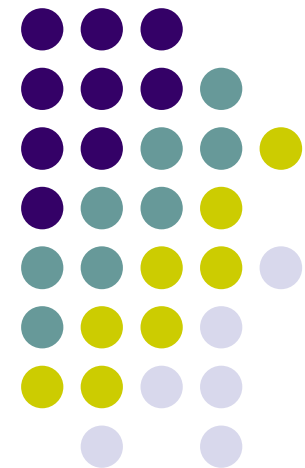


# Threats and Opportunities to Civil Society Development in the FSU

Armine Ishkanian  
London School of Economics





# Achievements since 1991

- Large sectors in some countries
- More professionalized, capacity significantly improved
- More confident about voice and place within society
- More widespread beyond urban centres to smaller towns and rural areas
- But...

# Current Challenges and Threats



- Post-colour revolution backlash against NGOs and civil society from governments
  - Restrictive legislation on NGOs
  - Crackdowns on independent NGOs
  - Rise in GONGOs and ‘loyal’ groups
- Growing authoritarianism in certain countries
  - ‘Managed’ democracies
  - ‘Sovereign’ democracy
- Local critiques from within civil society of Western double standards and approaches
  - The Iraq effect and the Global War on Terror
  - Social engineering

# Questions and Opportunities



- How to continue support in politically tense contexts?
- How to move from procedural towards substantive democracy?
- Top down + bottom up approaches
  - Local foundations?
- Regional and global integration and communication
  - Global civil society and transnational advocacy networks
  - Bridging the digital and informational divides
  - More (and more equal) partnerships