

# 10 THINGS CIVIL SOCIETY CAN DO

## To help create an enabling environment for transition to democracy and market economy

**It was the emergence of civil society associated with mass protest movements that precipitated the fall of communism in the 1980s. However, by the early 1990s civil society in Central and Eastern Europe had to transform from a largely informal protest movement to an organised sector taking its proper place within the economy and society. The civil society (or 3rd Sector) had to be defined anew and its role with respect to both government and business clarified. The growing number and variety of local or community civic groups, special interest organizations, free trade unions, church groups, independent funders and voluntarism during the 1990s helped mobilise public support for far-reaching democratic and economic reforms and helped mitigate their social costs. Civil society came of age in mobilising public support for accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union and for joining the NATO security alliance in the late 1990s. Leaders in civil society can contribute to collaborative development in a number of ways including:**

1. Focusing on companies, industry sectors and issues that have the **greatest potential** to further specific social, economic or environmental objectives.
2. Ensuring that there is clarity and commitment in terms of their own organisation's **social responsibility, integrity, transparency and accountability and commitment to democratic practice.**
3. Investing in understanding the **real power dynamics** – both constraints and strengths – of the company / industry sector, and relevant regulatory / policy arrangements so as to identify key areas of leverage.
4. Committing to giving '**credit where credit is due**' when companies and governments make genuine efforts to improve performance but not exclusively focusing on the 'first-movers', thereby creating a problem for other companies to move into the space.
5. **Collaborating** where possible on setting corporate accountability standards and on mobilising resources (skills and technology as well as money) to meet social and / or environmental objectives.
6. Engaging in **dialogue and consultation** with companies and government agencies on public policy issues and projects of mutual interest – preferably on a regular and ongoing basis.
7. Educating the public on market economy and responsible business issues through the **media, internet and other awareness-raising** campaigns.
8. Becoming a corporate shareholder and participating in **shareholder resolutions.**
9. Considering the creative potential for **demonstrations and consumer boycott campaigns,** always with responsibility towards public safety, transparency and long-term economic, social and environmental benefit.
10. Considering the potential for **law suits** only where other tactics are not effective or when serious social, economic or environmental abuses have occurred.

**'The development of the creative industries is not just important for the city's culture and image, it is also a key economic mission for St. Petersburg.'**

**Dmitry Milkov**  
St. Petersburg Jazz Festival