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THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PROMOTION OF PEACE AND SECURITY: INTERMEDIARY AND PREVENTIVE FUNCTIONS

The increased role of international non-governmental organizations in the promotion of peace and security are considered in the article. The article reveals the main aspects of the reflections of NGOs' mediating functions in resolving international conflicts: first, within the framework of preventive diplomacy; second, through the consideration of an NGO as a mediator. The article deals with the major examples of NGOs, which conduct preventive functions in the field of international peace and security, in particular: International Crisis Group, Search for Common Ground, International Alert, Femmes Africa Solidarité, and West Africa Network for Peacebuilding. Considering the function of the NGOs as a mediator in resolving both international and domestic conflicts, The Carter Center, Crisis Management Initiative, and The Center for Humanitarian Dialogue are analyzed in the article.

Keywords: international non-governmental organizations, peace and security, preventive functions, mediation.

Continuing internal and inter-state military conflicts are the biggest problem in the world politics. Although their numbers have dropped significantly since the end of the Cold War, they are still a major threat to the international peace and security. Thus, threats that seriously undermine current security and peace have become one of the most dangerous problems for humanity today. Considering these threats, the international community has distinguished specific current trends, in particular: the weakening of influence and respect for international law; the use of indirect forms of aggression («hybridization» of a conflict); the lack of global power in international politics; the uncontrolled migration processes; terrorism; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons; the presence of continuous conflicts arising from the desire to have access to limited energy resources.

Obviously, the modern world is now undergoing dramatic changes, so there is a need for a qualitatively new approach to solving international problems. That is why, today's international security situation is constantly pushing international society to find new alternative ways of solving all the growing threats.

Among researchers, who are considering the problem of the intermediary and preventive functions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the sphere of peace and security V. Filipchuk, T. Bielska, and others should be mentioned. At the same time, notwithstanding the wide range of scholars who have paid attention to this aspect of NGOs' role in conflict resolution and security ensuring, there is no single integrative approach to the identification of the main examples of NGOs' successful preventive and mediating activities in the sphere of peace and security in the global political experience.

Therefore, the *aim of the article* is to identify the role of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in resolving conflicts and ensuring the safety of people, their intermediary and preventive functions in particular.

According to the various sources (with different parameters of the armed conflicts' identification; for example, only conflicts with the number of casualties of more than 1 thousand people per year are taken into account) in 2014, there were from 15 to 40 armed conflicts; in 2015, from 14 to 56. The British Institute of Economics and Peace considers that 151 countries of the world are involved in some type of the conflict¹.

¹ Філіпчук, В. (2016). *Міжнародна миротворчість та війна на Сході України: чи є точки дотику?* Київ: Міжнародний центр перспективних досліджень, 6.

As a rule, the international community uses a variety of methods to resolve international conflicts, such as negotiation, the use of third-party services, and mediation to help the parties reach a joint decision. Usually, mediators are international intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and individual states. Recently, however, with the rapid increase in the number of international NGOs, their role in the prevention and settlement of international conflicts has also increased.

Thus, the mediating functions of NGOs in resolving international conflicts are reflected in the following aspects: firstly, within the framework of preventive diplomacy, NGOs take measures to prevent the escalation of interstate disputes into military conflicts, as well as to facilitate mutual dialogue and understanding; secondly, NGOs play the role of mediator.

INGOs are engaged in conflict prevention, in other words preventive diplomacy, which facilitates dialogue between the conflicting parties through a variety of activities and communication tools, including negotiations, conferences, seminars, peace strategies, the use of social networks, media and other initiatives.

In 2004, the representatives of two NGOs, CARE International and The International Center for Justice in Transition, were formally invited to the 4993 meeting of the UN Security Council on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. For example, in the late 90's of the twentieth century, United Nations, Research Institutes and NGOs International Alert (United Kingdom), Interdisciplinary Research Programme on Root Causes of Human Rights Violations (Netherlands), Academy of Sciences and Institute of Ethnology (Russia), American Council on International Relations (USA), York University and Swisspeace (Canada) set up together The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER). The Swisspeace Research Institute has developed an early bias methodology to monitor conflict situations in North and South America, Africa, and Asia. CARE International has established several early warning programs in high risk areas – in Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua¹.

Among the INGOs that mediate international conflict resolution through preventative measures are the following: International Crisis Group (Belgium), Search for Common Ground (USA), International Alert, Femmes Africa Solidarité (Switzerland), West Africa Network for Peacebuilding and others.

The International Crisis Group (ICG), a non-governmental organization working to prevent wars and formulate policies that would allow us to build a more peaceful world. According to the ICG's research, over 68 million people are currently displaced because of the conflicts. It is noteworthy that the largest number of refugees fleeing their war-ravaged homes belongs to three countries: Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia. Non-state actors are involved in 70 military conflicts and this is historically the highest number. Approximately 90 thousand people were killed during the conflict in the year of 2017. Over the last five years, there has been an increasing trend of worsening conflict, namely: the number of wars is increasing; civilians become even more vulnerable; every year more and more people die².

The ICG's preventive actions include the critical analysis of conflict events and recommendations to governments and the IGOs on preventing these events. In particular, every month the NGO publishes CrisisWatch, an early warning bulletin that monitors more than 80 conflicts and crises in vulnerable countries around the world³. Thus, the International Crisis Group provides regular reports and briefings on conflict zones, enabling governments and IGOs to analyze these events and develop a strategy for action to prevent such conflicts in the future. Mainly, the ICG is pushing for positive policy change through the direct personal advocacy via an access to political leaders and decision makers.

INGO Search for Common Ground (SFCG) takes preventative measures in conflicts situations by using three tools:

1. Dialogue: at the local or national level, INGO brings people together through separate lines to identify and achieve common goals; works with those who are traditionally in power, and with those who do not have power, usually with women and youth. Examples include mediation, training of youth leaders, feedback diplomacy, etc.;

2. Media: while dialogue affects tens, the media affects millions, so INGO uses the media to analyze opinions and discussions throughout society about the root causes of violence and how to overcome them. Examples: TV dramas, radio plays, music videos, etc.;

¹ Бельська, Т. В. (2015). Діяльність інститутів глобального громадянського суспільства в конфліктних зонах сучасного світу. *Теорія та практика державного управління*, 3(50), 184. <<http://www.kbuapa.kharkov.ua/e-book/tpdu/2015-3/doc/5/01.pdf>> (2020, March, 12).

² *International Crisis Group*. <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/who-we-are>> (2020, March, 15).

³ CrisisWatch. Tracking Conflict Worldwide. *International Crisis Group*. <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch>> (2020, March, 15).

3. Society: providing people with a safe place to resolve their conflicts locally; bringing together divided communities, neighbors, families through creative thinking to unlock common humanity. Examples include football matches, joint theater or farming projects, and more¹.

In pursuit of its conflict prevention activities, SFCG works with such groups as:

1. Artists (actors). For example, a theater is a tool for promoting peaceful conflict resolution, where artists who are trained to act as moderators engage in dialogue in local communities, while involving the audience in the development of proposal for the peaceful conflict resolution. Also, films and series are being created to promote peaceful resolution of conflict situations.

2. Children and youth. The SFCG states that the vast majority of young people are not the perpetrators of violence, but partners in peace and positive agents of change. INGO has conducted a Global Assessment of the Participation of Children and Youth in Peacekeeping and works with thousands of young peacekeepers. For example, the Global Youth Summit against Violent Extremism (New York, 2015) brought together over 60 youth leaders and organizations from around 45 countries to share their experiences in the fight against violence extremism in their communities. The experts on youth issues drafted a historic Summit Agenda for Youth, outlining three tenets: 1) young people are aware of violent extremism; 2) they work clearly in their communities to prevent it; 3) calls for action for governments, NGOs and politicians, that this momentum should be used to engage youth as partners against violent conflict and extremism².

3. Media professionals. Since journalists and other media professionals have a huge impact on society, especially in a conflict-stricken country, when reporting on confrontations and violent incidents, it can be quite easy to complicate the situation through rumors and prejudices. In this regard, the NGO conducts training for journalists in order to achieve and strengthen peace by providing objective reporting that provides prospects for resolving the conflict with the efforts of all parties.

4. Military police. Increasing confidence in the local police. For example, about 67% of Nepalese citizens do not trust the police, 78% believe that the police do not understand their problems.

5. Political leaders. The cooperation of NGOs with political leaders helps to inform them about the real situation in the conflict zone and influence their decisions on a particular issue.

6. Prisoners. The researches show that prisons are often the ideal environment for recruiting into violent and extremist groups. The SFCG is constantly fighting against radicalization in prisons via the continuous training of prison staff.

7. Religious leaders. For example, the implementation of the Project «Building a consensus on the protection of holy places in Northern Nigeria». The project is a response to the violent actions against holy sites in Northern Nigeria. On June 12-13, 2019, about 50 religious leaders from Nigerian, Christian and Muslim communities gathered in Abuja to participate in the National Conference on the Protection of Holy Places.

8. Women. Since its independence, Sudan has been experiencing protracted internal conflicts that led to the separation of South Sudan in 2011. SFCG brings together women for joint learning and sharing of key skills to eliminate obstacles to the development and supporting security and stability. Today the NGO has conducted training for more than 500 women in South Kordofan. According to the final evaluation of the project, women are now more influential and are involved in decision-making and peace processes, legitimizing their role in society as leaders³.

The preventive activity of another INGO Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS, Switzerland) is worth to be concerned. It is an independent non-governmental organization founded in 1996 by African women in Geneva. The purpose of the organization is to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa, and to empower women as leaders in peace-building. The FAS philosophy is based on the fact that every woman is a key agent of the civil society and can play an active role in the peacekeeping process. In particular, in 2013/2015, FAS has implemented a core program called «Women, Peace and Security», which aimed at mobilizing women's power to create peace and prosperity in Africa. It was based on two strategic principles: 1) empowering African women to be able to take the leadership in peace-building processes; 2) promoting of gender parity and integration of African peoples⁴. Thus, the program focused on developing the capacity of women to enhance their role in conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction.

¹ *Search for Common Ground*. <<https://www.sfcg.org/>> (2020, March, 17).

² Children and Youth. *Search for Common Ground*. <<https://www.sfcg.org/children-and-youth/>> (2020, March, 17).

³ Peacebuilding and economic resilience: empowering the women of South & West Kordofan. *Search for Common Ground*. <<https://www.sfcg.org/empowering-women-kordofan/>> (2020, March, 17).

⁴ *Femmes Africa Solidarite*. <<https://www.fasngo.org/>> (2020, March, 18).

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is also currently active in Africa. The organization is preparing the ground for civil society initiatives to prevent military conflict. Thus, WANEP is another INGO focusing on the developing of common approaches to the conflict prevention and peacebuilding. While working with various civil society actors: governments, IGOs, and intergovernmental organizations and groups it aims to create a platform for dialogue, exchange of experience and learning, which, in turn, complements efforts to ensure sustainable peace and development in West Africa and beyond. In 2002, WANEP entered into a historic partnership with the Early Warning and Response Network of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWARN), which is the monitoring and surveillance tool for future conflict prevention and decision-making¹.

WANEP is currently implementing several powerful conflict prevention programs in West Africa, such as:

1) The WARN Program (West Africa Early Warning and Early Response Network) is an integral part of the overall WANEP conflict prevention mechanism, as it works to strengthen human security in West Africa by monitoring and informing the world about socio-political situations that can turn into violent and destructive conflicts. At this point, WANEP is developing a National Early Warning System (NEWS) that establishes common conflict monitoring systems with local observers in order to prepare conflict assessment reports, early warning reports, and policy memos that are widely circulated among NGOs, governments, intergovernmental structures².

2) The WIPNET Program (Women in Peacebuilding) was established in November, 2001, to enhance the capacity of women to increase their role in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction in West Africa. WANEP through WIPNET seeks to increase the number of trained female practitioners in the field of peacekeeping as trainers, researchers, facilitators and advocates³.

3) The NAPE Program (Non-violence and Peace Education) promotes a culture of non-violence and peace in West African communities, with a particular focus on children and young people, both in schools and in the informal sector. The program promotes the creation of mutual mediation and peace clubs in schools, and implements peace programs at various levels: schools, colleges, universities, and at the political level⁴.

4) The Responding to Conflicts through Dialogue Program (Special Interventions) aims to promote WANEP's involvement in the early-stage peace settlement through the internal dialogue and peaceful co-existence between local communities and tribes, as well as through the expansion of the mediation capacity of communities and other relevant governmental and intergovernmental bodies⁵.

5) The West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) was created to provide specialized, intensive, national-specific training on conflict prevention and peace-building for individuals, civil society organizations, businesses, politicians, government agencies and other relevant actors from West Africa and around the world. Therefore, the main purpose of WAPI is to provide knowledge and experience in peacebuilding and conflict prevention to reduce and eliminate the frequency and severity of violent conflicts⁶.

As a result, in recent years, WAPI has provided a space and a stable platform for the implementation of the WANEP concept of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa. From 2002 to the present, WAPI has trained more than 450 practitioners in the following specialties: the paradigms of modern peace-building; natural resource management and conflict management; human security and development; dialogue and

¹ *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)*. <https://www.wanep.org/wanep/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=1&Itemid=4> (2020, March, 18).

² *West Africa Early Warning and Early Response Network (WARN)*. *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding*. <https://www.wanep.org/wanep/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=8&Itemid=18> (2020, March, 18).

³ *Women in Peacebuilding (WIPNET)*. *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding*. <https://www.wanep.org/wanep/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=10&Itemid=20> (2020, March, 18).

⁴ *Non-violence and Peace Education (NAPE)*. *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding*. <https://www.wanep.org/wanep/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=11&Itemid=21> (2020, March, 18).

⁵ *Responding to Conflicts through Dialogue (Special Interventions)*. *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding*. <https://www.wanep.org/wanep/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=12&Itemid=22> (2020, March, 19).

⁶ *West Africa Peacebuilding Institute*. <<https://www.kaiptc.org/the-west-africa-peacebuilding-institute-wapi-2018-2-2/>> (2020, March, 17).

mediation; youth and world education; gender equality and peace building; early warning and response to conflicts around the world¹.

Analyzing the preventive activities of INGOs, it is worth noting that International Alert, working on the prevention of military conflicts around the world, periodically organizes a panel discussion of Peace Talks, which reviews current events in the world. Through this interactive platform, policy makers, scientists, journalists and other researchers in the field of peacebuilding have the opportunity to discuss and analyze the experience of past conflicts, and how to prevent future potential confrontations, as well as how to manage natural resources to avoid conflicts and wars for influence over limited resources².

Considering the role of INGOs as a mediator in resolving both international and domestic conflicts, the Carter Center, founded in 1982 by former US President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, in partnership with Emory University should be mentioned. The aim of this one of the most influential NGOs is to promote peace and health around the world. The Center is currently working hard to resolve conflicts in regions such as:

- Israel-Palestine, where it encourages reconciliation between Palestinian communities and promotes inclusive peace in the region;
- Mali, where it acts as an independent observer of the Peace Agreement (2015), reporting the progress of the agreement;
- Sudan, where it supports the actual ceasefire and the current phase of the peace process;
- Syria, where it analyzes the political decisions of this catastrophic war, exploring options for governance and constitutional reform, initiates a conflict mapping project to better inform everyone about possible peace efforts;
- Preventing violent extremism and Islamophobia, working with religious and community leaders in Europe, the Middle East, the North Africa and the United States³.

It is worth to mention the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), which is an independent Finnish organization working to prevent and resolve violent conflicts through informal dialogue and mediation. CMI was formed by the former Finnish President, 2000 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Martti Ahtisaari. Since then, the organization has become one of the leaders in peace and security sphere in the most complex regions of the world, namely: the Middle East, the Sub-Saharan Africa, the North Africa, Eurasia, and Asia⁴.

The Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD, Geneva) is private diplomacy organization that mediates conflict resolution. In particular, thanks to HD, more than 40 agreements have been concluded worldwide, including peace and conflict management agreements, reduction of violence or local settlements, as well as humanitarian access agreements. The organization also assists conflicting parties in reaching interim declarations and joint commitments. Currently, the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue is involved in more than 40 dialogue and mediation initiatives in more than 25 countries⁵.

Conclusions. Thus, having done the analysis of the intermediary and preventive functions of INGOs, the role of the world's influential non-governmental organizations in preventing and resolving conflicts, both at the interstate and at the national level, can be argued as extremely important. NGOs are those independent mediators who can, as a rule, always be engaged in dialogue with different parties to the conflict and help them to find optimal solutions. In this context, we can conclude that the involvement of NGOs in the resolution of international conflicts is currently an auxiliary and sufficiently effective tool in solving problems in the area of peace and security.

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⁵ Mediation and dialogue. *Center for Humanitarian Dialogue*. <<https://www.hdcentre.org/what-we-do/mediation-and-dialogue/>> (2020, March, 19).

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