



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Dr. Dragan Golubovic
ECNL, Budapest

WHAT IS PUBLIC ADVOCACY?

- MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD IN PUBLIC.
- PUBLIC ADVOCACY AS A NORM REQUIRES SOME KIND OF ORGANIZED ACTION.
- IT IS NOT A DISTINCT HUMAN RIGHT, RATHER IS DERIVED FROM SOME OTHER HR (freedom of speech, freedom of public assembly, freedom of association, right to petition public authority, etc.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY AND CSOs

- ☛ THE ULTIMATE BENEFICIARIES OF PUBLIC ADVOCACY ARE CITIZENS.
- ☛ CSOs OFTEN TIMES MOST EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR PUBLIC ADVOCACY – BUT NOT NECESSARILY THE END USERS.
- ☛ CITIZEN VERSUS CIVIL PARTICIPATION.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY: THE ROLE

- AN INTEGRAL PART OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY.
- PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL DEMOCRACY (separation of power, multiparty system, free elections) – IT MAKES IT MORE EFFECTIVE.
- IT ALLOWS AN ONGOING ENGAGEMENT OF CITIZENS IN PUBLIC LIFE - AND NOT ONLY DURING ELECTIONS.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY: THE ROLE

- PUBLIC ADVOCACY/CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CRITICAL FOR PUBLIC POLICY PROCESSES:
- IT ENABLES ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO PARTICIPATE IN FORMULATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES AND THUS CONTRIBUTES TO THE QUALITY AND SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY: INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

☛ **THE EU LISBON TREATY:**

☛ Article 8 B:

- ☛ 1. The institutions shall, by appropriate means, give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action.
- ☛ 2. The institutions shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY: INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

- ☛ **COE RECOMMENDATIONS (2007) 14:**
- ☛ 76. Governmental and quasi-governmental mechanisms at all levels should ensure the effective participation of NGOs (CSOs) without discrimination in dialogue and consultation on public policy objectives and decisions. Such participation should ensure the free expression of the diversity of people's opinions as to the functioning of society. This participation and co-operation should be facilitated by ensuring appropriate disclosure or access to official information.
- ☛ 77. NGOs should be consulted during the drafting of primary and secondary legislation which affects their status, financing or spheres of operation.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY: INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

- ☛ CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL NGOs:**
- ☛ WORK ON DRAFTING A CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE IN CIVIL PARTICIPATION IN PROGRESS.**
- ☛ THE CODE SEEKS TO OUTLINES BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A SOUND FRAMEWORK FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.**
- ☛ THE CODE TO BE ADOPTED BY THE Council of Europe COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.**

PUBLIC ADVOCACY: TRENDS

- **INCREASING ROLE OF INTERNET AND INTERNET CREATED PLATFORMS:**
- **E-GOVERNMENT: EASIER ACCESS TO PUBLIC AUTHORITIES, MAKES THEIR WORK MORE TRANSPARENT.**
- **INTERNET CREATED PLATFORMS AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TOOL FOR CITIZEN MOBILIZATION (THE OBAMA CAMPAIGN).**



THANK YOU!

CONTACT INFORMATION:

✎ dragan@ecnl.org.hu

✎ www.ecnl.org.hu

✎ www.icnl.org

