

Can non-state individuals or bodies democratically represent their peoples,  
without being incorporated by election or appointment as formal agencies of the state?

**1. Two extreme views**

A state-centered view says ‘No’ on the grounds that a people is the incorporated *polity*,  
organized around the uncontested authority of state officials to speak for it.

An individual-centered view says ‘Yes’ on the grounds that a people is just a *populace*,  
and that it may be represented under different aspects by different agents/agencies.

The one would turn international bodies into ‘congresses of ambassadors’ with rival agendas,  
the other would be liable to incur inconsistent, international responsibilities for a state.

**2. Some principles of representation**

- i) One agent or agency may represent another in a responsive or indicative mode.
- ii) Whatever the mode, the represented must authorize the representative system.
- iii) In any domain, the represented can authorize only one representative voice.
- iv) A people must authorize their state as an all-domains, sovereign spokesperson.
- v) And so the state must be their only representative, with control over other voices.
- vi) But the state need not exercise this control actively, only in a standby manner.

**3. An alternative view of international representation**

Principle v) seems to support the state-centered view; but vi) offers an alternative  
under which non-state actors could propose, but state authorities reject, policies.

It would be distinctive if a. those authorities could not veto without giving reasons,  
and b. the non-state actors could publicize agreed proposals in advance.

This would allow non-state actors to generate initiatives with their interlocutors,  
while enabling state authorities to ‘ride herd’ in standby control.

This would avoid the dangers and realize the benefits associated with the other models.

And on the working assumption that members could only invoke ideas relevant for all,  
it would make the international organization a deliberative, not a bargaining body.

Thus, the members would be motivated to pursue novel, well-supported proposals together,  
forcing their governments to engage also in this search-and-solve approach.

On this citizen-centered model the people represented is neither polity nor populace  
but rather the people—the citizenry—who jointly sustain the state in existence.

This truly is *le peuple constituant* but a people who continue to uphold the state (vs Sieyes),  
by ‘willingly’ accepting the law, even when they are unable to opt out;  
by expecting others to accept it and to expect them to accept it in turn;  
by taking up tasks allotted to them and accepting their allotment to others: and  
by supporting election, contestation, and other gov’t constraints in a democracy.