

*[talking points]*

Limited participation in elections, general discontent with party politics and, lack of trust towards politicians are common characteristics of modern societies. We note that recourse to conventional remedies such as political and administrative decentralization or democratization of internal party organization are not enough. Furthermore important is *the strengthening of ties between the political and the civil society, the modification of the relation between economic power and political decision-making and the adjustment of the relation between the sources of mass information and politics.*

What is inevitably needed in this case is *social pluralism and social participation*. It is necessary to establish a strong third arena between the state and the market. An arena where citizens participate actively in organizations that operate on the basis of neither political party nor economic market logic. In other words, the passage *from democratic government to democratic governance* entails the development of a third sector, which can operate as a counterweight to the “colonizing” tendencies of both the state and the market. The balance between the three sectors -state, civil society and market-, their collaboration, the guarantee of their autonomy and the parallel promotion of their central claims for democracy, solidarity and development is the progressive answer for the realization of freedom and equality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.