

REGIONAL STUDIES

**POST-SOVIET SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP:  
THE POLITICAL AND  
CIVILIARCHIC DIMENSIONS OF  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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*Corporatism is not a categorical imperative since the modern democracies have many other methods of settling the conflicts of interests and reaching political compromises. None of them, however, is a priori more efficient than the others.*

*Philippe C. Schmitter*

***Introduction***

**T**he emergence and functioning of social partnership and a comparative analysis of the political and civiliarchic mechanisms of a constructive dialog can be described as indispensable for post-Soviet social life.

In the *sociocratic* context, the post-Soviet communities have reached the stage of internal and external systemic differentiation, which adds particular value to the democratization processes, the state's wider social functions, the devel-

opment of corresponding institutions, and the protection of civil rights and freedoms.

Having passed the first democratization stage, post-Soviet *sociocracy* and the system of social relations are doing practically nothing to resolve the problems at hand: they are not motivated enough to take the interests of social groups into account; social identities are vague, while value criteria are undeveloped.

The civiliarchic dimension of social partnership in contemporary social sciences calls for a comparative analysis of the sociocultural, economic, political, legal, and other aspects.

The following factors largely affect internal and external integration across the post-Soviet expanse:

- (1) social instability;
- (2) development of the “*middle class*”;
- (3) “formal” trade unions;
- (4) the political parties’ weak social basis;
- (5) low level of social partnership and social responsibility.

The downfall of the Soviet totalitarian system produced new traits in the civil institutions’ social responsibility. The *functional complexity* of the mechanisms of the contemporary political processes has pushed social partnership problems to the fore, as well as a constructive dialog and civiliarchic responsibility as forms of cooperation among the political, economic, and social institutions. The need for new principles and methods of social partnership became obvious since the “lowest level” of the multistage institutionalization of its entities in the context of the corresponding policy increasingly affects management efficiency, human security, and the quality of life, as well as relations between employers and employees, and associations of businessmen and trade unions.

This gives rise to elements of a new *civiliarchic culture* of cooperation among the civil society institutions, entities of social partnership, and bodies of state governance and local self-administration. It means that studying the mechanisms of social partnership is an important theoretical and practical task.

## The Social Imperative Policy

The steadily rising level of social disintegration and conflictogenity confirms that “it has become absolutely necessary for the business community to rely on the common principles of its social responsibility to the whole of society and that the social policy of any enterprise should be recognized a *sine qua non* of its ‘acceptance’ by all population groups.”<sup>1</sup> No social partnership is possible if political entities ignore the institutional rules of social responsibility and control and if there is no sustainable market economy and socially determined markets of knowledge and labor.

The novel features of the entities of social policy and adequate principles for protecting social rights and freedoms are coming to the fore, while post-Soviet social partnership is taking shape. The same is true of the mechanisms of personnel management and the mechanisms of settling labor contradictions and conflicts at the macro-, micro-, and meso-levels.

Efficient labor partnership is an inalienable element of the labor market and social policy; it is developing along with the social and economic situation, higher wages and higher employment (and, correspondingly, drop in the number of unemployed and poverty level), and improvement of the social laws.

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<sup>1</sup> N.N. Fedorova, *Politicheskie aspekty formirovaniia i realizatsii otvetstvennosti sovremennogo rossiiskogo biznesa*, Abstract of a Candidate Thesis, Moscow, 2010, p. 3.

Table 1

Some of the Economic Indices of  
the CIS Countries<sup>2</sup>

Countries	GNI per capita, 2005 (US\$)		Share of the macrosectors in GDP, %, 2005			Share of products of the manufacturing industry in the export, %, 2004	Share of high-tech products in the export of the manufacturing industry, %, 2004	External debt-GDP ratio, %, 2004	Internal credits of the banking sector-GDP ratio, %, 2005
	In terms of foreign exchange	In terms of purchasing power parity (PPP)	I	II	III				
<b>EurAsEC Countries</b>									
Russia	4,460	10,640	6	38	56	21	9	46	24,2
Belarus	2,760	7,890	10	41	49	60	3	20	13,9
Kazakhstan	2,930	7,730	7	40	54	16	2	101	26.7
Kyrgyzstan	440	1,870	34	21	45	43	2	82	7,1
Tajikistan	330	1,260	22	36	42	—	—	77	16.5
Uzbekistan	510	2,020	28	29	43	—	—	46	—
<b>Other CIS Countries</b>									
Ukraine	1,520	6,720	11	34	55	67	5	42	25.0
Azerbaijan	1,240	4,890	12	55	32	11	2	23	9.7
Armenia	1,470	5,060	21	44	35	62	1	50	7.2
Georgia	1,350	3,270	17	27	56	37	38	37	9.8
Moldova	880	2,150	21	24	55	36	4	75	21.3
Turkmenistan	1,340 (2004)	6,910 (2004)	21	45	34	—	—	0	—

Social partnership mechanisms serve as the prism through which the increase in social capital, the degree of social integration, and the development of civil institutions and corporatism can be viewed.

<sup>2</sup> See: V. Pankov, "Integratsia i disintegratsia na postsovetском prostranstve," *Mir peremen, Mezhdunarodny nauchno-obshchestvenny zhurnal*, No. 3, 2007, p. 135.

The recent studies of social partnership have revealed that it can take different forms and be realized as:

- (1) a process;
- (2) an institution;
- (3) a system;
- (4) a level and form of communication;
- (5) a task aimed at identifying the entities' responsibility and power;
- (6) a means and method of realization;
- (7) a result and prospect of sustainable development.

An analysis of relations in the management sphere reveals that cooperation among the entities of social policy, elaboration and planning of mutually acceptable decisions, the independent and joint activities of entities which belong to different levels and branches, as well as efficient (guaranteed) execution of decisions (agreements) are the central problems of social partnership. In this context, social partnership is seen as a method of administration and an effective mechanism of civil social involvement "as a special method of administrative decision-making."<sup>3</sup>

It should be said that even contradictory systems of social partnership increase the efficiency of the mechanism of civilizational cooperation by bringing to light the structural-functional faults in the elaboration of certain problems. Methodologically, the theoretical provisions of various trends of social partnership make it possible to elaborate new analytical approaches to possible interactions.

Through social partnership, political entities are actively involved in the civilizational management of socioeconomic development of society and capital and in the processes of decision-making and control. Here we are dealing with economic, political, and social civil involvement.<sup>4</sup>

When looking at the mechanism which regulates the interaction between society and the government, Andrey Merzlyakov points out: "Civil social involvement can be described as a mechanism of multi-entity interaction in the course of elaboration and realization of socially important managerial decisions."<sup>5</sup>

Ensuring an adequate standard of living and social wellbeing in the post-Soviet communities largely depends on efficient mechanisms and active entities of social partnership as a special type of social-labor relations with a correspondingly special structure of regulation. It is the most important element of a social state, civil society, and corporatism. Social partnership is also responsible for society's social, economic, and political stability and the development of civilizational institutions.

Improved social partnership presupposes more developed institutions of social dialog and mechanisms, norms, and procedures of their interaction. This will decrease social risks and take the edge off social contradictions; and also balance out the interests of various social groups. Business becomes more responsible and politics more efficient, which will balance out the application of sociocultural and legal norms.

M. Chernysh has the following to say about social partnership in the economic context of Russia: "While entrepreneurs point to improved relations with their employees and to what is being done to offer them better living standards, the trade unions insist that there are no tangible improvements

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<sup>3</sup> A.A. Merzlyakov, *Grazhdanskoe sotsial'noe uchastie kak universalnaia tekhnologia sotsial'nogo upravleniia*, Abstract of a Candidate Thesis, Moscow, 2007, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> See: *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Table 2

**Typology of the Technologies of  
Civil Social Involvement<sup>6</sup>**

Typological Bases	Types of Technology
The degree of involvement at various managerial stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—at the stage of project endorsement;</li> <li>—at the stage of project development and endorsement;</li> <li>—at the stage of formulating social policy and the project's main aims</li> </ul>
The dominating entity (the role of the public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—informative;</li> <li>—consultative;</li> <li>—deliberative;</li> <li>—determinative</li> </ul>
Specifics of social policy and activities of the government bodies	<p><b>Social policy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—traditional;</li> <li>—pragmatic;</li> <li>—emancipated.</li> </ul> <p><b>The way the government bodies act:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—limited;</li> <li>—cautious;</li> <li>—enthusiastic;</li> <li>—structured</li> </ul>
Type of technological strategy (model)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—protest (conflict);</li> <li>—coalition;</li> <li>—cooperation</li> </ul>
Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—diagnostic technologies;</li> <li>—information technologies;</li> <li>—consultative technologies;</li> <li>—decision-making technologies;</li> <li>—combined, multi-procedural technologies</li> </ul>
Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—number of potentially involved people;</li> <li>—the method's diagnostic, identifying, and coordinating potential related to the contribution of all participants;</li> <li>—the ability to create cooperation norms</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> A.A. Merzlyakov, op. cit., p. 17.

and that the contradictions which speak not so much of partnership as of the obviously divergent interests among economic entities are steadily mounting.”<sup>7</sup>

The changing post-Soviet social and economic sphere has imparted new meaning to trade unions, the mechanisms of social partnership, and collective agreements. The present state of labor relations and the labor market has changed the mechanisms, levels, forms, and content of social partnership. The mechanisms of social partnership in the sphere of labor relations bring to light numerous shortcomings and contradictions calling for corresponding economic and political decisions.

In the post-Soviet states, the model of civiliarchic involvement is politically rather than socially biased in the changed living conditions; “the fact that citizens are open about their new needs and interests related to the radically changed living conditions (environmental protection, the quality of life, etc.) and their desire to have a say in decision-making has been conducive to the emergence of new forms of participation, new collective actors, and new spheres in which civil initiatives are realized.”<sup>8</sup>

The socioeconomic, political, spiritual, and cultural changes are individualized, which leads to individual-collective actions through *civil socialization*. It is believed that this is caused by the “individualized” forms of civil-political involvement and collective action, as well as the general process of social individualization<sup>9</sup> and the balanced application of the sociocultural and legal norms.

The changes taking place in society are transforming the means and forms of civil involvement, collective action, legitimization and motivation of public actions, civil and national-cultural identity, political opportunities, and the mechanisms used to harmonize interests, axiological norms, and mobilization structures.

This context imparts special importance to the social movements as a non-institutionalized type of collective action: “(1) informal networks based on (2) values shared by everyone and solidarity, which mobilize its members to deal with (3) conflicts through (4) regular involvement in various protest forms.”<sup>10</sup>

## Measuring Interest Intermediation Systems

Philippe C. Schmitter refers to the following basic parameters of the systems of interest intermediation (taking due account of the spread of neo-corporatism in the neo-democratic context): the degree of involvement of all sorts of interest associations and groups; the extent of associational monopoly; and the pressure of higher-order coordination mechanisms.<sup>11</sup>

When analyzed and compared, the corporatist trends and vital capacity of the corporate structures demonstrate that countries where corporatism is highly developed are more governable, more balanced, and more efficient and stable, but not necessarily more democratic.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> M.F. Chernysh, “Protivorechia stanovlenia sotsial’nogo partnerstva,” *Sotsiologicheskie issledovania*, No. 6, 2004, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> S.V. Patrushev, S.G. Ayvazova, G.L. Kertman, *et al.*, “Doverie, grazhdanskoe deystvie, politika: opyt ‘starykh’ i ‘novykh’ demokratii,” in: *Rossia reformiruiushchaisia. Ezhegodnik*, ed. by M.K. Gorshkov, Moscow, 2008, Issue 7, p. 521.

<sup>9</sup> See: *Ibidem*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 522-523.

<sup>11</sup> See: Ph.C. Schmitter, “Neo-corporatism and the Consolidation of Neo-democracy,” Paper presented at the 8th International Conference on Socio-Economics, Geneva, 12-14 July, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> See: *Ibidem*.

In the post-Soviet political system, institutionalization of the harmonization and shaping of corporate civil culture can be described as a civiliarchic indicator of democratization.

Shota Kakabadze, for example, writes: "A democratic political order relies on representation of the interests of various groups which are aggregated and articulated for the sake of balancing forces. Harmonization of conflicting (or potentially conflicting) interests through talks and agreements speaks of the high development level of the democratic political system."<sup>13</sup>

This means that today "consolidation of democracy can be described as a process of transformation of random agreements; the norms suggested by common sense and ad hoc rivalry/cooperation decisions of a regular nature implemented according to well-established and well-known rules which are voluntarily accepted by all kinds of organizations and individuals (that is, politicians and the ordinary people) involved in democratic governance."<sup>14</sup>

The institutions, mechanisms, and procedures needed to harmonize interests are coming to the fore at the current stage of socioeconomic, political, spiritual, and cultural transformations (changes, reforms): they are expected to guarantee public stability (social, economic, political, spiritual, and cultural) and development.

Some believe that the institutions of interest intermediation should help maintain political stability, balance out the aspirations of the main social groups, and promote reforms, that is, promote consistent changes in the current social system.<sup>15</sup>

Table 3

Structure of Social Partnership as Social Action<sup>16</sup>

Direction of Social Action	Structural Elements of Social Partnership as Social Action			
	Subject	Object	Process	Context
Externally-oriented action	Selection of social partners	Identification of social partners	Representation	Systemic integration
Internally-oriented action	Self-organization	Self-reference	Self-identification	Adaptation

## Legal Dimensions of Social Partnership

Despite the new codes and regulatory acts (many of them purely formal) adopted in the post-Soviet states and the ongoing specification of the legal status of social partnership, labor legislation and its improvement are still on the agenda.

<sup>13</sup> Sh.Sh. Kakabadze, *Istitutsionalizatsia soglasovaniia interesov v sovremennoy Rossii*, Abstract of a Candidate Thesis, Moscow, 2009, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Ph. Schmitter, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> See: Sh.Sh. Kakabadze, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> See: S.A. Ivanov, "Sotsialnoe partnerstvo kak fenomen tsivilizatsii," *Zhurnal sotsiologii i sotsial'noy antropologii*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, 2005, p. 90.

In Western Europe, the practice of legal and institutional regulation of social partnership goes back into the past.

According to the international criteria, social partnership should take into account the interests of both sides (employees and employers) and the needs of economic development. The *social partnership regime* has demonstrated that “the criteria at the minimum level of working people’s basic requirements depend on the country’s social and economic situation.”<sup>17</sup>

Social partnership needs legal acts and a clear definition of the statuses and powers of the entities of collective labor relations.

European experience and the corresponding legal basis, as well as strict adherence to the legal norms found in documents of all sorts of international organizations seem to be best suited to the post-Soviet reality. Here I have in mind the ILO Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention (1962); the ILO Minimum Wage Fixing Convention (with special reference to the developing countries) (1970); the ILO Protection of Workers’ Claims (Employer’s Insolvency) Convention (1992); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers (1989), Council of Europe—European Social Charter (1996), etc.

When and if observed, the norms and principles registered in these documents will ensure adequate living standards, help improve the mechanisms of collective treaties and labor relations, and make the state, business, and trade unions more aware of their social responsibilities.

The Constitutions of all the CIS countries (Turkmenistan being the only exception until 2008) guarantee the right to work, to create trade unions, and to take part in state governance.

In practice, however, no constitutional norms, laws, or regulatory acts can fully guarantee that social-labor relations become more human.

In Russia, for example, the Decree of the RF President on Social Partnership and Settling Labor Disputes (Conflicts) and the RF Law on Collective Bargaining, Contracts and Agreements have been in force since the early 1990s. The legal base of social partnership was further developed in the Federal Laws: On the Russian Tripartite Commission for Regulating Social-Labor Relations (1999), On the Procedure for Settling Collective Labor Disputes (1995), and On Trade Unions, Their Rights and Guarantees of Their Activity (1996), and also in the Labor Code (2001), and in the laws of the RF constituencies and other regulatory acts.

The same can be said about Belarus where social partnership is envisaged as a constitutional norm in Art 14 of the Constitution. Social partnership is also based on the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus on the Development of Social Partnership in the Republic of Belarus (1995), the Labor Code (1999), the Law on Trade Unions (1992), etc.

Kazakhstan, likewise, passed laws On Trade Unions (1993), On Social Partnership (2000), and On State Social Order (2005); there is also the Labor Code (2007) and other documents.

As distinct from Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, other countries (Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) have no decrees or laws dealing with social partnership. This subject is dealt with in their labor codes and legislation which contain articles on trade unions, collective agreements, and contracts, the way labor disputes should be settled, employment, minimum wages, labor remuneration, associations of employers, etc. related to the social partnership sphere.

In the developed countries, social partnership is a local legal mechanism and an “inner code of cooperation” which guides employees and their employers. In the post-Soviet states, it is still in the process of development.

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<sup>17</sup> M.V. Lushnikova, D.A. Smirnov, “Osnovnye poniatia instituta oplaty truda: minimalny razmer oplaty truda i stimuliuiushchie vyplaty,” *Vestnik YarGU im. P.G. Demidova*, Humanitarian Sciences Series, No. 1 (11), 2010, p. 32.



The European model of social partnership presupposes direct involvement of labor collectives in administration and legal settlement of labor relations and conflicts; the ongoing changes and convergence, however, “presuppose that the already existing systems will be adjusted to the new conditions.”<sup>18</sup>

As it develops, social partnership in the labor sphere changes the conditions of labor relations and methods of collective talks, as well as representation of the sides. Democratic regulation of trade and wages issues, as well as interest intermediation between employees (expansion of the sphere of protection of their social rights and freedoms) and employers exist where social-labor legal relations are highly developed.

Alexander Pogorelskiy, who studies the market transformations in Russian society, has analyzed two main socioeconomic models: the social market and post-totalitarian market.<sup>19</sup> Evgenia Nekhoda, in turn, has pointed out that “social partnership is the most important mechanism for developing a social state and social policy.”<sup>20</sup>

It should be said that in West European countries, trade unions achieved their aims by defending social rights and freedoms: for the first time, the collective agreements registered social guarantees and statuses which, later, were transferred to legislation. Later, these norms of social-labor relations became an inalienable part of not only domestic, but also international standards.

## Post-Soviet Trade Unions

After the Soviet Union’s disintegration, when the Soviet political system underwent transformations and liberal reforms began, social partnership mechanisms were gradually set up in the economy; the transfer from centralized to decentralized (market) regulation of social-labor relations encouraged the working people to organize and develop their representation.

The CIS countries were drawn into worldwide globalization, their labor markets (in which the state played a much smaller role than before) being challenged by legal and illegal labor migration. Most of their trade unions “failed to adequately adjust themselves to the new conditions of the transition economy and its key aspects—privatization of industrial enterprises, liberalization of prices, unemployment, and wage arrears.”<sup>21</sup>

An analysis of labor conflicts suggests that as a mechanism for settling labor disputes and disagreements post-Soviet trade unions have been unable to cope with their social functions. This is confirmed by “a poll conducted by the All-Russia Public Opinion Center in September 2008. Only 2 percent of the polled turned to trade unions when their labor rights were violated; 75 percent of the polled are convinced that Russian trade unions can do little to improve the situation at any given enterprise.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> R.S. Grinberg, T.V. Chubarova, *Sotsialnoe partnerstvo: Mirovoy opyt i rossiyskaia spetsifika*, Paper delivered at a round table of the Analytical Council of the Unity for Russia Foundation, 31 May, 2005, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> “With few exceptions, people in post-totalitarian societies receive small wages; they steal (and continue stealing even when they receive higher wages). These are societies in which people try, as best as they can, to avoid taxes; they do not trust their states; and they try to form friendly and corrupt ties with bureaucrats. In such systems, being close to power rather than a high level of business efficiency is the greatest competitive advantage” (A. Pogorelskiy, “Sotsialny liberalizm: perspektivy v Rossii,” *Logos*, No. 6 (45), 2004, p. 51).

<sup>20</sup> E.V. Nekhoda, “Gruppy interesov v sisteme sotsial’nogo partnerstva,” *Ekonomika*, No. 1 (2), 2008, p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> O. Pavlova, A. Rogozinskiy, “Rynki truda v stranakh SNG,” *EKOVEST*, Issue 5, No. 3, 2006, p. 518.

<sup>22</sup> I.M. Kozina, “Rabochee dvizhenie v Rossii: Anatomia zabastovki,” *Zhurnal issledovaniy sotsial’noy politiki*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 2009.

Trade unions should be actively involved in the process of shaping social partnership at all levels: the state (national); branch (interbranch); regional (administrative-territorial), and transnational (corporate). The adequate and efficient partnership, to say nothing of administration (self-administration) at all levels, which the state is expected to ensure, requires the concerted efforts of trade unions and associations of employers.

In the context of societal transformation and development, it is for corporate management to deal with these problems while taking into account the specifics of the models of equal subject-subject cooperation. In the system of social ties and cooperation, institutionalized corporate management adds to social stability and integration. The future of corporate culture, social solidarity, norms of social orientation, and corporate behavior rules depends on the management quality at the sociodynamic macro-, micro- and meso-levels.

Transformation of the trade unions was largely instrumental in the transfer from formal social partnership to the real regulatory mechanism of social-labor relations and a new level of culture in collective contracts very much in line with the reality of the market economy. This means that the continued efficiency of post-Soviet trade unions guarantees social development and the signing of collective contracts (agreements).

Table 4

**Harmonization of Socioeconomic Interests of the State,  
Business, and Hired Workers<sup>23</sup>**

<b>Entity of Social Partnership</b>	<b>Responsibility of the Entity of Social Partnership (natural)</b>	<b>Responsibility of the Interested Entity of Social Partnership Realized through Various Mechanisms (artificial)</b>	<b>The Result of Synthesis of Natural and Artificial Responsibility (incentive)</b>
<b>The state</b>	<b>Social and economic</b>	<b>Stronger social and economic responsibility and incentives (in higher wages for the workers and incomes of enterprises)</b>	<b>Higher wages, GDP, taxes and dues, budget replenishment, social stability</b>
<b>Hired workers</b>	<b>Social (higher wages and other social indices)</b>	<b>Economic responsibility (higher incomes of enterprises)</b>	<b>Social and economic responsibility and incentives</b>
<b>Employers</b>	<b>Economic (higher profits and incomes of enterprises)</b>	<b>Social responsibility (higher wages)</b>	<b>Economic and social responsibility and incentives</b>

<sup>23</sup> See: N. Volgin, A. Kobyanov, "Sotsial'nye factory ekonomicheskogo rosta: garmonizatsia interesov rebotnikov i rabotodateley dostizhima," *Chelovek i trud*, No. 2, 2005, p. 33.

Today, the post-Soviet trade unions are losing their grip because business and employer associations are growing stronger; in the European Union, on the other hand, they are growing weaker because of smaller membership. Some authors explain the decrease in membership by lower employment in well-organized industrial branches and higher employment in less organized branches, as well as an increase in non-traditional employment forms.<sup>24</sup>

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) plays an important role when it comes to integrating the trade unions into the European expanse, increasing their role, and allotting them much more space. It is very important to develop a trade union movement throughout the entire post-Soviet expanse, which means that the Soviet successor-states can learn a lot by cooperating with the ETUC.

Today, the civiliarchic states are tending toward the social partnership policy in an effort to set up sustainable mechanisms of mutual responsibility and social equilibrium. This means that state-civil society relations are determined by the institutionalized level of social partnership.

The worldwide experience of social policy development has demonstrated that civiliarchic prerequisites and conditions conducive to social partnership help to defuse social tension, reduce poverty, and bridle civil instability and political confrontation. In favorable conditions, social partnership might promote humanization of social and economic conditions.

Isaac and Bella Model have identified the following as conditions that are indispensable for successful social partnership: democracy and civil society; objectively needed social partnership; institutionalization of group interests; well-oiled mechanisms and procedures of a social dialog; and the state's organizational, legal, and political principles.<sup>25</sup>

So far, the social control exercised by trade unions (their involvement is limited to formal "representation") and civil institutions can be described as spontaneous; more likely than not it is state-initiated for the following reasons:

- (a) the "liberal" Law on Trade Unions;
- (b) the low level of social awareness and culture;
- (c) the lack of traditions in the trade union movement and mechanisms of partnership (or confrontation) inherited from the past.

In the post-Soviet countries, trade unions do their best to settle social-labor conflicts and neutralize their negative repercussions.

This means that social partnership is a system of functional integration and a very specific algorithm of cooperation and mutually beneficial interaction. Realized in the micro- and macro-context, it helps to construct social reality and promotes civiliarchic values and the legitimization of social and political transformations.

## *Conclusion*

The above suggests the following conclusions:

1. The state of social partnership in post-Soviet public life speaks of an ongoing systemic crisis and destruction of society, which calls for adequate social, political, economic, spiritual, and

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<sup>24</sup> See: R.S. Grinberg, T.V. Chubarova, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> See: I.M. Model, B.S. Model, "Sotsial'noe partnerstvo v Rossii," *Sotsis*, No. 9, 2000, pp. 43-45.

cultural measures. It should be said that despite the deep-cutting social crisis, some of the institutionalized (“situational”) transformations of social partnership encourage changes in the social, political, spiritual, cultural, and legal spheres.

2. The emergence, functioning, and development of the social partnership system in the post-Soviet states are directly connected with democratization. Social partnership is a multi-level and multivectoral civilizational phenomenon, the emergence and development of which depends on the general process of civil socialization. The world has learned from experience that “political democracy, a market economy, and social partnership are inseparable; it is impossible to establish one of them in full while ignoring the other two.”<sup>26</sup>
3. An effective impact of the social partnership entities presupposes planning, organization, motivation, and control with a cyclic administrative (self-administrative) process. Each cycle of social partnership can be described as an interaction stage; if realized (or not realized), it affects administrative (self-administrative) efficiency at various levels. It should be said that social partnership of the “first” level adds to the efficiency of the “second” level; if social partnership of the “second level” remains unrealized at the “first” level efficiency decreases.
4. Social, economic, spiritual, and cultural independence in citizens largely fortifies the social-civilizational status of the individual and is the main prerequisite of post-Soviet social partnership.
5. The post-Soviet trade unions are practically excluded from social-economic decision-making (elaboration, adoption, realization, and control). This prevents social interaction and a dialog and means that “the trade unions should become more involved in controlling how the social-labor laws are observed; they should insist that the minimum wage be raised to the subsistence level and that the calculation methods be revised; the single social tax should be abolished, while the system of insurance funds should be restored; a single base for collective agreements should be created.”<sup>27</sup>
6. So far, the social-labor problems and agreements between the sides are mostly situational which means that this is the initial stage of harmonization (clash) of their interests. Social partnership is a special method of decision-making (elaboration, decision-making, realization, and control).
7. The low level of social protection is explained by the fact that the basic norms and obligations registered in collective contracts and agreements are consistently ignored; this deprives the mechanisms aimed at protecting working people’s rights and freedoms of their efficiency, while businessmen and business structures remain indifferent to socially important initiatives.
8. Internal social and international integration of trade unions is going on; in the future they will be able to take an active part in the payment of labor and employment. A new regulatory mechanism for the labor market and a transnational economic regime are formulating new criteria of social partnership, protection, capital, and labor resources.

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<sup>26</sup> “Novye perspektivy tripartizma v Evrope: Dokument kollokviuma MOT,” March 1992, *Vestnik profsoiuzov*, No. 7, 1992, p. 34.

<sup>27</sup> M.M. Sunarchina, “Nekotorye aspekty reformirovaniia rossiiskikh profsoiuzov kak sotsial’nogo instituta,” *Neftgazovoe delo*, 2004, p. 5.

9. Elaborating and legitimizing social problems during interaction among political entities is having a positive effect on civilizational competence, the socio-legal status of trade unions, and corporate-social responsibility. The ILO convention should be further ratified to confirm the laws on trade unions and upgrade the legal status of their charters.
  10. The world financial and economic crisis is negatively affecting all the positive achievements and the combination of short- and long-term factors of post-Soviet social partnership; it is also leaving the process of the social and economic transformation uncompleted.
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