

http://www.ong-ngo.org/en/president-obama-announces-new-civil-society-initiative/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+OngNgo-EN+%28Ong+Ngo+%28IFP%29+-+EN%29

International Forum of National NGO Platforms IFP

- [About Us](#)
- [What we do](#)
- [Partnership](#)
- [Contact](#)

NEWS | 10/07/2014

President Obama announces new civil society initiative



President Barack Obama announced a new presidential initiative today to promote the growth of civil society around the world at the Clinton Global Initiative's annual gathering in New York.

Stressing the importance of civil society in healthy nations, Obama noted that:

When communities, including minorities, are free to live and pray and love as they choose; when nations uphold the rights of all their people — including, perhaps especially, women and girls — then those countries are more likely to thrive. If you want strong, successful countries, you need strong, vibrant civil societies.

Obama continued to describe a series of steps his administration was taking to bolster the effort of civil society groups working at home and abroad.

First, partnering and protecting civil society groups around the world is now a mission across the U.S. government. So under a new presidential memorandum that I'm issuing today, federal departments and agencies will consult and partner more regularly with civil society groups. They will oppose attempts by foreign governments to dictate the nature of our assistance to civil society. (Applause) And they will oppose efforts by foreign governments to restrict freedoms of peaceful assembly and association and expression. So this is not just a matter of the State Department, or USAID. It's across the government — this is part of American leadership.

Second, we're creating new innovation centers to empower civil society groups around the world. And I want to thank our partners in this effort, including the government of Sweden and the Aga Khan Development Network. Starting next year, civil society groups will be able to use these centers to network and access knowledge and technology and funding that they need to put their ideas into action. And we'll start with six centers in Latin America, in Sub-Saharan Africa, in the Middle East and in Asia. Oppressive governments are sharing "worst practices" to weaken civil society. We're going to help you share the "best practices" to stay strong and vibrant.

Number three, we're expanding our support and funding for the Community of Democracies to better coordinate the diplomacy and pressure that we bring to bear. And this means more support for those who are fighting against the laws that restrict civil society. In recent years, we've worked together to prevent new limits on civil society from Kenya to Cambodia. And we've helped expand the space for civil society in countries from Honduras to Tunisia to Burma. And standing together, we can do even more.

And finally, we're increasing our support to society groups across the board. We're going to increase our emergency assistance to embattled NGOs. We'll do more to

match groups with the donors and funding that they need. And in the coming months, our Treasury Department will finalize regulations so it's even easier and less costly for your foundations to make grants overseas. (Applause)

We'll increase our legal assistance and technical support to those pushing back against onerous laws and regulations. And through our Open Government Partnership, we'll help more governments truly partner with civil society. We'll continue to stand up for a free and open Internet, so individuals can access information and make up their own minds about the issues that their countries confront.

And through our programs to engage young leaders around the world, we're helping to build the next generation of civil society leaders. And our message to those young people is simple: America stands with you.

Source: [Interaction](#)