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Press Release

Democratizing Global Governance
Ten Years of Case Studies and Reflections by Civil Society Activists

Civil society is about “we the people”, what people do and how they contribute to humanity’s common good. In order to function as a “civil” society, ensuring good governance and developing democracies from the local to the global, the people must be fully engaged in democratic overseeing, influencing and tempering those who make decisions that affect the common good. The ongoing global financial meltdown is a reflection of the failure of democratic overseeing of powerful, private global financial institutions and systems. The consequent impacts on human well being including public finances, social and economic well-being, and individual comfort and security continue and are proving to be long reaching and devastating. The democratic deficits inherent in financial globalization, its institutions and leadership have affected billions of citizens in hundreds of countries. Only the people can fill this democratic deficit. The world needs to hear the voices of the people and civil society and its organizations are the mechanisms through which these voices can, indeed must, be heard. Civil society has learned a great deal from its individual and collective actions over the past decade. It is now a global power – an informed force. Civil society has learned to strategize, to organize, and to articulate and communicate its messages. Civil society activists are becoming learned ‘practical scholars’ of civil society building and of governance, capable of both remaining grounded in the every day realities of the people and of offering genuinely global solutions. *Democratizing Global Governance: Ten Years of Case Studies and Reflections by Civil Society Activists* illustrates the growing capacity of, mostly Southern-based, civil society to begin to fill a global practice-based knowledge deficit. It documents the activities, experiences, reflections, and lessons learned by civil society leaders involved in networks, committees, coalitions, alliances, conferences, and fora. In all cases, activists were working to understand and influence the processes, policies, and practices of the powerful bodies that affect the security and well being of humanity. Learning from, and building upon, these strategies and lessons are keys to tempering the forces that have brought us to this unprecedented collective experience of the consequences of profound governance deficits.

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