

## Introduction

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Close to 400 participants from 45 countries gathered in Montréal, Québec, Canada from May 29 to June 1, 2005 for the *Global Democracy: Civil Society Visions and Strategies (G05) Conference*. Participants from civil society organizations—together with representatives of governments, private entities, and intergovernmental organizations—shared civil society perspectives on the key issues that determine the state of global democracy. They discussed how to democratize the international system of governance and developed proposals to tackle the democratic deficit plaguing global governance. They also devised visions and strategies to guide discussions and action leading up to the Millennium +5 Summit hosted by the United Nations in September and other relevant events.

Two background papers provided gist for the discussions. Dr. Rajesh Tandon, President of the FIM (Forum International de Montréal) Board and President of PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) prepared a framing document entitled “Democratization of Global Governance,” in which he provided five principles on which civil society actions ought to be based:

- Global institutions and agenda should be subjected to democratic political accountability.
- Democratic policy at the global level requires legitimacy of popular control through representative and direct mechanisms.
- Citizen participation in decision making at global levels requires equality of opportunity to all citizens of the world.
- Multiple spheres of governance, from local to provincial to national to regional and global, should mutually support democratization of decision making at all levels.
- Global democracy must guarantee that global public goods are equitably accessible to all citizens of the world.

In the other background paper, “Promising Visions and Strategies to Advancing Global Democracy: Policy Brief,” James V. Riker addressed emerging trends in global democratic governance. He proposed questions through which to assess the main possibilities for enhancing democratic participation, empowerment, and governance during the opening-day discussion panel.

Participants considered the viability of these and other possibilities throughout the conference in plenaries and breakout sessions that touched on the major crosscutting themes for advancing global democracy in G05’s following six tracks:

- Track 1: Civil society engagement: Changing territorial priorities?
- Track 2: International treaties/International law: A hierarchy of values?
- Track 3: Global security: Undermining democracy?
- Track 4: Civil society participation; Opportunities and responsibilities
- Track 5: How to democratically regulate the global economy?
- Track 6: Maintaining cultural diversity in global solidarity?

In addition, papers were presented within the self-organized workshops.

This report is the result of a collective effort by conference reporters and volunteers. Their work has been combined to produce a report that highlights the varied discussions and themes of the conference, and reflects its participatory nature.