

# CHAPTER 6

## OTHER ACTORS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The typical actors of international relations are states and international organisations, however, not only these entities are considered important. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the scope of the subjects of international law broadened and non-governmental organisations, private individuals and business enterprises started to play a role in international relations.

### 6.1. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

#### 6.1.1. THE DEFINITION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

**Non-governmental organisations** are forms of national or international cooperation (not subject to international law), established by private individuals or private institutions in compliance with the internal laws of the given state, with a management independent from the state. These institutions are either called non-governmental, civil or non-profit organisations, with the general abbreviation: NGO. In case we are talking about a civil organisation operating not only in one state, it is also called an *international non-governmental organisation* or INGO.

In 1986, the Council of Europe defined the main characteristics of INGOs:

- the organisation should not be for profit;
- the organisation shall have been established under the national laws of a certain state;
- and shall conduct actual activities on the territory of at least two states.

Source: Convention of 1986 of the Council of Europe  
No. 124 on the recognition of the legal personality  
of international non-governmental organisations

We can see from the definition and the characteristics that the foundation of an NGO is not based on international law or an international agreement, but on the internal laws of one of the states. Therefore, it **does not have international legal personality** not even when it operates on the territories of multiple states. In this case, organisations performing the activities shall be formed, on the territory of each state, in compliance with the national laws of the given state. In order to work in a harmonised way, they may create an international coordinating committee but this will not be subject to international law either. An exception could be when the states decide that they confer rights and obligations on an NGO through an international agreement. This happened with the International Committee of the Red Cross (better known as the International Red Cross), which was formed as a civil organisation in 1863 in Switzerland but it could manage to receive from the states conferred essential powers in the field of the law of war and humanitarian law.

NGOs are typically established by **private individuals or private institutions**. It is not excluded that the state is also a founding party, however it is a requirement that the state cannot participate in its operation and governance. The state may provide financial support for a certain part of the operation but cannot take over the organisation's governance in this case either.

One of the main reasons of establishing NGOs is that the state cannot or does not want to perform certain tasks, which are **demand by the society**. In this case private individuals join each other and

perform the activities instead of the state. Related to this, their operation is typically not profit-oriented; their purpose is not business advantage but the promotion of the interests of certain communities and the fulfilment of their needs. Since they do not operate with the purpose of profit-making their work is often assisted by volunteers and their operation is typically maintained by donations. The first charity organisations were related to the church, one of them was the Order of Malta established in 1099 by Italian merchants for the hospitalisation of sick people and to take care of pilgrims arriving to Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

### 6.1.2. THE SCOPE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF INGOs

There are numberless NGOs operating in the world's states, there are around 60 thousand civil organisations solely in Hungary. There are far less **international NGOs** (INGOs), approximately 25,000. Among these there are around 2,000 which perform important activities on a global level. Examples for this are *Greenpeace*, the *International Red Cross*, *WWF* (World Wide Fund for Nature), *Amnesty International* or *Caritas Internationalis*.

INGOs may deal with basically any type of activities. However, some typical activities can be identified, such as religion, politics, science, sports, human rights, environment protection, trade unions or healthcare. The most ancient forms of international civil organisations are religious movements and **religion**-based relief organisations. The official relief organisation of the Catholic church has been *Caritas* since 1924, which has national organisations in more than 150 states. The Jesuit Refugee Service is present in more than 50 states and provides practical and moral support to refugees. The World Jewish Congress was established in 1936 and supports the protection of Jewish interests and culture in around 90 states.

International movements based on **political** views also have an important history, among which the first was the Socialist International formed in 1860. Its purpose was to harmonise the activities of national Socialist parties, conciliate politics and propagate Socialist world views. Similarly, the Liberal International and the Christian Democrat International were established in the first half of the 1900s. Formally, these organisations fulfil the requirements of INGOs, however taking into consideration the ambitions of the national parties and their presence in the government or the parliament, a lot of people have doubts whether they should be categorised as such.

The representatives of **science** formed a wide range of international associations, which amass the scientists working in the given field of science, organise professional events for them and help spread science. In the field of international law such an association is the *International Law Association* (ILA) established in 1873, with 3700 members interested in international law worldwide.

In the field of **sports** the most famous INGO is the International Olympic Committee (IOC) which was established by *Pierre de Coubertin* in 1894 with the purpose of reviving the ancient Olympic Games. Obviously, the Olympics nowadays can be organised exclusively with active state participation, however the IOC is still an INGO, the members of which, the national Olympic committees are civil organisations themselves. National and international associations of certain sports have the same system, like FIFA in football (soccer), or FINA in swimming and water polo. There are also INGOs in the field of sports, which undertake to propagate free time sports or use sports for peace-building in conflict-stricken territories (such as *Peace and Support*).

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<sup>1</sup> BLAHÓ–PRANDLER 2005, 476.

There are several INGOs for the protection of **human rights**, one of the most well-known among them being *Amnesty International* established in 1961 by an English lawyer, *Peter Benenson*. The lawyer and his friends started to send hundreds of letters to governments which detained people because of political or conscientious reasons, demanding their release. Besides releasing political prisoners their activities also covered a wide range of protections for other human rights. *Human Rights Watch* is another, similar international human rights organisation. For example the ban on landmines is a result of the cooperation of human rights civil organisations, for which a coalition including non-profit organisations had been fighting since 1992 with a campaign called *International Campaign to Ban Landmines*. One of the most famous supporters of the campaign was *Diana*, Princess of Wales. As a result of their campaign most of the countries adopted the Ottawa Treaty of 1997, the convention on the prohibition of the use and production of landmines. For their hard work, they have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

**Environmental protection** is one of the newest areas of international law and relations; the states realised its importance for the first time in the 1960s. Now there are a lot of NGOs working in this field, *Greenpeace* is one the largest or WWF, known of its logo with the panda. The latter is the world's largest nature protection civil organisation, operating in almost 100 countries. The purposes of WWF include the preservation of biological diversity, decreasing pollution and promoting sustainable development. As the result of the WWF's work and campaign, the convention of 1971 on the protection of wetlands of international importance was concluded. Furthermore, WWF lobbied during the preparation of the Convention regulating the International Trade of Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (also called CITES).

Similar to political associations, international associations of **trade unions** also have a long history; the interest organisations of industrialists on a national level existed already in the Middle Ages in the form of guilds and clubs. The first international organisation was related to the Socialist political movement, which was the International Workers' Association founded in 1864 in London with the merger of organisations representing English, French and German workers. In 1920, the World Confederation of Labour was established as the association of Christian trade unions. The largest world association is the *International Trade Union Confederation* (ITUC), with its seat in Brussels, having member trade unions from 162 countries worldwide, including 3 Hungarians.<sup>2</sup> Trade unions were formed not only at a global level but also in Europe. Among these the largest is the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) with its seat also in Brussels.

**Health challenges** have also been uniting people for a long time, either for the purposes of vaccines, modern healthcare services or any other objectives related to the welfare of people. *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) and *Save the Children* are both well-known organisations on this field.

Evidently there are also international civil organisations which perform activities related to multiple areas, such as *Oxfam* that fights against **poverty**, for development and the welfare of people. The activities of the *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation* (the foundation of Bill Gates and his wife) are also similar. CARE is also an important civil organisation, which besides the fight against poverty, is actively fighting for the rights of women and children.

### 6.1.3. THE COOPERATION OF INGOs WITH INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

One of the most important purposes of civil organisations has been from the beginning to draw the attention to a public need or value and influence national legislation. The conclusion of the international

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<sup>2</sup> See ITUC website: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/18\\_07\\_10\\_list\\_of\\_affiliates\\_ac.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/18_07_10_list_of_affiliates_ac.pdf)

treaties mentioned in the previous part, e.g. in the field of environmental protection or the ban of landmines, were the results of the active lobbying of national and international civil organisations. Similarly, the ban on slavery or the adoption of women's voting rights were all the results of important civil movements. Certain civil movements had famous leaders such as *Martin Luther King* in the USA, the leader of the African-American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. In most cases the topics promoted by civil movements did not have an important impact on the territory of only one state; they became international movements aiming to influence not only the national legislation but also international law-making.

The **importance** of INGOs was recognised already in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and states created different frameworks for such purpose. Its first appearance was ILO's special, tripartite structure. In 1918, when establishing the International Labor Organization (ILO), the founding states decided that the protection of the workers' interests and the international regulation of employment could not be achieved only from the top, on the part of the state. Therefore, within the frameworks of ILO they created a tripartite cooperation in which the representatives of governments, employers and employees had equal votes. (For more detail, see Chapter 7.)

In the case of most of the international organisations established after WWII, it became evident to ensure some form of **consultation possibilities** to INGOs. Traditionally the representatives of the states make the decision in international organisations, cooperating in certain cases with international officials or experts. It facilitates balanced and informed decision making if the representatives of the civil sector can also participate in decision-making in an organised way, with at least consultation rights. This was first institutionalised by the UN.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN created in 1946 the Committee on NGOs and the forms of **cooperation with NGOs** were laid down. ECOSOC has a list on those NGOs that are eligible to assist the work of the UN. There are three categories on this list. The first category is the so-called general consultative status. The biggest NGOs dealing with the most topics might fall into this category, also touching upon the most part of ECOSOC's activities. These organisations have general consultative rights, moreover they can propose agenda items for the meetings of ECOSOC. The second category is the special consultative status, and those organisations might fall into this, which deal with only one or a few topics of ECOSOC's activities. These organisations have consultative rights only in connection with meetings relevant to their topic. The third category is the "*Roster*"; these organisations are partially waiting to be accepted in the first or second category, and partially assist the work of ECOSOC now and then.<sup>3</sup> In 1946, there were only 41 NGOs on the list, however, the civil movement in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was blooming in a way that now there are more than 4,300 civil organisations on the list including the third category. Among these, almost 140 fall into the first category of general consultative status, while 3,200 into the second category of special status, and around 1,000 into the third category.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, considering the whole system of the UN, ECOSOC and the specialised agencies (e.g. ILO, FAO, WHO) cooperate with around 5,000 NGOs. In order to make the work of this huge number of organisations more effective and harmonised, the *Conference of NGOs* (CONGO) was created, which provides a forum for NGOs being in a consultative relationship with the UN.<sup>5</sup>

Numerous other international organisations benefit from the expertise of NGOs; the Council of Europe also introduced the **consultative status** in 1952, and currently 288 civil organisations can

<sup>3</sup> See UN website: <http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=30>

<sup>4</sup> List of NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC as of 1 September 2016 – Note by the Secretary-General, 29 December 2016, UN Doc. No. E/2016/INF/5. <http://undocs.org/E/2016/INF/5>

<sup>5</sup> In more detail, see: <https://www.ngocongo.org/>

participate in decision-making.<sup>6</sup> The activity of NGOs is especially strong in the European Union; masses of civil organisations are lobbying at the Commission and the European Parliament. The EU Commission supports the projects of NGOs with an annual amount of more than 1 billion euros, and more than 15,000,000 lobbyists are working in Brussels.<sup>7</sup> To reach a more significant influence, these civil organisations also form associations and networks (for example CONCORD, which coordinates the work of civil organisations in the field of humanitarian aid and development).<sup>8</sup>

Civil organisations are very important elements of a democratic society and informed legislation; however, it should also be emphasised that certain civil organisations represent only the interests of specific groups, and well-supported lobbyists with plenteous financial resources can perform activities with a stronger ‘voice’, even if they do not represent the interests of the wider layers of society. A typical example for this is that car factories can provide abundant resources to represent their interests and maintain the existing regulations, while environmentalists standing against them cannot necessarily do so, although the interest of the wider layers of society is to develop and produce more eco-friendly (‘greener’) cars. Based on these, it is important that national and international legislators provide access to consultation to the wide range of interest representatives.

## 6.2. INDIVIDUALS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERSTATE RELATIONS

### 6.2.1. *INDIVIDUALS AS SUBJECTS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*

Individuals as subjects of international law bear rights and obligations based on international law. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the protection of individuals based on international law appeared as a result of the ban on slavery in the 1800s. This road led further to the foundation of the ILO in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and to the international regulation of the employment rights and obligations of people.

Comprehensive conventions on the wide range of human rights are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), both adopted in 1966. Besides these, several other universal conventions were adopted regulating particular topics, such as the prohibition of racial discrimination (CERD, 1965), prohibition on discrimination against women (CEDAW, 1979), prohibition of torture (CAT, 1984), rights of children (CRC, 1989), rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD, 2006).

Besides the global human rights protection system, states have also adopted regional conventions, in which European states are frontrunners. These states have been generally regulating human rights since 1950 in a dozen of international conventions within the frameworks of the Council of Europe (e.g. the ECHR, 1950) or special areas of human rights (e.g. the European Social Charter of 1961, the European Convention on the Legal Status of Children born out of Wedlock of 1975, the European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes of 1983, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 1992 and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 1995). Although to a lesser extent, human rights conventions were also adopted on other continents, such as the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights, the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam and the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/participatory-status>

<sup>7</sup> Global Policy Forum: NGOs and the EU. <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/177/31567.html>

<sup>8</sup> See: <https://concordeurope.org/>

However, experiencing the horrors of WWII was also necessary to reach the broad protection of **human rights**. In 1948, the UN General Assembly created the first international document that covered a wide range of human rights. However, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was not created to be a binding instrument; therefore, states adopted multiple human rights conventions after it.

However, the conventions would not have any meaning without any enforcement mechanism behind them. There are huge differences in this regard, since while e.g. the states of the European continent set up a court (European Court of Human Rights, ECtHR, Strasbourg) to enforce the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), there is no such court in Africa or worldwide. Under the universal conventions adopted within the framework of the UN, typically there is one committee, consisting of expert and/or government-delegated members, to which a state or an individual can turn with complaints. Therefore, while based on the development of human rights, individuals clearly became subjects of international law, the domain, in which they can actually enforce human rights is strongly limited geographically.

Besides human rights, **international criminal law** is another field of international law, where the legal personality of an individual is evident. After WWII, in the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials individuals were held responsible for the violation of the law of war and international humanitarian law. The fact that war criminals were held responsible based on international law gave new life to the process in the beginning of the 1900s and now there are different types of international tribunals working in this field. (For me detail, see Chapter 13.)

#### 6.2.2. THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The lobbying activities of civil organisations and individuals mentioned above are important driving forces behind the development of human rights and e.g. environmental protection. However, in international relations, individuals can show up and have an impact not only through NGOs but also individually or in crowds.

Persons who themselves have an impact on international relations due to their positions, have individual influence. Heads of states, of governments, foreign ministers, members of diplomacy, officials of international organisations belong to the **elite of foreign affairs**. Evidently, their level of influence depends on the institutional system in which they work as well as on their personality. Dictators such as *Hitler*, *Stalin*, *Saddam Hussein*, or the *Kim* family in North Korea had or still have a very important influence on foreign policy. However, the same is true for personalities who reached extraordinary effects with a solid and strong institutional background, like *Kennedy* during the Cuban Missile Crisis or *Winston Churchill* in WWII, or *Gorbachev* in the second half of the 1980s.

According to Liberal and Constructivist theories, the human personality is extremely important and international relations are basically influenced by powerful persons. Contrary to this, Realists are more modest on the importance of certain individuals; they argue that foreign policy and international relations are developed more by the state itself and the positions of power. According to Realists, the interest of the state is continuous and it forces consecutive statesmen of different views to conduct similar foreign policies. Examining the history of the previous decades, it seems that reality is somewhere in the middle since the position of power and the interests of the states are influenced by the decisions of every statesmen, albeit individual views, identity and the characteristics of personality such as the spirit of cooperation (see e.g. *Konrad Adenauer*) or the predisposition for narcissism (see e.g. *Donald Trump*) are also important.

Besides leaders, private individuals also have the possibility to influence international relations. The UN asks more and more famous people to stand by different noble purposes: *Angelina Jolie* who has been the goodwill ambassador (now Special Envoy) of the UNHCR, *Nicole Kidman* and *Emma Watson* who are goodwill ambassadors of the UN's program dealing with women and *David Beckham* who is the goodwill ambassador of UNICEF. By now, it is a fundamentally established fact that private individuals can have an important role in **background diplomacy**. One of its most well-known areas is sports, which had an essential importance in the improvement of the relationship of the USA and China in the 1970s (the famous ping pong diplomacy), or in the fight against the apartheid system in South Africa (the IOC banned South Africa from the Olympics and a strong pressure was put on sportsmen not to participate in South African sport events).

**Referendum** is one of the commonly accepted forms of private individuals' impact on foreign policy. For Hungarians the referendum of 1921 deciding the territorial affiliation of the city of Sopron and its surroundings between Hungary and Austria is an important story; similarly, a referendum made the final decision for Hungary to join NATO and the EU. These referenda can have long-term consequences even for the whole of Europe, consider Brexit (the exit of Great Britain from the European Union) as an example. Therefore, it would be important that political elites assess the potential results of referenda with a sense of responsibility and properly inform the society thereon in advance.

Thanks to the development of information and communication technology it also became evident by the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that private individuals can form **crowds** fast and stand together for national and international purposes. The series of protests broken out in 2011 swept through North Africa and the Middle East (this is the so-called Arab Spring) and the protests and the revolution were organised on *Facebook* and other social media, thus far unprecedented in history. People could mobilise extremely huge crowds extremely fast, the consequences of which we are still facing as Libya's failed statehood, and Syria's endless armed conflict. Therefore, crowds form easily nowadays and their power is huge; however, the effect of their acts is impossible to be foreseen. Crowds can destroy the existing power, however they are not capable to establish a new operating state system, and this can lead to permanent problems.

### 6.2.3. THE ROLE OF BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to the development of international law business enterprises also became the subjects of international law at a small scale, therefore they can have **international rights and obligations**. For example, within the frameworks of international protection of investments a business enterprise may sue the state before international arbitral tribunals (for more details: see Chapter 8). One part of the Nuremberg Trial after WWII concentrated on how German business enterprises contributed to the crimes committed against humanity and the executive directors of *Krupp*, famous in the field of steel production (now *ThyssenKrupp*), and *I.G. Farben* were convicted. The latter had an important role in the field of chemical and pharmaceutical industry; to date it ceased to exist, and its successors include *BASF*, *Bayer* and *Sanofi*. In the field of human rights, legal entities also have rights, e.g. they are undoubtedly entitled to the right of property based on the ECHR.<sup>9</sup> While legal entities clearly have rights based on international law, it is disputed in literature whether they have obligations based on international law.<sup>10</sup>

However, an important movement started to reach that business enterprises, especially multinational corporations, could have international obligations since they have a serious impact on international

<sup>9</sup> Article 1, Protocol No. 1. to the ECHR

<sup>10</sup> WOUTERS-CHANÉ 2013

relations. States outsource more and more state tasks to business enterprises (for example private military corporations perform activities abroad besides the American and other armies, or e.g. there is a prison in Hungary operated by a business enterprise). However, while states can be held accountable for their activities to comply with international human rights, environmental protection and humanitarian or other rules, this cannot be achieved in the case of business enterprises.

Thanks to the world-wide spread of economic liberalization and globalisation by the 21<sup>st</sup> century, **multinational corporations** (MNCs) on the top of the economy have gained an incredibly huge importance. According to the idea of economic liberalism, the engines of economic growth are MNCs, which organise production in the most effective way and make the consumption of any goods possible at a global level. Economic liberalism considers the situation ideal when the state and the economy operate separately, with the state being responsible to maintain social order, but being able to influence the operation of economy and market since the market regulates itself.

The forerunners of MNCs existed already in the Middle Ages, such as the Dutch East India Company. Until the end of WWII, the biggest MNCs were operating in the field of the production of goods (for example *General Motors*, *Siemens*, *Krupp*), which has significantly changed by now. The world's largest companies operate in the field of information technology, communication and financial services. These are *Apple*, *Microsoft*, *Alphabet*, owning *Google* and its affiliates, *Amazon*, *Facebook*, *Exxon Mobil* as one of the world's largest oil companies, *Johnson&Johnson* operating in the field of chemical and pharmaceutical industry, or the conglomerate of *General Electric*, members of which cover every field of industry from the energy sector through the pharmaceutical sector to the bank sector.<sup>11</sup>

Although there are thousands and thousands of MNCs in the world, among them the largest one thousand produce and receive 80% of the global profit. The annual income of the biggest MNCs is many times the income of most states of the world. The annual income of e.g. the Dutch *Shell* oil company is more than Mexico's or Sweden's annual income (or that of the remaining, approximately 170 smaller states of the world).<sup>12</sup> However, among the around 3 billion people who can work, only 100 million work for MNCs, rest of them work in small and medium-sized enterprises or in the public sector (furthermore, almost 200 million people are unemployed).<sup>13</sup> Based on these, several theories criticise the idea of economic liberalism, and all of them share that the state's economic governing position should be increased and free market should be limited (for example etatism and Marxism).

MNCs have indeed made production global; however, the intention behind the rationalisation of production was not only based e.g. on the location of raw material necessary for the good, but also on which states' work force is the cheapest due to the lack of social security and other taxes, or e.g. due to the lack of a set minimum wage, where taxes can be avoided, where there are no plant building standards, or where there is no complicated system of regulatory requirements for environmental protection, or for the protection of employees' interests. Therefore, for instance, it turned out in 2014 that the seafood distributed by large European and North American distributors (e.g. *Tesco*, *Carrefour*, *Walmart*) was produced by slave work in Thailand.<sup>14</sup> MNCs often contributed to the existence of regimes heavily violating human rights, pollution, or the maintenance of low work protection standards. Because of these, important civil movements condemn globalisation, and their main goal is to reach that MNCs be bound by obligations under international law, not only have rights.

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<sup>11</sup> GRAY 2017

<sup>12</sup> MYERS 2016

<sup>13</sup> Unemployment and decent work deficits to remain high in 2018. International Labour Organization: World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2018. 22 January 2018. [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_615590/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_615590/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>14</sup> HODAL--KELLY--LAWRENCE 2014

The UN also stepped up to make MNCs respect and protect human rights and to provide compensation in case they cause damage. In 2011, the UN's Human Rights Council adopted **Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights** which declares that economic enterprises shall respect the national laws of the state where they operate. On the other hand, states shall protect human rights on their territory and demand the compliance with the laws from business enterprises. One of the guidelines states that business enterprises should also provide for remediation of adverse impacts, such as to restore any polluted environment. In any event, it should be noted that these are only guidelines, not binding principles.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, the guidelines do not solve the problem that certain states refuse to undertake the protection of fundamental human rights based on international law; therefore, their laws require a low level of protection, easy for enterprises to comply with. A solution for this problem could be if business enterprises were required to comply with the requirements of the laws of that state where their seat is, regardless of performing activities in other states as well. Hence, for example a company with a seat in the USA should respect the human rights prescribed in the USA (for example ban on child work) even if it produces the goods in a factory in Bangladesh. Any enforcement of such measures is rather difficult and faces several legal problems; therefore, currently the movement of civil organisations is the most effective way to do so.

Campaigns were initiated in several states against the products of MNCs, which turned out to have been produced in developing, third world countries amid serious abuses. The principal means of these campaigns is awareness-raising, which might lead to the direct decrease of company profit, since outraged individuals will not buy their products. Therefore, consumers, through their own choice, can influence the companies' regulatory compliance. As a response to this, business enterprises developed the concept of **corporate social responsibility** (CSR) which is a self-regulating mechanism. Business enterprises have recognised by themselves that complying with international and national laws and regulations as well as fair operation could contribute to the image of the company as well as to sales. Consumers expect an increasingly responsible operation and at the same time the companies have decided to promote social welfare more effectively.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a self-governing mechanism as part of which – in the course of their operations – corporations comply with national and international laws and standards, ethical norms, take into consideration the principles of sustainable development, and in the course of their decision-making they properly assess the interests of affected social groups.

CSR appears in the practice of several companies. The English company, *The Body Shop*, producing natural cosmetics is at the forefront of the movement against animal experiments and promotes the purchase of materials resulting from ethical production and fair commerce.<sup>16</sup> *H&M*'s global clothes collection program introduces sustainability to fashion.<sup>17</sup> Companies set environmentally conscious operational goals. *Coca-Cola*, for instance, wants to have everything made of recyclable packaging by 2025 and to have a 100% of collection and recycling rate regarding its bottles by 2030.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights – Implementing the United Nations. “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework. United Nations, New York–Geneva, 2011

<sup>16</sup> Enrich Not Exploit Sustainability Report 2016. The Body Shop. <https://www.thebodyshop.com/about-us/our-commitment/enrich-not-exploit-sustainability-report-2016>

<sup>17</sup> H&M Program of clothes collection: [http://www2.hm.com/hu\\_hu/noi/vasarlas-kategoria-szerint/16r-garment-collecting.html](http://www2.hm.com/hu_hu/noi/vasarlas-kategoria-szerint/16r-garment-collecting.html)

<sup>18</sup> Hulladékmentes világ: a Coca-Cola globális stratégiát hirdetett. Sajtóközlemény, [Waste-less world: Coca-Cola issued a global strategy, press release in HU, 19 January 2017.] <https://www.coca-cola.hu/sajtoszoba/sajtokozlemenyek/hulladekmentes-vilag-a-coca-cola-uj-globalis-strategiat-hirdetet>

## QUESTIONS FOR SELF-CHECK

1. What are the characteristics of NGOs?
2. Which non-state actors can influence international relations?
3. In what areas NGOs operate?
4. List five important NGOs!
5. What type of consultative status NGOs have?
6. What does CSR mean?
7. In what ways can an individual influence international relations?
8. Why did the UN create the document with the title of Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights?
9. List three universal human rights treaties!
10. Which was the first international human rights document that listed the fundamental human rights in a comprehensive manner?

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