil society themselves). In a yet different way, Catherine

Eschle (2000) presents a series of ‘conceptualizations’ about civil society, looking at democratization theories from the 1990s. We prefer to adopt the expression ‘realities’ of civil society, in order to stress that, in spite of chronological developments, we now witness a co-presence of different expressions of global civil society organizations, acting today on the world scene. Moreover we are looking at concrete modes of political participation.

- 7 *Our Global Neighbourhood*, Final Report (1995), Oxford University Press.
- 8 Mary Kaldor further differentiates between a ‘post-modern version’ and an ‘activist version’ of civil society, underlying the plurality of global networks of contestation that characterizes the first and the focus on the emergence of a global public sphere which is peculiar in the conceptualization of the second.
- 9 Both Eschle and Kaldor refer to this as ‘the liberal vision’ where ‘civil society consists of associational life – a non-profit, voluntary third sector – that not only restrains state power but also actually provides a substitute for many of the functions performed by the state’ (Kaldor, 2003: 9). We adopt the label ‘institutional’ in order to stress the conception of civil society as composed by formal, identifiable organizations; the top-down character of such a vision, elaborated by institutional actors searching for ‘representative’ and identifiable interlocutors, and its consequences in terms of an ‘aggregative’ model of governance, which will be discussed in the conclusion of this article.
- 10 Particularly innovative in this sense have been certain UN agencies and programmes, such as the International Labour Organization, UN Habitat, UNAIDS, where actions were taken to foster and formalize consultative mechanisms involving governments, private sector entities and civil society as the three ‘parties’.
- 11 Defining the time frame for global social transformation is clearly an arbitrary exercise. As far as trans-national connections in the post cold war era are concerned, we tend to agree with Manuel Castells (2000) in considering the role played by the Zapatista insurgency in the early 1990s and their innovative use of Internet and ICTs, as turning points (Padovani, 2001).
- 12 This has been investigated by Stefania Milan in a thesis on *Civil Society Media at the WSF* and then compared with initiatives within the WSIS in Hinz & Milan, in a paper presented at the IAMCR Conference in Porto Alegre, July 2004.
- 13 Web references for above-mentioned initiatives and associations: MacBride RoundTables www2.hawaii.edu/rvincent/macbride.htm; People’s communication charter www.pccharter.net/chartere.html; WACC www.wacc.org.uk; AMARC www.amarc.org; APC www.apc.org; CRIS campaign www.crisinfo.org.
- 14 We recall that UNESCO has been the most active international organization in consulting with civil society, as demonstrated by the meeting organized in Paris, in April 2002, before the formal start of the WSIS process, which contributed to defining UNESCO positions within the process; as well as by the on-line consultation conducted in December 2002, see <http://www.unesco.org/wsisdirectory>.

- 15 For a thorough analysis of civil society participation in WSIS, see Cammaerts & Carpentier: *The Unbearable Lightness of Full Participation in a Global Context: WSIS and Civil Society participation*, in this volume.
- 16 We refer to the several and detailed reports on the role performed and the structures developed by the civil society sector at WSIS (Raboy & Landry, 2004; Ó Siochrú, 2004a). We also refer to the website set up by the civil society sector to organize its structure and communication channels: www-wsis-cs.org. Here we only recall, to set the context for a better understanding of our investigation, that the ultimate authority for the civil society sector at WSIS was the Plenary Assembly, which would take collective decisions, also concerning the written work elaborated and coordinated by the Content and Theme group (building upon a number of working groups, set up according to thematic focus or geographical representation).
- 17 Most of our analyses refer to documents that have been elaborated by the Coordinating Group of Civil Society (CGCS, later Content and Theme Group, CT), linked to the Plenary. The reasons for this choice are the following: that was the group which allowed the widest collective cooperation within civil society and it would have been impossible to track all documents presented by all civil society accredited entities. Furthermore, given our interest for convergences inside the WSIS, we should recall that the CT group has been recognized, from the beginning, the ultimate competence in terms of content development in the name of civil society. It worked through a core group of people (volunteers) who coordinated the efforts made by several caucuses and working groups, which were the actual spaces where thematic debates took place amongst subjects coming from the most different backgrounds (NGOs, professional, researchers, campaign exponents...). Consultations were done both on-line and off-line and consensus was reached on specific formulations referring to single aspects; such formulations were then channelled through the CT group and contributed to the documents then approved as the collective expression of the civil society sector in the Plenary. Recognizing the peculiarity of such procedure, the documents we have analysed can well be considered as part of civil society convergences at WSIS.
- 18 For a complete explanation of the method and its application we refer to the appendix of the chapter. Here we recall that we conduct our analysis with simple words as well as with multi-words or sequences, which are defined as CTU. Complex textual units are used to a) increase the amount of information (textual units carry more information than simple terms) and b) to reduce the ambiguity of simple word-types (simple word-types are ambiguous because they are isolated from their context of usage). Graphs are built on the basis of correspondence analysis and we visualize some of the CTU that contribute to the definition of axes. Yet, our interpretation draws not only on the visualization of CTU in the graph but also on ulterior information concerning specific and exclusive CTUs. Specific CTUs: those relatively more used in a document or a phase in comparison to others, therefore relatively more important in those documents; and exclusive CTUs: those which have been exclusively used in a specific phase/set of documents.
- 19 The three official PrepComs (July 2002, February 2003, September 2003), the Informal meeting (Nov. 2002), the Intersessional meeting (July 2003), PrepCom3A (November 2003) and the Summit (December 2003).

- 20 For consideration about the choice and selection of governance CTUs, see Padovani & Tuzzi (2004).
- 21 Contributions to PrepCom1 were developed before the actual process started and therefore show a different language and focus mainly on value aspects such as: participation, democratic, consensus. Actors are identified in a generic form and barely mentioned (all countries, all citizens), the only element concerning the 'what' of governance is a single mention of 'regulatory framework'.
- 22 Once again we underline this aspect, since we consider the structure through which civil society has self-organized itself a meaningful space for dialogue among different realities. It should be recalled that a number of civil society actors maintained their own interest and language, as demonstrated by the number of civil society documents presented at the final Summit, which we have analysed elsewhere (Padovani & Tuzzi, 2004). Therefore we are aware that the documents we are taking into consideration are not fully representative of the entire presence of civil society at WSIS; nevertheless we consider them as the result of the most articulated collective effort of cooperation.
- 23 The closer a document appears to the origin of axes, the least specific its language in relation to other documents. Not all specific and exclusive CTUs appear in our graphs, in order to make the graph more readable.
- 24 This was actually the position expressed in the civil society statement presented at PrepCom3A, in November 2003, when the sector denounced the limits of the intergovernmental process and declared it was to write an alternative declaration.
- 25 Aspects of our methodology have been developed over time; therefore the two analyses cannot be subject to a direct comparison. Yet it is interesting to have some historical insights.
- 26 Bucharest, Beirut, Bavaro, Tokyo and Bamako represent two reports elaborated in the regional preparatory conferences held between PrepCom1 and PrepCom2 (a part from the Bamako meeting, which took place in May 2002). CCBI is the document elaborated by the Coordinating Committee of Business Interlocutors, private sector; Prep2 principles and Prep2 Action are, respectively, the draft documents for the *Declaration of Principles* and the *Plan of Action*; CSCG is the document elaborated by the Coordinating Group of Content and Theme, civil society sector; Samassekou stands for the 'non-paper' proposed by the President of the Preparatory process as a basis for negotiation of documents.
- 27 We refer to Padovani & Tuzzi (2004) for a complete analysis of all documents from the Summit.
- 28 As reported by Kaldor (2003: 96–97) when discussing the role of NGOs. See also Calabrese (2004).
- 29 The Civil Society Plenary document uses *information_and_communication_societies* 25 times and *knowledge_societies* 4 times (in an exclusive manner). This is its strongest statement: the idea of a plural reality, which should be respected in principle as well as through appropriate

wording (recurrent are: pluralistic, differences, linguistic_and_media_diversity) (Padovani & Tuzzi, 2004a).

- 30 Aggregative and integrative approaches have been elaborated by Messina (2003) building on new-institutional analysis, focusing on administrative styles in local governance. We here suggest that a similar interpretation could be adopted to describe the visions of governance that emerged from WSIS documents. This certainly needs further reflection, thus we see it as one of the many interesting starting point for future investigation.

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