



CIVICUS WORLD ASSEMBLY

The CIVICUS World Assembly is the premier global gathering of inspired thinkers, innovation leaders and influential organisations.

It connects concerned citizens across sectors, themes, regions and backgrounds to tackle the world's most pressing challenges.

The first CIVICUS World Assembly took place in **1995** in **Mexico City, Mexico**. Throughout the event, delegates worked to create the five goals that would guide CIVICUS through its initial years. Although now consolidated, the same goals remain at the core of CIVICUS' work – to defend civic freedoms and democratic values, to strengthen the power of people to organize, mobilise and take action, and to empower a more accountable, effective and innovative civil society.

In **1997**, the World Assembly moved to **Budapest, Hungary**, attracting more than 500 people from 76 countries and six continents. Participants reviewed CIVICUS' activities and immersed themselves in issues around visibility, resource mobilisation and creating an enabling legal environment for civil society.

In **2001**, shortly after "anti-globalisation" protests spread throughout the world, the CIVICUS World Assembly was held in **Vancouver, Canada**. 730 people from 87 countries came together to reflect on the role of voluntary action in shaping social and economic change. Youth played their most prominent role yet, voicing their perspectives through the Youth Engagement Project.

In **2004** the CIVICUS World Assembly took place in **Gaborone, Botswana**, under the theme "Acting Together for a Just World." This was also the launch of the CIVICUS Nelson Mandela Graça Machel Innovation Awards, which have since become a central feature of the CIVICUS World Assembly. The CIVICUS Board made the decision to annualise the event in 2006, privileging a three-year cycle in one venue.

Accordingly, the **2006, 2007 and 2008** World Assemblies were held in **Glasgow, Scotland**. It was during this series that the Youth Assembly was introduced. The Youth Assembly aims to bring together the world's most dynamic young activists and enable them to engage effectively with other delegates.

The proceeding CIVICUS World Assembly series took place in **2010, 2011 and 2012** in **Montreal, Canada**. The series culminated in the Montreal Declaration – 15 civil society commitments for civil society personnel to implement as they seek to work more effectively to challenge and change the rules of engagement between citizens, the state and other holders of power.

Subsequently, CIVICUS undertook an evaluation and redesign of the CIVICUS World Assembly with the aim of creating a more inclusive and sustainable event. As a result, in **2014**, the CIVICUS World Assembly took place in **Johannesburg, South Africa**. The World Assembly served as the flagship event of the inaugural International Civil Society Week, which brought together more than 50 local and global partners to reflect on citizen action and people power, as South Africa celebrated 20-years of freedom and democracy.

The **2016** International Civil Society Week in **Bogotá, Colombia** was CIVICUS' largest global convening to-date, bringing together 818 participants from 102 countries. As the Colombian government worked towards a historic peace deal, civil society gathered to discuss how to create positive pathways to affect durable and non-violent social change. The CIVICUS World Assembly featured representation from Tunisia's National Dialogue Quartet, a 2015 Nobel Peace Prize.

In the spirit of inclusion, the CIVICUS Board of Directors decided to take International Civil Society Week to the Pacific in **2017**. The CIVICUS World Assembly took place in **Suva, Fiji**, and focused largely on environmental justice within the overarching theme "Our Planet. Our Struggles. Our Future." During the CIVICUS World Assembly a global partnership launched the Declaration on Climate-Induced Displacement.

The next CIVICUS World Assembly will take place in the Balkans and Black Sea region in April/May 2019.

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