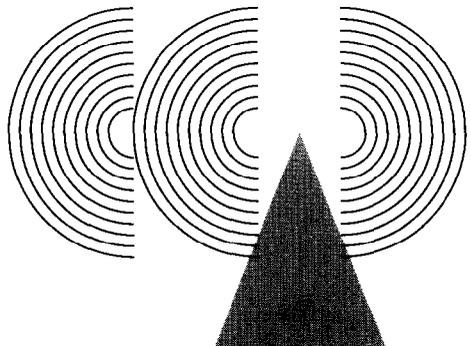




United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Basic Texts 89-95 in Communication



Basic Texts in Communication
1989-1995

Table of contents

<i>Preface</i>	7
----------------	---

Introduction	9
--------------	---

New Communication Strategy	13
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▶

I. Declarations on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media	15
- Declaration of Windhoek	17
- Declaration of Alma Ata	25
- Declaration of Santiago	31
- Declaration of Sana'a	41

▲

II. Toronto Platform for Action	47
---------------------------------	----

◀◀

III. General Conference Resolutions	61
- " <i>Communication in the service of humanity</i> " (Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995, Resolution 104, adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session, November 1989)	63
- " <i>Promotion of press freedom in the world</i> " (Resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-sixth session, November 1991)	71
- " <i>Women and the media</i> " (Resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session, November 1993)	73
- " <i>Role and functions of public service broadcasting</i> " (Resolution 4.6 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session, November 1993)	77

-
- *“Support to cultural and educational activities undertaken by public service broadcasting, media professionals and journalists to reduce violence in the media”* 79
(Resolution 4.5 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, November 1995)
 - *“Promotion of independent and pluralist media”* 81
(Resolution 4.6 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, November 1995)
 - *“Toronto and Beijing Platforms for action on women and the media”* 83
(Resolution 4.7 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, November 1995)
 - *“New information and communication technologies”* 85
(Resolution 15 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, November 1995)
 - *“Promoting the free flow of information and the development of communication”* 87
(Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, November 1995)
 - *“Contributing to conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building”* 95
(Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session, November 1995)

Preface

Fifty years after the adoption of its Constitution, UNESCO is more actively engaged than ever in promoting the “free flow of ideas by word and image” and in developing the means of communication between the peoples of the world in the interests of their mutual understanding. The Organization’s commitment to this constitutional task was strongly reaffirmed with the adoption of its New Communication Strategy at the twenty-fifth session of its General Conference in 1989. Since then, taking advantage of the new spaces of freedom opened up by the end of the Cold War, it has ranged wide in its efforts to encourage “the free flow of information at international as well as national level, and its wider and better balanced dissemination, without any obstacle to freedom of expression”.

*The Organization has been particularly active in areas such as media development and democracy, women’s access to decision-making and expression in the media, public service broadcasting, the reduction of violence on the screen, promotion of media independence and pluralism, new communication technologies, and communication for conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building. Its work in these and other areas over the last seven years has given rise to a number of resolutions, declarations and other official texts, which are published here under the title **Basic Texts in Communication (1989-1995)**.*

I hope that this collection of instruments adopted by the international community to promote freedom of information and expression throughout the world will be read with profit by all those concerned to foster democracy, development and peace within and among nations.

Federico Mayor

Introduction

...“the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other’s lives”

therefore,

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *“will collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image”*.

These words which are to be found in UNESCO’s Constitution, approved by over 180 Member States, reflect the Organization’s mandate to defend and protect the free flow of information world wide.

With respect to this mandate, the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 129th and 130th session (May and October 1988) worked out a new communication strategy to be presented to the General Conference.

On 9 November 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolized the end of the Cold War and released a tide of hope and aspirations in Eastern Europe which was to spread well beyond that region.

On 15 November 1989, the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously adopted the new communication strategy, which already reflected the profound changes in the political landscape of Europe and the world at large.

Also symbolic of the end of ideological rivalries and divisions, the new strategy stressed the importance of the fundamental principles of freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the development of independent and pluralistic media.

New challenges were immediately posed to UNESCO by the emergence of an independent press in Central and Eastern Europe. As a response, the Organization convened an informal meeting at its Headquarters in February 1990.

Encouraged by the outcome of this meeting, and in order to respond to the democratization process under way in a number of countries all over the world, UNESCO, jointly with the United Nations Department of Public Information (UN-DPI), and with the co-operation of several international professional media organizations, organized a series of regional seminars on 'Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media'. The first was held in Windhoek (Namibia) the second in Almaty (Kazakstan), the third in Santiago (Chile), and the fourth in Sana'a (Yemen).

The Declarations adopted in these fora reflect the communication needs of societies in different parts of the world. Echoing the Declaration of Windhoek, the twenty-sixth session of UNESCO's General Conference (November 1991) considered the Windhoek Seminar as a catalyst in the process of encouraging press freedom, independence and pluralism in Africa. Furthermore it recapitulated the key statement of the Declaration, that 'a free, pluralist and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society'.

The General Conference of UNESCO also invited the Director-General to transmit to the United Nations' General Assembly the wish expressed by its Member States that 3 May be declared 'World Press Freedom Day'. Consequently, at its 48th Session, the General Assembly decided to adopt it.

UNESCO's work is also eminently practical. The International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) is the main operational instrument of this new communication strategy. The Programme has been extremely active in seeking funds to follow up the conclusions and the projects proposed by these seminars.

These *Basic Texts in Communication 1989-1995* show UNESCO to be an Organization truly and actively committed to fundamental freedoms, in particular to the freedom of the press; and second, an efficient operational body in the field of communication development, giving priority to the needs of all newly democratic nations.

Free communication is an essential means of disseminating knowledge and values. Its key function in democratic societies is today undeniable, since it enables citizens to speak and to be heard, and thus exercise a decisive influence on the events that shape their daily lives.

New Communication Strategy

Adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-fifth session – 1989

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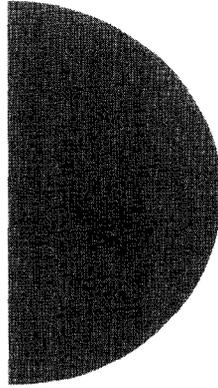
*To encourage the free flow
of information,
at international as well as
national levels,*

*to promote the wider and
better balanced dissemination
of information, without any
obstacle to freedom of expression,*

*and to strengthen
communication capacities
in the developing countries
in order*

*to increase their participation
in the communication process.*

”



I Declarations on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media

Declaration of Windhoek

3 May 1991

Endorsed by the General Conference
at its twenty-sixth session – 1991

We the participants in the United Nations/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Seminar on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press, held in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29 April to 3 May 1991,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 59(I) of 14 December 1946 stating that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and General Assembly resolution 45/76 A of 11 December 1990 on information in the service of humanity,

Recalling resolution 25C/104 of the General Conference of UNESCO of 1989 in which the main focus is the promotion of “the free flow of ideas by word and image at international as well as national levels”,

Noting with appreciation the statements made by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and the Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics of UNESCO at the opening of the Seminar,

Expressing our sincere appreciation to the United Nations and UNESCO for organizing the Seminar,

Expressing also our sincere appreciation to all the intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental bodies and organizations, in particular the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which contributed to the United Nations/UNESCO effort to organize the Seminar,

Expressing our gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia for their kind hospitality which facilitated the success of the Seminar,

Declare that:

1.

Consistent with article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the establishment, maintenance and fostering of an independent, pluralistic and free press is essential to the development and maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for economic development.

2.

By an independent press, we mean a press independent from governmental, political or economic control or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of newspapers, magazines and periodicals.

3.

By a pluralistic press, we mean the end of monopolies of any kind and the existence of the greatest possible number of newspapers, magazines and periodicals reflecting the widest possible range of opinion within the community.

4.

The welcome changes that an increasing number of African States are now undergoing towards multi-party democracies provide the climate in which an independent and pluralistic press can emerge.

5.

The world-wide trend towards democracy and freedom of information and expression is a fundamental contribution to the fulfilment of human aspirations.

6.

In Africa today, despite the positive developments in some countries, in many countries journalists, editors and publishers are victims of repression – they are murdered, arrested, detained and censored, and are restricted by economic and political pres-

asures such as restrictions on newsprint, licensing systems which restrict the opportunity to publish, visa restrictions which prevent the free movement of journalists, restrictions on the exchange of news and information, and limitations on the circulation of newspapers within countries and across national borders. In some countries, one-party States control the totality of information.

7.

Today, at least 17 journalists, editors or publishers are in African prisons, and 48 African journalists were killed in the exercise of their profession between 1969 and 1990.

8.

The General Assembly of the United Nations should include in the agenda of its next session an item on the declaration of censorship as a grave violation of human rights falling within the purview of the Commission on Human Rights.

9.

African States should be encouraged to provide constitutional guarantees of freedom of the press and freedom of association.

10.

To encourage and consolidate the positive changes taking place in Africa, and to counter the negative ones, the international community – specifically, international organizations (governmental as well as non-governmental), development agencies and professional associations – should as a matter of priority direct funding support towards the development and establishment of non-governmental newspapers, magazines and periodicals that reflect the society as a whole and the different points of view within the communities they serve.

11.

All funding should aim to encourage pluralism as well as independence. As a consequence, the public media should be funded only where authorities guarantee a constitutional and effective freedom of information and expression and the independence of the press.

12.

To assist in the preservation of the freedoms enumerated above, the establishment of truly independent, representative associations, syndicates or trade unions of journalists, and associations of editors and publishers, is a matter of priority in all the countries of Africa where such bodies do not now exist.

13.

The national media and labour relations laws of African countries should be drafted in such a way as to ensure that such representative associations can exist and fulfil their important tasks in defence of press freedom.

14.

As a sign of good faith, African Governments that have jailed journalists for their professional activities should free them immediately. Journalists who have had to leave their countries should be free to return to resume their professional activities.

15.

Cooperation between publishers within Africa, and between publishers of the North and South (for example through the principle of twinning), should be encouraged and supported.

16.

As a matter of urgency, the United Nations and UNESCO, and particularly the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), should initiate detailed research, in cooperation with governmental (especially UNDP) and non-governmental donor agencies, relevant non-governmental organizations and professional associations, into the following specific areas:

- (i) identification of economic barriers to the establishment of news media outlets, including restrictive import duties, tariffs and quotas for such things as newsprint, printing equipment, and typesetting and word processing machinery, and taxes on the sale of newspapers, as a prelude to their removal;
- (ii) training of journalists and managers and the availability of professional training institutions and courses;

- (iii) legal barriers to the recognition and effective operation of trade unions or associations of journalists, editors and publishers;
- (iv) a register of available funding from development and other agencies, the conditions attaching to the release of such funds, and the methods of applying for them;
- (v) the state of press freedom, country by country, in Africa.

17.

In view of the importance of radio and television in the field of news and information, the United Nations and UNESCO are invited to recommend to the General Assembly and the General Conference the convening of a similar seminar of journalists and managers of radio and television services in Africa, to explore the possibility of applying similar concepts of independence and pluralism to those media.

18.

The international community should contribute to the achievement and implementation of the initiatives and projects set out in the annex to this Declaration.

19.

This Declaration should be presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the United Nations General Assembly, and by the Director-General of UNESCO to the General Conference of UNESCO.

Annex

Initiatives and Projects Identified in the Seminar

I

Development of co-operation between private African newspapers:

- to aid them in the mutual exchange of their publications;
- to aid them in the exchange of information;
- to aid them in sharing their experience by the exchange of journalists;
- to organize on their behalf training courses and study trips for their journalists, managers and technical personnel.

II

Creation of separate, independent national unions for publishers, news editors and journalists.

III

Creation of regional unions for publishers, editors and independent journalists.

IV

Development and promotion of non-governmental regulations and codes of ethics in each country in order to defend more effectively the profession and ensure its credibility.

V

Financing of a study on the readership of independent newspapers in order to set up groups of advertising agents.

VI

Financing of a feasibility study for the establishment of an independent press aid foundation and research into identifying capital funds for the foundation.

VII

Financing of a feasibility study for the creation of a central board for the purchase of newsprint and the establishment of such a board.

VIII

Support and creation of regional African press enterprises.

IX

Aid with a view to establishing structures to monitor attacks on freedom of the press and the independence of journalists following the example of the West African Journalists' Association.

X

Creation of a data bank for the independent African press for the documentation of news items essential to newspapers.

Declaration of Alma Ata

9 October 1992

Endorsed by the General Conference
at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

We the participants in the United Nations/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Seminar on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Asian Media, held in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, from 5 to 9 October 1992,

Recalling Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, and regardless of frontiers”,

Recalling General Assembly Resolution 59(I) of 14 December 1946, stating that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and General Assembly Resolution 45/76 A of 11 December 1990 on information in the service of humanity,

Recalling Resolution 104 adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-fifth session in 1989, in which the main focus is the promotion of “the free flow of ideas by word and image at international as well as national levels”,

Recalling Resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-sixth session in 1991, which recognizes that a free, pluralistic and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society and which endorses the Declaration adopted by the participants at the United Nations/UNESCO Seminar on “Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press”, held in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29 April to 3 May 1991,

Stressing the growing role of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), whose Intergovernmental Council decided, at its February 1992 session, to give priority to projects which seek to reinforce independent and pluralistic media,

Noting with appreciation the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Seminar, delivered on his behalf by his representative, the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and the statement made by the Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics of UNESCO on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO at the opening of the Seminar,

Expressing our sincere appreciation to the United Nations and UNESCO for organizing the Seminar,

Expressing our gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Kazakhstan for their kind hospitality, which facilitated the success of the Seminar,

Expressing also our sincere appreciation to all the intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental bodies and organizations, in particular the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which contributed to the United Nations/UNESCO effort to organize the Seminar,

Recognizing the historic emergence of newly independent media in the Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union, and the need to build upon the innovative achievements of the Seminar in Africa,

Declare our full support for, and total commitment to, the fundamental principles of the Declaration of Windhoek, and acknowledge its importance as a milestone in the struggle for free, independent and pluralistic print and broadcast media in all regions of the world.

Specific Project Proposals

In Asia and the Pacific, including the newly independent Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union, which identify with the Asian region, we seek practical application of the principles enshrined in the Declaration of Windhoek, in conjunction with relevant national and international professional organisations and relevant UN agencies, in the following specific project proposals and in the following fields:

1. Legislation

To give expert advice and legal drafting assistance to replace redundant press laws inherited at independence with laws that create enforceable rights to freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, access to information and freedom of the press; to abolish monopolies and all forms of discrimination in broadcasting and allocation of frequencies, in printing, newspaper and magazine distribution, and in newsprint production and distribution; and to abolish barriers to launching new publications, and discriminatory taxation.

2. Training

To promote a programme of national in-country and sub-regional seminars and/or training courses covering:

- (a) professional skills, including extensive training and treatment of development issues;
- (b) management, marketing and technical skills for the print and broadcast media;
- (c) international principles of freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of information and freedom of the press;
- (d) international principles of freedom of association, management/staff relations, collective bargaining skills and the rights and responsibilities of representative associations of journalists, editors, broadcasters and publishers;
- (e) principles of journalists' independence and the relationship between the editorial department of a newspaper,

- the board of directors and the administrative, advertising and commercial departments;
- (f) appropriate curricula and training methodology for journalism training institutions (including tutor/lecturer exchange programmes) and special trainer programmes;
- (g) access to training programmes and facilities;
- (h) codes of conduct relating to advertising in the broadcast media;
- (i) the rights of women in the media, and the rights of minority groups within societies.

3. Free Flow of Information

As a matter of urgency:

- (a) To support the establishment of media resource centres in the Central Asian Republics where journalists and other media personnel can gain access to international news and information, manuals, textbooks and study materials, and where they can utilize desktop publishing equipment to prepare material for publication;
- (b) to assist independent media in the upgrading of production, content and presentation of television news and current affairs programmes through the provision of new technology and the exposure of staff to modern and alternative production techniques and values;
- (c) to assist in the establishment of an inter-country news exchange service, in order to increase the flow of international, national and regional news and information to and from neighbouring countries, and to help upgrade technology and develop more extensive communication links.

4. Safety of Journalists

To support the right of journalists to exercise their profession safely, and to establish a protection centre (or centres) in the region to link up with the proposed IFEX (International Freedom of Information Exchange) Action Alert Network for Asia, aiming specifically at the safety of journalists and press freedom issues.

5. Public Service Broadcasting

To encourage the development of journalistically independent public service broadcasting in place of existing State-controlled broadcasting structures, and to promote the development of community radio.

To upgrade educational broadcasting through support for distance education programmes such as English-language instruction and formal and non-formal education, literacy programmes, and information programmes on AIDS, the environment, children, etc.

6. Professional Associations

To assist Central Asian journalists, editors, publishers and broadcasters in establishing truly independent representative associations, syndicates or trade unions of journalists and associations of editors, publishers and broadcasters where such bodies do not yet exist.

7. Special Economic Issues

To identify economic barriers to the creation of new, independent media in Central Asia and in particular to arrange a feasibility study into alternative methods of acquiring and distributing newsprint, alternative facilities for printing and distributing newspapers and magazines and alternative means of obtaining low-interest credit.

The above projects, while identified as specific needs of Central Asian media, have region-wide applications. The participants call on UNESCO and its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), international professional organizations, donor countries, foundations and other interested parties to contribute generously to, and cooperate in, the implementation of these initiatives.

The participants request that this Declaration be presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the United Nations General Assembly, and by the Director-General of UNESCO to the General Conference of UNESCO.

Declaration of Santiago

6 May 1994

Endorsed by the General Conference
at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

We the participants in the United Nations/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/United Nations Development Programme “Seminar on Media Development and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean”, held in Santiago, Chile, from 2 to 6 May 1994,

Recalling Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, and regardless of frontiers”,

Recalling the American Convention on Human Rights (Pacto de San José de Costa Rica),

Recalling General Assembly Resolution 59(I) of 14 December 1946, stating that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and General Assembly Resolution 45/76 A of 11 December 1990 on information in the service of humanity;

Recalling Resolution 104 adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at its twenty-fifth session in 1989, in which the main focus is the promotion of “the free flow of ideas by word and image at international as well as national levels”,

Recalling Resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-sixth session in 1991, which recognizes that a free, pluralistic and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society and which endorses the Declaration adopted by the participants at the United Nations/UNESCO Seminar on “Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press”, held in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29 April to 3 May 1991,

Recalling General Assembly Resolution 48/133 of 20 December 1993, on the International Year of the World’s Indigenous People, 1993,

Recalling the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Stressing the growing role of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) of UNESCO, whose Intergovernmental Council decided, at its February 1992 session, to give priority to projects which seek to reinforce independent and pluralistic media,

Noting with appreciation the statement made by the representative of the Department of Public Information of the United Nations, the statement made by the Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics of UNESCO, and the statement made by the representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the opening of the Seminar,

Noting with satisfaction that the holding of the Seminar coincided with the first observance of World Press Freedom Day, established by General Assembly Decision of 20 December 1993,

Noting with appreciation the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, delivered on his behalf by the representative of the Department of Public Information, the message on the occasion of the Day by the Director-General of UNESCO delivered on his behalf by the Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics, the statement made by the President of the Republic of

Chile and the statement made by the Mayor of the City of Santiago at the dedication ceremony of the International Square of Freedom of the Press, in Santiago, on 3 May 1994, World Press Freedom Day,

Expressing our gratitude to the Government and people of Chile for their kind hospitality, which facilitated the success of the Seminar,

Expressing our gratitude to the Mayor and people of Santiago for dedicating on 3 May 1994, World Press Freedom Day, a square, in Santiago, to press freedom,

Expressing our sincere appreciation to the United Nations, UNESCO and UNDP for organizing the Seminar,

Expressing also our sincere appreciation to all the intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental bodies and organizations which contributed to the United Nations/UNESCO/UNDP effort to organize the Seminar,

Aware that peace, development and democracy are intimately interlinked, and recognizing that the Latin American and Caribbean media, amongst the most dynamic in the world, have played a major role in favour of peace, democracy and world economic and social development,

Express our full support for, and total commitment to, the fundamental principles of the Declaration of Windhoek, and acknowledge its importance as a milestone in the struggle for free, independent and pluralistic print and broadcast media in all regions of the world.

Regarding the specific situation prevailing in Latin America and the Caribbean, where there exist highly developed print and electronic media of which some are known worldwide, and small and community media, including those recently established, with very limited means, in particular in rural and marginalized urban areas,

We declare that:

1.

Freedom of expression is the cornerstone of our democracies. Democracy is a prerequisite for peace and development within and between our countries. Freedom of the press is a key and indivisible part of the freedom of expression.

2.

All States of the region must be encouraged to provide constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression, freedom of the press for all forms of media, freedom of association and freedom for media trade unions.

3.

Respect for pluralism, cultural, language and gender diversity should be a fundamental factor in our democratic societies and should be reflected through all the media.

4.

We strongly condemn the fact that journalists, publishers and broadcasters are still victims of repression, threats, aggression, murder, arrest, detention and abduction for which the criminals, in many cases, enjoy impunity. They are also restricted by economic and political pressures such as censorship; restrictions on newsprint and other professional equipment and material; licensing systems and abusive controls which limit the opportunity to publish or broadcast; travel or visa denials and restrictions which prevent the free movement of journalists; limitations on the free flow of news and information; and restrictions on the circulation of periodicals within countries and across national borders.

5.

Our aim is to promote the greatest possible number of newspapers, magazines, videos, radio and television stations reflecting the widest possible range of opinion in the community.

6.

State authorities should make available in a timely and reasonable manner the information generated by the public sector.

7.

No journalist should be forced to reveal his or her sources of information.

8.

In accordance with the fundamental rights of expression and association as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the access to and the practice of journalism must be free, and not limited by any means.

9.

There is an urgent need to increase training and educational programmes for journalists and other media practitioners with a view to improving their professional standards.

10.

We call on the General Assembly of the United Nations to create a "World Press Freedom Prize", to be awarded annually, to honour individuals, organizations or institutions that have contributed significantly to the advancement of freedom of information, irrespective of the medium, print or electronic. The jury shall be appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of UNESCO, and shall be composed of distinguished personalities recognized and respected for their dedication to the cause of freedom of the press and for their internationally recognized ethical standing.

Plan of Action

The Plan of Action adopted by the Seminar proposes the following measures:

- 1. Promotion of community media in rural, indigenous and marginal urban areas**
 - A. Taking into account the increasing importance of community media in the democratic process in the region, to request the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with the assistance of professional organizations and research institutions, to survey the current situation of community media concerning legislation, frequencies, power limitations and advertising restrictions, with a view to making recommendations for the consideration of the governments concerned.
 - B. To request the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) of UNESCO and donor agencies to support projects for the creation of new community media, both print and broadcast, and projects aimed at strengthening existing community media in accordance with international norms, especially those media serving women, youth, indigenous populations and minorities.
 - C. To call upon professional organizations and the regional and national representatives of international organizations involved in community development issues, to encourage community media to exchange information among themselves and with other media. In so doing, they will contribute to the development of communication networks.

2. Training

- A. To promote and support the training of journalists, broadcasters and other media professionals, especially those working in rural and marginal urban areas. To this end the curricula should include the legal, technological, managerial, marketing, advertising, gender and cultural aspects of the media.
- B. To recommend to media organizations in the region, (journalists, broadcasters and publishers) to hold a meeting with a view to harmonizing their training and educational programmes and working methods, and to adapting them to new technologies, in collaboration if necessary with UNESCO.
- C. To encourage the reading of both community and national newspapers in school as learning tools, in order to enable children to understand the value of the free press and to learn to exercise their judgement. Further, to include in the curriculum of primary education the issue of freedom of the press.
- D. To ask UNESCO to convene, in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other UN agencies, seminars to analyze the status and the participation of women in the media.

3. Free press and the safety of journalists

- A. To extend the number of monitoring centres in the Latin American and the Caribbean region and to link them with the existing International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) Action Alert Network, using joint resources of professional national and international organizations with assistance from UNESCO.
- B. In addition to monitoring aggression against journalists, to request IFEX to investigate the possibility of including in the monitoring system serious cases of visa rejection, limited movement of journalists and restrictions on the free flow of information in the region, among other press freedom issues.
- C. To request UNESCO to participate, together with professional organizations, in promoting at different levels of society

awareness of the right of journalists to exercise their profession safely.

4. Equipment and technology

- A. To request UNESCO and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), together with professional organizations, to advise small media, especially in rural and marginal urban areas, on available technology optimal for their needs.
- B. To ask the IPDC, the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP) and the Programme of General Information (PGI), all three of UNESCO, to support the creation of networks, documentation centers and data bases in the Latin American and Caribbean countries in order for journalists and broadcasters to have access to international information, as well as manuals, texts, compact discs (CD-ROM) and other kinds of training material.

5. Research

- A. To encourage media organizations, universities, research institutions and governmental and intergovernmental agencies to conduct research on the impact of communication technology development on indigenous communities, with a view to maintaining their cultural identity.
- B. To recommend that UNESCO, in cooperation with professional organizations, conduct a comparative study of legislation affecting media.

Declaration of Sana'a

11 January 1996

To be submitted to the twenty-ninth session
of the General Conference - 1997

We, the participants in the United Nations/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Seminar on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Arab Media, held in Sana'a, Yemen, from 7 to 11 January 1996;

Bearing in mind Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, and regardless of frontiers";

Recalling United Nations General Assembly Resolution 59 (I) of 14 December 1946, which states that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and General Assembly Resolution 45/76 A of 11 December 1990 on information in the service of humanity;

Recalling Resolution 104 adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at its twenty-fifth session in 1989, focusing on the promotion of "the free flow of ideas by word and image at international as well as national levels";

Recalling also resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-sixth session "recognizing that a free, pluralistic and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society", and inviting the Director-General "to extend to other regions of the world the action ... to encourage press freedom and to promote the independence and pluralism of the media";

Further recalling United Nations General Assembly decision of 20 December 1993 on the observance of World Press Freedom Day on 3 May;

Noting with satisfaction resolution 4.6 of the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference of UNESCO (1995), which stressed “the outstanding importance of”, and endorsed, the Declarations adopted by the participants of the Seminars, held in Windhoek, Namibia (29 April – 3 May 1991), in Almaty, Kazakstan (5 – 9 October 1992), and in Santiago, Chile (2 – 6 May 1994), and which expressed its conviction that “the joint UNESCO/United Nations... Regional Seminar on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Arab Media to be held in Sana’a, Yemen in early 1996 will contribute to creating conditions that will enable pluralistic media to develop and participate effectively in the democratization and development processes in the Arab region;”

Stressing the growing role of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) of UNESCO, whose Intergovernmental Council decided, at its February 1992 session, to give priority to projects which seek to reinforce independent and pluralistic media;

Noting the vital need and the importance of access by women to free expression and decision-making in the field of media;

Noting with appreciation the statements made at the opening of the Seminar by the United Nations Assistant Secretary General for Public Information on behalf of the Secretary General and the Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics of UNESCO on behalf of the Director-General;

Expressing our sincere appreciation to the United Nations and UNESCO for organizing the Seminar;

Expressing also our sincere appreciation to all the intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental bodies, organizations, agencies and foundations which contributed to the United Nations/UNESCO effort to organize the Seminar;

Expressing our gratitude to the Government, people, media organisations and professionals of the Republic of Yemen for their kind hospitality which facilitated the success of the Seminar.

Fully support and express our commitment to the principles of the Declaration of Windhoek, acknowledging its crucial importance for promoting free, independent and pluralistic print and broadcast media in all regions of the world and seek practical application of the principles enshrined in this Declaration;

Welcome the world-wide trend towards democracy, freedom of expression and press freedom, recognize efforts by a number of Arab countries in this direction and urge all Arab states to participate in this historic process;

Believe that the advent of new information and communication technologies contributes to genuine cooperation, development, democracy and peace; acknowledge, however, that these technologies can be used to manipulate public opinion; and note that some governments do exploit the perceived threat of such technologies to justify curtailing of press freedom;

Deplore that, in the Arab World, journalists, publishers and other media practitioners continue to be victims of harassment, physical assault, threats, arrest, detention, torture, abduction, exile and murder. They are also subject to economic and political pressures, including dismissal, censorship, curbs on travel as well as passport withdrawals or visa denials. In addition to limitations on the free flow of news and information, and on the circulation of periodicals within countries and across national borders, the media is also subject to restrictions in the use of newsprint and other professional equipment and material. Licensing systems and abusive controls limit the opportunity to publish or broadcast;

Believe that arrest and detention of journalists because of their professional activities are a grave violation of human rights and urge Arab governments that have jailed journalists for these reasons to release them immediately and unconditionally. Journalists who have had to leave their countries should be free to return and to resume their professional activities. Those who have been dismissed abusively should be allowed to regain their positions.

Declare that:

Arab States should provide, and reinforce where they exist, constitutional and legal guarantees of freedom of expression and of press freedom and should abolish those laws and measures that limit the freedom of the press; government tendencies to draw limits/ "red lines" outside the purview of the law restrict these freedoms and are unacceptable;

The establishment of truly independent, representative associations, syndicates or trade unions of journalists, and associations of editors and publishers, is a matter of priority in those Arab countries where such bodies do not now exist. Any legal and administrative obstacles to the establishment of independent journalists' organizations should be removed. Where necessary, labour relations laws should be elaborated in accordance with international standards;

Sound journalistic practices are the most effective safeguard against governmental restrictions and pressures by special interest groups. Guidelines for journalistic standards are the concern of the news media professionals. Any attempt to set down standards and guidelines should come from the journalists themselves. Disputes involving the media and/or the media professionals in the exercise of their profession are a matter for the courts to decide, and such cases should be tried under civil and not criminal codes and procedures;

Journalists should be encouraged to create independent media enterprises owned, run and funded by the journalists themselves and supported, if necessary, by transparent endowments with guarantees that funders do not intervene in editorial policies;

International assistance in Arab countries should aim to develop print and electronic media, independent of governments in order to encourage pluralism as well as editorial independence. Public media should be supported and funded only when they are editorially independent and where a constitutional, effective freedom of information and expression and the independence of the press are guaranteed;

State-owned broadcasting and news agencies should be granted statutes of journalistic and editorial independence as open public service institutions. Creation of independent news agencies and private and/or community ownership of broadcasting media including in rural areas should also be encouraged;

Arab governments should cooperate with the United Nations and UNESCO, other governmental and non-governmental development agencies, organizations and professional associations, in order to:

- (i) enact and/or revise laws with a view to: enforcing the rights to freedom of expression and press freedom and legally enforceable free access to information; eliminating monopoly controls over news and advertising; putting an end to all forms of social, economic or political discrimination in broadcasting, in the allocation of frequencies, in printing, in newspaper and magazine distribution and in newsprint production and allocation; abolishing all barriers to launching new publications and any form of discriminatory taxation;
- (ii) initiate action to remove economic barriers to the establishment and operation of news media outlets, including restrictive import duties, tariffs and quotas for such things as newsprint, printing equipment, typesetting and word processing machinery and telecommunication equipment, and taxes on the sale of newspapers or other restrictions on the public's access to news media;
- (iii) improve and expand training of journalists and managers, and other media practitioners, without discrimination, with a view to upgrading their professional standards, also by the establishment of new training centers in the countries where there are none, including Yemen.

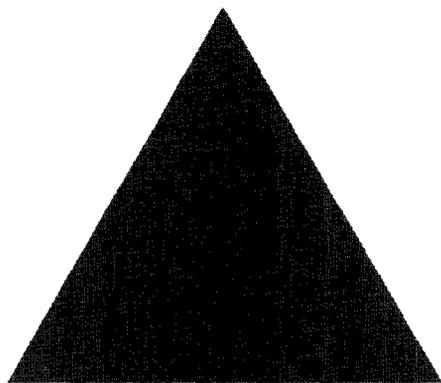
Seek the assistance of national, regional and international press freedom and media professional organizations and other relevant NGOs to establish national and regional networks aimed at monitoring and acting against violations of free expression, to create data banks and to provide advice and technical

assistance in computerisation as well as in new information and communication technologies with the understanding that UNDP, IPDC and other development partners would consider these needs to be a major priority;

Request UNESCO National Commissions of the Arab States to help in organizing national and regional meetings to enhance press freedom and to encourage creation of independent media institutions.

The international community should contribute to the achievement and implementation of this Declaration.

This Declaration should be presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the General Assembly, and by the Director-General of UNESCO to the General Conference, for follow-up and implementation.



II
Toronto Platform
for Action



Toronto Platform for Action

3 March 1995

Adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

Introduction

In the past twenty years, the world has seen an explosion in the field of communications. With advances in computer technology and satellite and cable television, global access to information, when democratically used, continues to increase and expand creating new opportunities for the participation of women in communications and media and for dissemination of information about women. However all these developments bring about new threats. They may affect negatively the existing cultures and prevailing values of receiving countries. With the re-emergence in some countries of reactionary beliefs, media are also becoming a weapon of domination and obscurantism. Finally the present global situation in the media shows the perpetuation and re-enforcement of negative images of women that do not provide an accurate or realistic picture of women's multiple roles and contributions to a changing world. Even more insidious are the use by media of women's bodies as sex objects, and violence against women as "entertainment". Greater involvement by women in both the technical and decision-making areas of communication and media would increase awareness of women's lives from their own perspective.



Global Actions

1.

We, the participants in the International Symposium: Women and the Media, Access to Expression and Decision-Making, held in Toronto (Canada) from 28 February to 3 March 1995, propose the following actions with these long-term objectives in mind:

- 1.1 To increase women's access to expression in and through the media;
- 1.2 To increase women's access to and participation in decision-making and management of the media, so as to encourage media to promote women's positive contributions to society;
- 1.3 To use communication as a driving force in the promotion of women's active and equal participation in development in a context of peace and equality, while preserving freedom of expression and freedom of the press.
- 1.4 To recognize the importance of women's media networks worldwide, both those that supply news in women's activities and concerns to media outlets, and those that utilize alternative media channels to reach women and women's groups with information that assists and supports them in their personal, family and community development activities.
- 1.5 To recognize the rights of all women to have access to expression and participation in the media, in particular those from discriminated groups such as other-abled, indigenous, women of colour and women of diverse sexual orientation.

2.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage media enterprises to undertake the following actions, where they do not already exist:

- 2.1 Adopt positive action programmes, including equal pay for equal work, equal access to training, fair and transparent promotion procedures, targets and timetables to achieve a fair proportion of women in decision-making positions, action against sexual harassment, so that women can reach their full potential as media professionals.
- 2.2 Adopt gender-awareness programmes targeted at both female and male media professionals to encourage equality and variety in the portrayal of men and women.
- 2.3 Develop editorial policies that are gender-sensitive and reflect gender equity, so that women's perspectives are included in all topics.
- 2.4 Sensitize media managers and professionals to increase coverage of women's points of view, especially in political, economic, business, and scientific news.
- 2.5 Recognize women as authoritative information sources, experts, and opinion makers, therefore news sources on any issue and not confine women to the role of speaking only on "women's issues."
- 2.6 Prepare, in cooperation with journalists' organizations, guidelines against gender-biased treatment of information and checklists against gender-biased language for reporters and editors to use when writing and reviewing stories.
- 2.7 Include media women in media self-regulatory committees and other executive committees that draft programme guidelines, budgets, contracts, and personnel documents.
- 2.8 Encourage media employers to print in recruitment advertisements and personnel materials the fact that they are equal opportunity employers.



- 2.9 Avoid the requirement of facts such as gender and marital status in job applications.
- 2.10 Take steps when feasible towards providing food service and childcare, in view of the unpredictability of schedules for covering breaking news.
- 2.11 Urge the definition of ethical guidelines adapted to all types of media, including on-line technologies and virtual reality, as well as monitoring mechanisms with respect to images that are discriminatory or that violate children's and women's rights in information, advertisements, marketing, and entertainment; this not with a mind to restrain freedom of expression and of the press, but rather to ensure the respect of human rights and dignity.
- 2.12 Maintain and promote the idea of public service. Encourage information and education programmes on, among other topics, those concerning women.
- 2.13 Publicize legislation and international conventions on women in local languages so as to educate women about their rights.
- 2.14 Educate women and men, young and old, about all forms of violence against women and emphasize solutions to eliminate this violence.
- 2.15 Design gender-sensitizing programmes for media managers and train them to be vigilant decision-makers against discriminatory and stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.
- 2.16 Examine how media when dealing with topics of violence against women, can do it in an educative and non-exploitative context.

3.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage professional media organizations to undertake the following actions, where they do not already exist:

- 3.1 Establish and increase the membership of local, regional, national, and international networks for women media professionals in order to address professional concerns, form mentoring programmes, promote contacts for professional training and advancement, and develop women's sense of pride and professionalism.
- 3.2 Promote active North/South and South/South cooperation between journalists' organizations, women's professional media associations, women's legal groups, and women's political associations.
- 3.3 Lobby for the creation of advertising standards councils to develop regulations against the use of sexist, gender-biased language concerning women and images of women in advertisements.
- 3.4 Advise smaller media, especially reaching women in rural and marginalized urban areas, on questions, such as available technology optimal for their needs.
- 3.5 Encourage the adoption of guidelines on gender portrayal in consultation with media women, which support the representation of women in their diversity and recognize their fundamental rights to equality, security and dignity, and to assist in putting these guidelines into practice.



4.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage educational and media training institutions to undertake the following actions, where they do not already exist:

- 4.1 Encourage dialogue between the media sector and the field of education in general to raise public awareness of the portrayal of women in the media.
- 4.2 Promote media literacy programmes for the public at large, in particular children, in order to develop critical faculties among society for the reception of messages disseminated in the media, as well as awareness of discriminatory and stereotyped images that feed inequalities between the genders; and to prevent prejudices that may be caused by television's depiction of violence against women.
- 4.3 Adopt gender-awareness programmes and local history and cultural diversity programmes targeted at both female and male media professionals at all media training institutions.
- 4.4 Organize and encourage the training of women in journalism, radio, film videomaking, mechanical and technical media skills, and in specialized subject areas, such as culture, education, science, technology, environment, economics, politics, business and sports.
- 4.5 Train women media students and professionals in management and related subjects, such as interpersonal communication, and decision-making skills, with a view to promoting women's media enterprises.
- 4.6 Sponsor short-term or longer term professional internships or exchanges to expand the professional skills of women media professionals.
- 4.7 Encourage the development of women's participation in electronic discussion groups, computer bulletin boards, electronic newsletters, fax newsletters, and other alternative media and new information technology.
- 4.8 Develop and support monitoring bodies that survey media and advertising content concerning gender portrayal.

5.

*We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage **governments** to undertake the following actions, where they do not already exist:*

- 5.1 Include women on a parity basis in government reform committees, parliamentary, advisory, policy-making and other regulatory bodies that consider advertising and communications policy.
- 5.2 Assign programme budgets to allow for the equal access of women to telecommunications and to training in computing, among other communications technologies.
- 5.3 Review and enforce pornography legislation, in consultation with concerned citizens and groups.
- 5.4 Abolish those laws which effectively curb freedom of expression, freedom of association and those laws that result in discrimination of women.
- 5.5 Establish a legal framework which guarantees the right to freely seek, receive and impart information to men and women and to refrain from defining journalists' ethics, which is a matter for those engaged in journalism.

6.

*We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage **international and national governmental and non-governmental organizations, including research bodies,** to undertake the following actions, where they do not already exist:*

- 6.1 Interlink more effectively grassroots workers and volunteers, media researchers, NGOs, advocacy groups, alternative media networks and policy-makers concerning women and the media.
- 6.2 Set up an international on-line network for exchange of information on portrayal of women in the media and information on women's media enterprises.



- 6.3 Develop and strengthen traditional forms of communication such as story telling and drama, especially for rural women.
- 6.4 Introduce, support and extend community radio stations as a way of increasing women's participation and contribution to the media and local economic development, especially in areas of high illiteracy rates.
- 6.5 Establish in cooperation with broadcasters an international video library on the portrayal of women to be used in seminars and workshops aimed at raising awareness of media professionals and the general public.
- 6.6 Ensure that international governmental and non-governmental organizations, which address issues of communication, aim at equity in the participation of women and men in programmes, wages, and career advancement opportunities.
- 6.7 Encourage procedures for adequate consideration of consumer complaints lodged with media enterprises or advertisers against media content or advertisements that portray women in a discriminatory way.
- 6.8 Promote the free circulation of information regarding funders interested in the development of communication projects relating to women.
- 6.9 Expand data banks and develop research on gender and media, for wide distribution.
- 6.10 Develop follow-up and evaluation systems as part of research in women's communication programming to know what works and what needs improvement.
- 6.11 Support the publication of studies relating to women's images in the media, audience studies, listening, viewing, and reading patterns, media policies and patterns of media ownership; all these as an investment in building up a base for evaluation and planning.
- 6.12 Conduct research into various alternative, traditional, local, and folk forms, as well as new communications technologies used by women.
- 6.13 Collect and distribute annual bibliographies on major research activities and findings concerning women in communication and development.

- 6.14 Undertake research studies on the impact on viewers of the content of media products, especially violence against women.
- 6.15 Support efforts by NGOs to provide technical assistance and training in communications methods and technologies to local and national groups that are attempting to reach out to otherwise isolated communities, using appropriate languages and channels not available to regional and international networks.
- 6.16 Promote dialogue between the representative organizations of journalists and media employers to discuss a joint approach to journalists' ethics concerning gender portrayal.
- 6.17 Include a communication dimension in development programmes, in particular those addressing women.
- 6.18 Condemn all types of extremism, in particular religious extremism, which jeopardizes the rights of women and democracy.

7.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage media enterprises, professional media organizations, international and national governmental and non-governmental organizations, educational and media training institutions, and governments to undertake the following action:

- 7.1 Involve men in action towards the achievement of women's equality in the media, as equality between men and women concerns all people and touches upon the very functioning and development of our societies.
- 7.2 Develop educational and training methodologies to enable women's organizations and community groups to effectively communicate their own messages and concerns and access to existing media.



Specific and Immediate Actions

1.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage UNESCO to:

- 1.1 Form an open network WOMMED/FEMMED beginning with Toronto Symposium observers and participants in order to work together to achieve proposed actions.
- 1.2 Establish a Women and the Media videolibrary and documentation depository, containing in particular the submissions to the Toronto Symposium's parallel activity "Demystifying Media for Social Change."
- 1.3 Present the "Toronto Platform" for endorsement by the UNESCO General Conference and upon its approval, request that its implementation be monitored regularly.

2.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage media enterprises to:

- 2.1 Establish and diversify media products and services reflecting local cultures and languages in order to encourage local women's participation.
- 2.2 Adopt equal opportunities programmes to ensure that women have equal access to decision-making in the media.
- 2.3 Develop in cooperation with journalists' and media professional organizations guidelines on gender portrayal.

3.

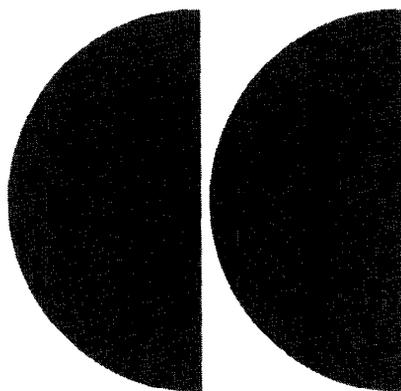
We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage professional media organizations to:

- 3.1 Promote equal opportunity hiring and promotional policies, and guidelines for non-sexist reporting.
- 3.2 Publish directories of women media professionals to act as a networking tool; provide gender sensitization workshops for media professionals; and promote media skills training for lay women's groups.

4.

We, the Toronto Symposium participants, encourage international and national governmental and non-governmental organizations, including media training institutions, to:

- 4.1 Ensure that several themes on women's contributions to the media are adopted for World Press Freedom Day and other relevant observances.
- 4.2 Involve men in action towards the achievement of women's equality in the media, as equality between men and women concerns all people and touches upon the very functioning and development of our societies.
- 4.3 Monitor and denounce attacks on media professionals or users who expose or speak out against extremists, be they political, religious, racist, etc.
- 4.4 Continue expanding community radio projects in view of high illiteracy rates in rural and urban areas.
- 4.5 Sponsor training in Desktop Publishing techniques and marketing for new small media run by women, especially in rural areas.



III
General Conference
Resolutions

‘Communication in the Service of Humanity’

Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995,
Resolution 104 adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-fifth session – 1989

*(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV,
at the thirty-second plenary meeting, on 15 November 1989)*

The General Conference,

Reaffirming its attachment to the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Constitution of UNESCO and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racialism, Apartheid and Incitement to War,

Reaffirming that it is incumbent upon UNESCO, in accordance with the provisions of Article I.2(a) of its Constitution, to ‘collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image’,

Bearing in mind that the objective of Major Programme Area IV, ‘Communication in the service of humanity’, is based on the principles set forth in the Constitution and on the provisions of the relevant international instruments and the resolutions which it has adopted itself on this subject,

Recalling more particularly Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that ‘Everyone has the right

to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers’,

Recalling also Articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Reaffirming also its attachment to the principles of the freedom of the press, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media,

Deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and by the consequences of every kind arising from these disparities that affect the capability of their public, private or other media to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production,

Considering that all efforts should be made to ensure the free flow of information at international as well as national level, and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information, without any obstacle to freedom of expression,

Reaffirming finally that it is incumbent upon UNESCO and its Member States to assist in:

- (a) reducing existing disparities in information flow at international as well as national level and the consequences arising from these disparities, particularly by increasing assistance for the development of communication infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries with public and private support for public, private and other enterprises, by promoting greater solidarity in the flow of information, further developing the exchange of information, and ensuring diversity in the flow of information to and from all societies, and between them,
- (b) facilitating access by the public to information in all its forms, including information concerning science and technology, through a variety of easily accessible sources and information media, without prejudice to restrictions in national or international legal instruments,
- (c) facilitating and guaranteeing for journalists the freedom to report and the fullest possible access to information,



- (d) ensuring that the public, private and other media in developing countries are provided with the conditions and resources to gain in strength, consolidate their independence, expand, and cooperate both among themselves and with the public and private media in the developed countries, on a basis of strict equality and mutual respect,
- (e) promoting awareness of the value of the media as a source of information and a component of the learning process in the modern world and as a means of promoting and safeguarding cultural identities and of increasing understanding among peoples,
- (f) emphasizing the contribution that the media can make to economic, social and cultural development and to the struggle against intolerance and all forms of discrimination,
- (g) studying and taking into account the appropriate use of low-cost technologies and the economic and socio-cultural impact of new communication technologies on societies, culture and cultural identities,
- (h) promoting media education designed for both producers and users, with a view to encouraging the development of critical awareness and the capacity of individuals and communities to react to any kind of information received and, at the same time, promoting a better understanding of the means available to users to know and to defend their rights,

Noting with satisfaction the new communication strategy worked out by the Executive Board at its 129th session and confirmed at its 130th, which it defined as follows:

- (a) UNESCO's decision to call for the establishment of a new world information and communication order was not a spur-of-the-moment invention, prompted by no particular set of circumstances;
- (b) at the time when that concept was launched, the situation in the information and communication field was one characterized by inequalities in the flow of information and by strong feelings in the developing countries regarding

- the false, distorted and in any case inaccurate image that was given of their national reality; it was doubtless because that situation had been noted and recognized by all the Member States of UNESCO that draft resolutions calling for the establishment of a new world information and communication order seen as an evolving and continuous process were at all times adopted by consensus;
- (c) however, it must be acknowledged that, while this demand was understood by many people (although some nevertheless frequently expressed reservations on the matter), professional communicators widely interpreted UNESCO's action as a more or less avowed ambition on the part of the Organization to undermine freedom of information and impede the free flow of messages, individuals and ideas; this resulted in a misunderstanding that was used to tarnish the Organization's image;
 - (d) the governments of all regions of the world, anxious not to underestimate the real problems that existed, proposed the establishment among the many other measures envisaged of an International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) aimed at developing the endogenous capacities in the developing countries;
 - (e) now that UNESCO, following the consensus reached at the twenty-fourth session of the General Conference and without turning its back on the past, is setting out on a path of innovation, it is perhaps the time to take the lessons of past experience to heart and to explore the possibilities of a new strategy whereby the Organization's global objective may be attained in such a manner as to dispel the misunderstandings. That strategy, while recognizing the legitimacy of the call for a new world information and communication order seen as an evolving and continuous process, consists in developing, in countries requesting such assistance, the training of communication professionals and the facilities for a media education that would lay emphasis on the development of critical acumen among users and the capacity of individuals and communities to react to any kind of manipulation and would at the same time promote a better understanding of the means available to users to defend their rights;



- (f) it is important to bear in mind that Article I.2(a) of the Constitution stipulates that the Organization will “collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image”.

Taking into consideration all the relevant recommendations formulated by the Executive Board in 131 EX/Decision 4.1 (25 C/108),

1. **Welcomes** the high priority accorded to activities aimed at strengthening communication capacities in developing countries, in particular through the development of infrastructures, the training of personnel, and media education, with a view to gradually ensuring a balance in regard to the flow of information, and stresses the need, from this standpoint, to mobilize greater means and resources on behalf of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC);
2. **Emphasizes** that every effort should be made to reinforce the action of IPDC in all its functions and to increase its financial resources through increased mobilization of the public and private sectors, especially in the developed countries on whose initiative IPDC was created;
3. **Invites** the Director-General to mention in his oral report at each session of the Executive Board the state of contributions received and, once a year, to indicate the percentage of requests for assistance satisfied, and to bring this information to the attention of Member States;
4. **Stresses** the importance of the intellectual co-operation mission of UNESCO in fostering collaboration among relevant professional organizations and research institutions for gaining a better insight into the contribution of the media and communication to the development of societies, to the enhancement of cultural identities and to the improvement of international understanding and mutual knowledge, providing information and building up awareness among the public concerning transverse activities foreseen in all the

- areas of the Organization's action, such as peace, human rights, solidarity, protection of the environment, freedom of expression in all its forms and improvement of the status of women;
5. **Emphasizes** the need to maximize the practical benefit of UNESCO programmes to public, private and other media, in developing countries, by, among other things, further developing concepts and promoting research in the field of communication development;
 6. **Approves** the orientations of Major Programme Area IV, 'Communication in the service of humanity', and invites the Director-General to base the biennial programming for 1990-1995 on the following programmes:
 - Programme IV.1:
'The free flow of information, and solidarity'
 - Programme IV.2:
'Communication for development'
 - Programme IV.3:
'The socio-cultural impact of new communication technologies'
 7. **Authorizes**, the Director-General in particular:
 - A. under Programme IV.1, *'The free flow of information, and solidarity'*, aimed at facilitating throughout the world the free flow of ideas by word and image, to implement the two following subprogrammes as follows:
 - (a) Subprogramme IV.1.1, *'The free flow of ideas by word and image'*, seeks to ensure the free flow of information, at international as well as national level, and its wider and better balanced dissemination, without any obstacle to freedom of expression, the Organization's action taking the following lines at operational level:^{*}
 - (i) encouraging the free flow of information, at international as well as national level;
 - (ii) promoting the wider and better balanced dissemination of information, without any obstacle to freedom of expression;

^{*} It being understood that the distinction between the first two concepts, set out under (i) and (ii), which are complementary but separated above for operational reasons, cannot be interpreted as excluding one or other of them, or as setting one against the other.



- (iii) developing all the appropriate means of strengthening communication capacities in the developing countries in order to increase their participation in the communication process;
- (iv) advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommending such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image;
- (b) Subprogramme IV.1.2, '*Communication and solidarity*', seeks:
 - (i) to reinforce all the functions of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) (mobilization of increased resources from the industrialized countries; intensification of its activities, particularly as regards the development of communication infrastructures, skills and capacities, in the developing countries; strengthening of international technical co-operation and particularly technical co-operation among developing countries);
 - (ii) to explore all possible ways of increasing communication skills and capacities in the developed and developing countries;
- B. under Programme IV.2, '*Communication for development*':
 - (a) to establish linkages between communication and the development of societies;
 - (b) to train journalists and other communication professionals, particularly in the developing countries;
- C. under Programme IV.3, '*The socio-cultural impact of new communication technologies*':
 - (a) to study the economic and socio-cultural impact of new communication technologies (appropriate utilization of low-cost technologies and impact of the media on societies, culture and cultural identities);
 - (b) to develop media education, by emphasizing the development of critical awareness, the ability to react to any kind of information received and the education of users to defend their rights;

8. **Further invites** the Director-General to ensure that the activities foreseen under this major programme area in the biennial programming for 1990-1995:
- (a) emphasize the need for a diversity of solutions to the problems of communication, promoting press freedom and the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, in response to the needs and values of each people and society;
 - (b) promote the establishment of appropriate technical means, including the satellite and terrestrial transmission of programmes, in order to extend the benefits of education, science and culture to all social groups and, in particular, to reduce the isolation of sparsely populated areas;
 - (c) contribute to a better understanding of the impact of new communication technologies on societies, culture and cultural identities;
 - (d) include *inter alia*, research and training activities in the areas closely related to matters mentioned in (a), (b) and (c) above, and strengthen in this regard co-operation among professional bodies and research institutions in all world regions;
 - (e) continue to be implemented in co-operation with the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies.

Promotion of Press Freedom in the World

Resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-sixth session – 1991

*(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV
at the twenty-sixth plenary meeting, on 6 November 1991)*

The General Conference,

Recalling 25 C/Resolution 104 set out in the Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995 and concerning Major Programme Area IV, ‘Communication in the service of humanity’,

Noting with satisfaction the decisions taken at the 136th session of the Executive Board concerning this major programme area,

Welcoming the scope provided in this programme for activities aimed at encouraging press freedom and the independence and pluralism of the private, public and other media in all regions,

Recognizing that a free, pluralist and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society,

Considering that the Seminar on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press (29 April – 3 May 1991), organized by UNESCO and the United Nations in Windhoek, Namibia, acted as a catalyst in the process of encouraging press freedom, independence and pluralism in Africa,

Congratulating the Director-General and the Secretariat on this initiative,

Noting with satisfaction the co-operation that developed at that meeting between UNESCO and the professional media associations,

Noting with interest the Declaration adopted by participants at the Windhoek seminar, which provides a reference for the development of independent and pluralist media in Africa,

Thanking the Director-General for his action aimed at providing positive follow-up to the recommendations made at the seminar, especially those mentioned in the annex to the Windhoek Declaration,

Invites the Director-General:

- (a) to extend to other regions of the world the action taken so far in Africa and Europe to encourage press freedom and to promote the independence and pluralism of the media;
- (b) to celebrate the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration adopted on 3 May 1991;
- (c) to transmit to the United Nations General Assembly the wish expressed by the Member States of UNESCO to have 3 May declared 'International Press Freedom Day';
- (d) to examine, with the United Nations Secretary-General, the possibility of issuing a joint report on the progress of press freedom in the world to mark this day.

Women and the Media

Resolution 4.3 adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-seventh session – 1993

*(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV
at the twenty-eighth plenary meeting, on 13 November 1993)*

The General Conference,

Recognizing that the promotion of the rights of women and the encouragement of their participation in the development and establishment of peace form part of the two common objectives of the United Nations system:

- (a) the promotion of sustainable and equitable development centred on human beings,
- (b) the construction of a peace based on human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy,

Recognizing that, almost everywhere in the world and irrespective of the culture to which they belong and the specific nature of the problems existing in the given national context, women share the same concerns and are subjected to brakes on and obstacles to their full participation in cultural, economic, social and political life,

Recalling that the question of relations between women and communication was acknowledged to be of fundamental importance by the first United Nations World Conference on Women in 1975,

Recalling the unceasing efforts being made by UNESCO to promote equality, improve the status of women and achieve their advancement in and through communication, in particular the decisions and recommendations contained in the following resolutions: 24C/Resolution3.1 (November 1987), 25C/Resolutions 4/108 and 109 (November 1989) and 26C/Resolutions 4.1 and 11.1 (November 1991),

Noting in particular that in the media there are few women at decision-making levels where influence can be exercised on content, policies and access to the means of expression,

Conscious that this under-representation of women at the decision-making levels in the media is both a symptom and a cause of the inequality between the sexes and discrimination against women,

Considering that communication could be a driving force in the promotion of women's responsible participation in development in a context of peace and equality,

1. **Notes with satisfaction** the impact evaluation of communication activities carried out for the benefit of women over the last decade (1981-1991) and 139 EX/Decision 4.2.1, which was adopted after examination of the evaluation;
2. **Approves** 141 EX/Decision 7.2.2, concerning UNESCO's participation in the major conferences and events in 1993-1996 (see 141 EX/42);
3. **Notes with satisfaction** that all the activities concerning women, including, therefore, those involving communication, will contribute to the implementation of the objectives established for the fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace (see 141EX/22, para. 44);
4. **Welcomes** the fact that under Major Programme Area IV, 'Communication, information and informatics in the service of humanity', UNESCO is making its own contribution to this fourth World Conference on Women (27 C/5, para. 04002, proposed resolution 4.1, para.2.A(c));
5. **Hopes** that the preparation of the World Conference on Women will play a pivotal role in the organization of communication activities for the benefit of women, including research, training and production;
6. **Recommends** that the preparation of this Conference form part of the implementation of strategies to transform the media into instruments to achieve equality, development and peace, in which context the seminar on women and the media is placed;



7. **Insists** that the seminar on women and the media provided for in paragraph 04110 of document 27 C/5 should be considered a priority both for the regular programme and when prospecting for extra-budgetary resources;
8. **Hopes** that exchanges of experience will take place not only between the North and the South;
9. **Invites** the Director-General to ensure:
 - (a) that account is taken of the conclusions of the impact evaluation of communication activities carried out for the benefit of women over the last decade;
 - (b) that the recommendations made by the Executive Board at its 139th session continue to be implemented;
 - (c) that there is a strengthening of efforts to mobilize more extra-budgetary resources for communication activities for the benefit of women, and that the resources earmarked for these activities under the regular programme are affected by budgetary restrictions only as a last resort;
10. **Invites** Member States to mobilize in order to provide the women and the media project, including its preparatory phase, with the required resources.

Role and Functions of Public Service Broadcasting

Resolution 4.6 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session – 1993

(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV at the twenty-eighth plenary meeting, on 13 November 1993)

The General Conference,

Recalling 25 C/Resolution 104, also contained in the Medium-Term Plan (1990-1995), which lays emphasis on the promotion of ‘the free flow of ideas by word and image ... at international as well as national levels’,

Recalling also 26 C/Resolution 4.1, in which it invites the Director-General ‘to examine and pursue concrete measures to encourage the freedom of the press and the independence, pluralism and diversity of public, private and other media in all regions’,

Bearing in mind the Declaration adopted by the Windhoek seminar on promoting an independent and pluralistic African press (29 April-3 May 1991), which stresses in particular that ‘the worldwide trend towards democracy and freedom of information and expression is a fundamental contribution to the fulfilment of human aspirations’,

Also bearing in mind the Declaration adopted by the Alma Ata seminar on promoting independent and pluralistic Asian media (5-9 October 1992), which invites UNESCO in its specific project proposals ‘to encourage the development of journalistically independent public service broadcasting in place of existing State-controlled broadcasting structures’,

Stressing the need, in this context, to explore more deeply the concept of public service by specifying the functions, particularly in the fields of education, science and culture, which it is meant to perform, and the means required,

Recognizing the experience acquired in this respect by many countries of different cultures and in different regions, and considering the opportunities for co-operation that could ensue,

Noting the urgent requests made in this respect by countries recently open to democracy,

Invites the Director-General to support and promote comprehensive action focusing on the role and functions of public service, and in so doing to take the advice of the international, regional and national professional organizations concerned and of the National Commissions.

Support to Cultural and Educational Activities Undertaken by Public Service Broadcasting, Media Professionals and Journalists to Reduce Violence in the Media

Resolution 4.5 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV at the twenty-second plenary meeting, on 15 November 1995)

The General Conference,

Bearing in mind UNESCO's commitment to communication in the service of humanity,

Mindful of the dangers, in particular for children, young people and women, of violence in video and television programmes and electronic games,

Expressing its gratitude to the Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication and to the Indian National Commission for UNESCO for the holding of the international round table on non-violence, tolerance and television (New Delhi, 1 April 1994),

Noting with satisfaction that, following that round table, the Secretariat drew up an international list of guiding principles formulated by various television companies with a view to reducing violence on television,

Recalling the conclusions of the international seminar on the target family: the image of the family in media productions (Courmayeur, 19-21 March 1995),

Taking into account the conclusions of the international round table on the cultural and educational functions of public service broadcasting (UNESCO, Paris, 3-5 July 1995),

Recalling Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the efforts made by the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO to organize an international seminar on violence on the screen and the rights of the child (Lund, Sweden, 26-27 September 1995),

Expressing satisfaction at the emphasis placed by the Director-General on action designed to encourage debate between professional media circles and representatives of civil society on the need to reduce violence on the screen,

Invites Member States:

- (a) to support public service radio and television broadcasting so that it can fulfil its cultural and educational mandate;
- (b) to encourage media professionals (responsible for production, programming and creation) to study possible ways and means of reducing violence on the screen, especially in fictional programmes;
- (c) to encourage journalists to give thought to violence in news programmes and to take steps towards reducing such violence, doing so in accordance with the codes of ethics established by the profession, and by the profession alone;
- (d) to make a positive contribution to international debate on this subject.

Promotion of Independent and Pluralist Media

Resolution 4.6 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV at the twenty-second plenary meeting, on 15 November 1995)

The General Conference,

Recalling Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, **Also recalling** resolution 4.3 adopted at its twenty-sixth session ‘recognizing that a free, pluralistic and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society’, and inviting the Director-General ‘to extend to other regions of the world the action ... to encourage press freedom and to promote the independence and pluralism of the media’,

Noting with satisfaction resolution 4.1 adopted at its twenty-seventh session and, in particular, paragraph 2.A.(a) inviting the Director-General ‘to promote the free flow of information at international and national levels, press freedom, independent and pluralistic media, and a better balanced dissemination of information, without any obstacle to the freedom of expression’,

Thanking the Director-General for having implemented, in accordance with the above resolution, a broad variety of activities, and in particular for having organized, in co-operation with the United Nations Department of Public Information and professional media organizations and with the assistance of a number of donor agencies, a series of regional seminars to promote press freedom, and independent and pluralistic media,

Stressing the outstanding importance of and endorsing the declarations adopted by the participants in the seminars held in Windhoek, Namibia (29 April-3 May 1991), in Almaty, Kazakstan (5-9 October 1992) and in Santiago, Chile (2-6 May 1994),

Convinced that the joint UNESCO/United Nations (Department of Public Information) regional seminar on promoting independent and pluralist Arab media to be held in Sana'a, Yemen, in early 1996 will contribute to creating conditions that will enable pluralist media to develop and participate effectively in the democratization and development processes in the Arab region,

Invites the Director-General to take adequate measures in order to prepare and organize, in co-operation with the United Nations Department of Public Information and professional media organizations and with the support of various funding sources, a similar regional seminar in Europe at the beginning of May 1997, also using this opportunity to celebrate International Press Freedom Day, whose creation was proposed in May 1991, in Windhoek, by the participants in the Seminar on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press.

Toronto and Beijing Platforms for Action on Women and the Media

Resolution 4.7 adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-eighth session, 1995

*(Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV
at the twenty-second plenary meeting, on 15 November 1995)*

The General Conference,

Recalling resolution 4.3 adopted at its twenty-seventh session ‘recognizing that the promotion of the rights of women and the encouragement of their participation in development and the establishment of peace form part of the two common objectives of the United Nations system:

- (a) the promotion of sustainable and equitable development centred on human beings,
- (b) the construction of a peace based on human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy’,

and ‘inviting the Director-General to ensure that account is taken of the conclusions of the impact evaluation of communication activities carried out for the benefit of women over the last decade (1981-1991)’,

Also recalling 144 EX/Decision 5.1.4 specifically concerning the Organization’s contribution to the fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace,

Noting with satisfaction that resolution 4.3 was implemented in a dynamic, concrete and constructive manner during the 1994-1995 biennium, and that the planning, preparation and proceedings of the International Symposium, ‘Women and the Media – Access to Expression and Decision-Making’, clearly met a need and aroused great interest not

only amongst those responsible for equality policies, but also amongst media professionals,

Emphasizing the quality of the discussions, results and recommendations of that International Symposium, recorded in the Toronto Platform for Action and taken into account in the preparation of the Beijing Platform for Action (section J),

1. *Adopts* the Toronto Platform for Action which, whilst respecting the necessary freedom of expression in and by the media, is a useful instrument for promoting the development of relevant and innovative projects for equality between men and women;
2. *Expresses* the wish that the short- and medium-term recommendations consistent with freedom of expression contained in the Beijing Platform for Action (section J) and, more particularly, in the Toronto Platform for Action should serve as a reference in determining and implementing priorities concerning communication policies relating to women, their rights and their potential, and that these concerns be systematically taken into account;
3. *Thanks* the Director-General for having suggested, in the follow-up to these recommendations, various activities on behalf of women for the next biennium (1996-1997) in and through communication;
4. *Recommends* that the activities proposed in document 28C/5 and within the WOMMED/FEMMED network, in particular those relating to community radio, new technologies and training, be considered as priorities both in the regular programme and in the search for extra-budgetary funding;
5. *Invites* the Director-General to take all appropriate measures to ensure the implementation of these activities during the next biennium;
6. *Urges* that an 'official for women' (m/f.) be appointed in the Communication, Information and Informatics Sector with permanent responsibility for all matters relating to women, as should be done in each sector;
7. *Invites* Member States to take all possible measures to promote the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Toronto and Beijing (section J) platforms for action.



New Information and Communication Technologies

Resolution 15 adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

*(Resolution adopted at the eighteenth plenary meeting,
on 13 November 1995)*

The General Conference,

Having examined documents 28 C/4 and 28 C/5,

Considering the significance of the paragraphs relating to the problems and challenges of the twenty-first century, and in particular the references contained therein to the new information and communication technologies,

Desirous, however, that this major issue should be presented in a uniform manner in document 28C/4,

Stressing the importance of the societal problems posed by these new technologies, which relate both to the isolation of individuals and to the threats to the maintenance of cultural and linguistic diversity and the widening of the gaps between the industrialized and the developing countries,

Mindful that the report of the Communication, Information and Informatics Sector (CII) Working Group on the Medium-Term Strategy of UNESCO (1996-2001) makes very critical observations in paragraph 9 about the potential dangers of an ‘information superhighway’ to developing nations,

Stressing further the potential inherent in such technologies for the development of educational methods, the flow of data and the expansion of intercultural exchanges,

Recalling that the intellectual and ethical mission of UNESCO concerns all its fields of competence,

Bearing in mind the recommendations of the Executive Board contained in documents 28 C/6 and 28 C/9, in particular paragraph 13 of document 28 C/9 and paragraph 64 of document 28C/6,

Invites the Director-General:

- (a) to ensure that in the final version of the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 attention is drawn to the rapid development of the new communication technologies in such a way as to prompt interdisciplinary and intersectoral reflection on these technologies as a factor of development, and to revise document 28C/5 accordingly;
- (b) to initiate in parallel therewith a wide-ranging discussion of the consequences of the development of such technologies for UNESCO's programmes in order to ensure that the Organization is able to anticipate and adapt to these changes for 1996-1997 on the basis of regional consultations;
- (c) to promote a deontological approach which is in keeping with UNESCO's ethical mission and which is aimed at achieving harmonious development of these technologies while ensuring respect for linguistic and cultural pluralism and for the right to privacy;
- (d) to take steps, beginning in the current biennium, to elaborate, together with the various partners concerned, specific and carefully monitored projects, in particular in the fields of distance education and virtual libraries.

Promoting the Free Flow of Information and the Development of Communication

Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001
 adopted by the General Conference
 at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

- 139 Although the word ‘communication’ is not reflected as such in UNESCO’s initials, the importance of communication was nevertheless recognized from the very inception of the Organization. Under its Constitution, UNESCO is expressly required to *promote the free flow of ideas by word and image* and to *collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of all peoples, through all means of mass communication*. Closely related to human rights and, in particular, to freedom of expression, communication is a factor for development and for the social welfare of humankind and also an essential component in the building of a world at peace. The importance of communication – above all the media – and information in all areas of human activity is beyond dispute, whether it be for spreading news or ideas, transmitting scientific or technological data, making people aware of matters essential to democratic life, or providing a medium for individual or collective cultural expression.
- 140 The new communication strategy adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session in 1989 will continue to serve as a reference for the Organization’s action during the period from 1996 to 2001. It aims, on the one hand, to encourage the free flow of information, at international as well as national level, and its wider and better balanced dissemination, without any obstacle to freedom of expression,

and, on the other hand, to strengthen communication capacities, particularly in the developing countries.

The free flow of ideas by word and image

- 141 In line with the first aim of this strategy, UNESCO will continue to promote freedom of expression and its corollary, freedom of the press, by encouraging the action of non-governmental and professional organizations working to defend these fundamental freedoms. It will help to establish conditions, nationally and regionally, conducive to the development of pluralist and independent media, whether public or private. In this connection, the Organization will assist with the preparation of national legislation and administrative, fiscal or other provisions, designed to ensure the freedom and pluralism of information. Member States which so wish will be helped to transform their government radio and television networks and news agencies into public services with editorial independence. Lastly, UNESCO will organize the exchange of experience by making comparative studies of national legislation guaranteeing press freedom.
- 142 At a time when the hitherto separate concerns of communication, i.e. the media, and specialized information are tending to move closer together because the technologies through which they are conveyed are now much the same, the principle of the 'free flow' of information should no doubt be widened to cover all forms of information that contribute to the progress of societies and their democratic functioning. The linking of telecommunications with information technology and the audio-visual media is opening up novel prospects for the progress of knowledge and the development of intellectual co-operation. However, although these technologies hold out great promise for the exchange of knowledge and know-how, for education and training – particularly distance education and continuous training – and for encouraging creativity and intercultural



dialogue, there is a considerable danger that they will be of benefit to only a minority of nations and to only a minority of the people in those nations. UNESCO will therefore have to be very aware of the risks of exclusion and of the new disparities, particularly between industrialized and developing countries, which these technologies could engender, now that the spread of messages and programmes across frontiers is increasing. It will be important to see that services of general and public interest, particularly data banks, remain, or become, accessible to as many people as possible.

- 143 Over and above its economic and social impact, the coming technological revolution will have major repercussions on all aspects of the life of societies. The relationship to information, and hence the organization of knowledge and thought, and ways of taking action and taking decisions, of working and relaxing, of perceiving time and space and even of creating language will be changed by it. Under the combined effect of technological advances and the globalization of communication, the maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity might well become a major issue. A very large number of both industrialized and developing countries run the risk of becoming mere 'consumers' of imported products and services (whether television programmes broadcast by satellite, audio-visual productions, data banks or electronic games) as their financial and technological capabilities or the size of their internal markets are inadequate to support a national production able to satisfy, even partly, the needs of their people.
- 144 In this very serious situation UNESCO's mandate, both intellectual and moral, urges it to promote reflection on the impact of these technologies, and to foster access to the possibilities they offer for educational, scientific and cultural development. The Organization therefore intends to offer the international community a forum for interdisciplinary debate on the new applications of the information and communication technologies so as to observe their development, consider their likely effects – both beneficial and harmful – on societies and individuals, and gauge their impact in the Organization's fields of competence. Young

people, enthusiastic consumers of the products generated by these new technologies, particularly the games, will be closely involved in this general debate, which will call on the broad spread of disciplines and areas covered by the Organization.

- 145 UNESCO will also help its Member States to frame integrated policies and strategies, taking account of the convergence of telecommunications, information technology and the electronic media, which will enable them to adapt themselves to this new technological environment and take advantage of the opportunities it offers. In establishing a dialogue between States and a process of consultation with the main industrial entities concerned, representatives of civil society and professional organizations, UNESCO will above all be setting itself the aim of helping to adapt technological innovations to the priority needs of the most disadvantaged and to encourage the production, distribution and circulation of a wide range of high-quality cultural programmes and products.
- 146 While maintaining this intellectual 'watchdog' function, UNESCO will look into the methodological, legal and ethical aspects of the processing and distribution of specialized information. The confidentiality of the information in data banks, the security of these banks, the pirating of information and 'computer crime' are posing problems that are increasingly difficult to solve owing to the growing interconnection of computer networks. Another awkward problem is the protection of intellectual property rights connected with the new multimedia products and services available 'on line' via computerized networks. The establishment of technical standards and unified procedures for the processing of information and access to existing international computerized research networks is another way by which the 'free flow' of information can be facilitated. UNESCO will pursue its work in this field in co-operation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), other intergovernmental organizations, and the professional and academic communities concerned in order to help meet the expectations of present and potential users in many countries.



Building capacities and developing skills

- 147 In line with the second aim of the Medium-Term Strategy, UNESCO will continue to encourage the development of the communication, information and informatics capacities of Member States. UNESCO's efforts will be mainly directed towards extending infrastructure and improving vocational training in developing countries and in countries in transition to democracy. Its catalytic action will be aimed, in particular, at securing international technical co-operation through the intergovernmental programmes set up for that purpose, i.e. the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the General Information Programme (PGI) and the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP). PGI will have to become one of the Organization's main consultative bodies in matters relating to the 'information superhighway', while at the same time proposing innovative activities to enable populations remote from information sources to have access to them.
- 148 The Organization will support what many higher education institutions and professional organizations are doing to include professional ethics in training and further training programmes for communication specialists. The network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication (ORBICOM) and the network of schools of journalism associated with UNESCO will be called upon to play an active role in this work. By encouraging the establishment of networks of co-operation between schools and academic institutions concerned with the training of librarians, archivists and information specialists, the Organization will seek to establish a new range of professional qualifications adapted to the processing of information for decision-making purposes. In the training of informatics specialists and users, priority will be given to training high-level instructors and young users. In all these activities, emphasis will be placed on the integrated teaching of information and communication technologies, particularly through the development of

- modular programmes suited to different groups of learners and different contexts.
- 149 For many years, and especially since the establishment in 1980 of the International Programme for the Development of Communication, UNESCO has sought to increase the means available to developing countries for the production, transmission and distribution of information and programmes, e.g. national and regional news agencies, radio and television stations, the rural press, and so forth. This will continue to be done, with high priority being given during the six years covered by the Medium-Term Strategy to improving the communication capacities of people living in the most disadvantaged rural and urban areas. Emphasis will be placed on the development of community media, such as local radio stations and the local press, and on the provision of low-cost technology and equipment using renewable energy such as solar power. The Organization will also support municipalities in setting up communication systems, especially in cities, aimed at improving intercommunal relations and at fostering participation by the public in municipal management. It will also continue to assist producers in developing countries by providing them with equipment that comes up to international professional standards and by facilitating their access to the various regional and international audio-visual markets.
- 150 Another of UNESCO's objectives is to improve the organization and operation of libraries, archives and information systems in developing countries. Their role of educational and cultural 'focus' will grow considerably in the years to come, so UNESCO will aim particularly to bring within their reach the benefits of new technologies so that the knowledge accumulated by them can be managed better and made more accessible. From this point of view, the 'virtual library' concept will be explored more deeply and tried out in different socio-economic contexts. Similarly, the Organization will encourage the twinning of libraries and their grouping into networks for the purpose of fostering co-operation and exchanges of publications or staff between them. The UNESCO Network of Associated



- Libraries (UNAL) is expected to play an important role in this respect.
- 151 UNESCO's Constitution assigns it the task of *ensuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books [and] works of art*. This is the aim of the 'Memory of the World' project, launched in 1991, which endeavours to seek out documents, manuscripts, collections and archives, including sound and visual archives, that should be safeguarded. By helping Member States to conserve such works and by mobilizing the knowledge and skills needed for their restoration, reproduction and storage and their circulation among a vast public, UNESCO is hoping to help safeguard and bring to the fore an important portion of the heritage of mankind.
 - 152 Increased efforts will be needed to develop regional information technology networks since, for developing countries, such networks may be the first steps on the route towards the 'information superhighways' that are beginning to be set up. They should also, in the long term, make it possible to link up regions that are poorly served at present. UNESCO will thus help to ensure that they are technically compatible and linked with existing international research networks.
 - 153 The establishment of networks, national, regional and international, the advent of multimedia products and current technological developments could be a great asset for educational, scientific and cultural development. The Organization will seek, through pilot projects, to promote the application of information and communication technologies in all its fields of competence. The aim of these projects, developed in conjunction with the professional communities concerned, will be to design information services and tools using the possibilities offered by the multimedia approach, to explore the potential afforded by the 'virtual laboratory' concept in opening up academic circles and research centres in developing countries, and to develop partnerships between users and telecommunications operators in order to obtain more favourable conditions of access to the networks.

Contributing to Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Peace-Building

Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001
adopted by the General Conference
at its twenty-eighth session – 1995

- 187 In addition to the long-term action UNESCO is undertaking for peace, it is increasingly being asked to assist, together with the other United Nations system organizations, funds and programmes, in seeking solutions in the three fields of action referred to by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in *An Agenda for Peace*: conflict prevention, emergency assistance and post-conflict peace-building.
- 188 These are new fields of action for UNESCO, which in consequence required to explore, with due caution, new roles in order to carry out its specific constitutional mission – constructing peace in the minds of men – by helping to lay the intellectual and moral foundations of reconciliation between parties to conflicts. It goes without saying that in such cases the Organization acts only strictly within its fields of competence and at the request of the Member States concerned or on initiatives taken under the auspices of the United Nations.
- 189 With regard to conflict prevention, UNESCO will strengthen its clearing-house function for the exchange of information on current research and experience concerning the means of ensuring the early detection and peaceful settlement of conflicts. To that end it will co-operate with research centres, institutes and organizations and programmes

working on the theme of peace. The emphasis will be on the study of the new conditions for security and on the promotion of innovative methods of conflict management, drawing for instance on the rich store of experience of conflict management to be found in traditional cultures. UNESCO will also assist Member States that so wish to organize the transfer and sharing of experience in the matter, particularly through national or regional culture of peace forums or by establishing 'Culture of Peace Centres', where members of different communities in countries where there is ethnic tension will be able to talk together.

- 190 With regard to emergency assistance, UNESCO has become a strong advocate in the international community of the idea that humanitarian assistance cannot be reduced merely to the supply of food, medicine and blankets; that there must be a close link between the concepts of 'relief', 'rehabilitation' and 'long-term development'; and that emergency operations must include from the beginning a local training component. This idea has gained ground: there is growing recognition of the principle that the victims of conflicts have an equally inalienable right to education as all other human beings. UNESCO's strategy therefore consists in endeavouring to set up temporary educational structures in emergency situations, particularly for displaced persons and refugees. There, too, the Organization's role can only be as a catalyst: it is not so much to build schools or print school textbooks as to assess priority education needs, formulate strategies to meet them in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) and contribute to the formulation of consolidated appeals for international humanitarian assistance co-ordinated by the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA).
- 191 While education is one of the high priorities in emergency situations, assistance to the independent media can prove to be fundamental to the reconciliation process. We are only too well aware of the role played by warmongering propaganda and incitement to hatred in triggering and aggravating conflicts. UNESCO will therefore continue,



as it has done in Bosnia and elsewhere, to support, together with the United Nations and professional organizations, local media whose independence of the parties to the conflict is internationally acknowledged, which provide non-partisan information and which defend the values of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding.

- 192 It is most of all during the reconstruction period following the conclusion of peace agreements, however, that vast fields of action open up to UNESCO: peace-building, especially the building of civil peace, can rest only on genuine national consensus, that is on the widespread desire to plan and construct peace together. That implies a considerable effort to sensitize and educate the main actors in civil society, and here education, science, culture and communication all have their part to play. It does not just mean rebuilding the institutions destroyed during a conflict – even if that is a priority objective; it means doing so in such a way that the foundations of a democratic, pluralist and participatory society are laid at the same time.
- 193 Here again, education – in its broadest sense – has a key role to play, not only in building the bases of democratic citizenship; not only in alleviating the psychological after-effects of conflict for young people; but also in ensuring that all sections of the population who have been excluded because of their age or sex, their ethnic origin or religious beliefs, their political or economic situation or their geographical position are given a real opportunity to be brought back into social and working life. It is in that context that the concept of 'learning without frontiers' will find its most innovative field of application, the idea being to set up systems of intensive and varied training adapted to the needs of each learner that would enable everyone – and most particularly those who, because of the conflict itself, have 'missed' the education train – to enjoy a second chance of developing their full intellectual and human potential.
- 194 Communication is also an essential tool for reconstructing civil societies torn apart by conflict: freedom of the press, pluralism and independence of the media, development of community newspapers and radio stations are crucial to the

re-establishment of social bonds and to the reconciliation process.

- 195 The national programmes UNESCO has launched in recent years in countries emerging from conflict (in El Salvador and Mozambique), the programmes currently being prepared (in Burundi, Guatemala, Haiti and Rwanda) and those it may initiate during the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy are intended to support national reconstruction efforts in the Organization's fields of competence. Their originality, though, lies in the fact that they seek to create the necessary climate for the establishment of genuine interaction between all the parties concerned. They involve protagonists from all sides, governmental as well as non-governmental, in the implementation of development projects relating to the Organization's various fields of competence, and in many cases to several at once. The projects all contain an element of training in methods of conflict management and an educational component designed to disseminate the values of human rights and democracy. As such, these national culture of peace programmes are intended to illustrate and put into practice in the field, where the action is, the relation of interdependence between peace, development, human rights and democracy.