

The Potential of Trans-border Networking in 2030

Concept Paper for the Sylff Leaders Workshop, 2018–19

Previously, governance was the responsibility of sovereign states, which exerted political control over their own territory. Many political, economic, and social issues today, though, have become global in nature, and single states cannot effectively deal with them alone. An increasingly large role is being played by nonstate actors—both in causing and managing these problems. Many trans-border issues, such as human rights, environmental preservation, basic labor rights, and trade and investment, are now addressed by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international governmental organizations (IGOs), international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and transnational corporations (TNCs), which are displacing sovereign states as the principal agents of political governance.

Networking across national boundaries and with both local and global partners is thus expected to become even more relevant in the coming years in tackling problems that affect many, if not all, societies around the globe.

At the **Sylff Leaders Workshop**, fellows from diverse backgrounds will discuss how networking might be more effectively utilized in bridging differences and tackling global problems. By systematically exploring best- and worst-case scenarios, fellows will identify not only the positive and negative consequences of networking but also what aspects of networking should be promoted and what needs to be restrained. Fellows will examine factors that constitute or influence the power of networking, identify the most relevant ones, and construct scenarios that illustrate networking's full potential.¹

Participating fellows will first gain familiarity with the conceptual frameworks of networking so they may systematically create different hypotheses about its development. They will then formulate scenarios for 2030 using concrete examples. References will also be made to the relevant activities of non-state organizations, such as the International Criminal Court, the World Health Organizations, Oxfam, Doctors without Borders, and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

¹ The topic and content of the workshop take into account the aims of the Sylff program, which are to identify and nurture leaders who will overcome differences in nationality, language, ethnicity, religion, and political systems to tackle global issues and whose integrity and enable them to make a real difference in their respective countries.