

838 (IX). Draft International Code of Ethics for the use of information personnel

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous decisions, in its resolutions 635 (VII) of 16 December 1952 and 736 B (VIII) of 28 November 1953, concerning the draft International Code⁸ of Ethics for the use of information personnel,

Noting the Secretary-General's report⁹ on the question of organizing an international professional conference to prepare the final text of such a Code,

Noting further that the information enterprises and national and international associations which favour the organization of a conference do not appear to constitute a sufficiently representative group,

Reaffirming its interest in the improvement of standards of conduct and performance for information personnel, through measures adopted by professional action,

Decides:

(a) To take no further action at the present time in regard to the organization of such a conference;

(b) To request the Secretary-General to transmit the text of the draft International Code of Ethics for the use of information personnel, together with his report¹⁰ to the enterprises and associations with which he has been in communication regarding this matter, for their information and for such action as they may deem proper.

*514th plenary meeting,
17 December 1954.*

839 (IX). Technical assistance in freedom of information

The General Assembly,

Noting Economic and Social Council resolution 522 J (XVII) of 29 April 1954 concerning technical assistance in freedom of information,

Authorizes the Secretary-General to render, at the request of Member States, services which do not fall within the scope and objectives of existing technical assistance programmes, in order to assist these States in promoting freedom of information.

*514th plenary meeting,
17 December 1954.*

840 (IX). Draft Convention on Freedom of Information

The General Assembly,

Considering that it has not studied the draft Convention¹¹ on Freedom of Information during its sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth sessions,

Recalling its decision, in resolution 631 (VII) of 16 December 1952, that it would consider, *inter alia*, the draft Convention on Freedom of Information in the

⁸ *Ibid.*, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 4 A.

⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 29, documents A/2691 and Add. 1 and 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Seventh Session, Annexes, agenda item 29, document A/AC.42/7 and Corr.1, annex.

light of the report¹² of the Rapporteur on Freedom of Information to the Economic and Social Council and after the Council had had an opportunity to examine that report,

Noting that the Rapporteur on Freedom of Information has made recommendations for further consideration of the draft Convention,

Considering the reasons why the Convention has been delayed, as pointed out by the Rapporteur,

Noting that the Economic and Social Council has not made any recommendations for further action on the draft Convention,

Considering the importance of freedom of information as a fundamental human right and the necessity for giving the conclusion of a convention on this right high priority in the work of the United Nations,

Noting that the draft International Covenants on Human Rights are to be discussed during the tenth session of the General Assembly,

1. Requests the Economic and Social Council to continue its efforts on the technical level to promote freedom of information;

2. Further requests the Economic and Social Council to discuss, at its nineteenth session, the draft Convention on Freedom of Information and to formulate recommendations for the consideration of the General Assembly, taking into account the views expressed and the proposals made on this subject at the ninth and previous sessions of the General Assembly;

3. Decides to discuss the draft Convention on Freedom of Information not later than at its eleventh session, including such recommendations as the Economic and Social Council may make.

*514th plenary meeting,
17 December 1954.*

841 (IX). International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace (Geneva, 1936)

The General Assembly,

Considering that the International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace (Geneva, 1936)¹³ constitutes an important element in the field of freedom of information,

Considering that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 24 (I) of 12 February 1946, the custodial functions mentioned in the Convention have already been assumed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and that the Convention is still in force,

Considering further that by taking over, by agreement between the Parties to the Convention, the powers and functions established by certain provisions of the Convention, the United Nations can give full effect to all the provisions of the Convention in question,

Decides:

1. To request States which are Parties to the International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace (Geneva, 1936) to state whether they wish to transfer to the United Nations

¹² See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixteenth Session, Supplement No. 12.*

¹³ See League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. CLXXXVI, 1938, p. 301.

the functions which were performed, under the terms of that Convention, by the League of Nations;

2. To instruct the Secretary-General:

(a) To prepare for this purpose a draft protocol concerning the transfer to the United Nations of the functions assigned to the League of Nations under the International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace;

(b) To provide in the draft protocol for the accession of Members and non-members of the United Nations which are not Parties or signatories to the Convention, and also for such legal or other adjustments as may be necessitated by current conditions; including new articles, based on General Assembly resolution 424 (V) of 14 December 1950, to provide that each High Contracting Party shall refrain from radio broadcasts that would mean unfair attacks or slanders against other peoples anywhere and in so doing conform strictly to an ethical conduct in the interest of world peace by reporting facts truly and objectively, and to provide that each High Contracting Party shall not interfere with the reception, within its territory, of foreign radio broadcasts;

(c) To circulate the draft protocol to the International Convention concerning the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace to the States Parties to that Convention.

*514th plenary meeting,
17 December 1954.*

842 (IX). Forced labour

The General Assembly,

Having noted Economic and Social Council resolution 524 (XVII) of 27 April 1954 concerning the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Forced Labour,

1. *Endorses* the condemnation by the Economic and Social Council of the existence of systems of forced labour which are employed as a means of political coercion or punishment for holding or expressing political views, and which are on such a scale as to constitute an important element in the economy of a given country;

2. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council and the International Labour Organisation to continue their efforts towards the abolition of such systems of forced labour;

3. *Supports* the Council's appeal to all Governments to re-examine their laws and administrative practices in the light of present conditions and the increasing desire of the peoples of the world to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person;

4. *Expresses its satisfaction* with the action taken by the Economic and Social Council in requesting the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the International Labour Office to prepare a further report on this subject for consideration by the Council at its nineteenth session, setting out:

(a) Whatever replies are received from Governments in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 740 (VIII) of 7 December 1953;

(b) Any new information on systems of forced labour which might be submitted by Member States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in consultative status, together with any comments submitted by the Governments concerned.

*514th plenary meeting,
17 December 1954.*

843 (IX). Status of women in private law: customs, ancient laws and practices affecting the human dignity of women

The General Assembly,

Recalling the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Considering that, in certain areas of the world, women are subject to customs, ancient laws and practices relating to marriage and the family which are inconsistent with these principles,

Believing that the elimination of such customs, ancient laws and practices would tend to the recognition of the human dignity of women and contribute to the benefit of the family as an institution,

Having considered Economic and Social Council resolution 547 H (XVIII) of 12 July 1954,

1. *Urges* all States, including States which have or assume responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, to take all appropriate measures in the countries and Territories under their jurisdiction with a view to abolishing such customs, ancient laws and practices by ensuring complete freedom in the choice of a spouse; abolishing the practice of the bride-price; guaranteeing the right of widows to the custody of their children and their freedom as to remarriage; eliminating completely child marriages and the betrothal of young girls before the age of puberty and establishing appropriate penalties where necessary; establishing a civil or other register in which all marriages and divorces will be recorded; ensuring that all cases involving personal rights be tried before a competent judicial body; ensuring also that family allowances, where these are provided, be administered in such a way as to benefit directly the mother and child;

2. *Recommends* that special efforts be made through fundamental education, in both private and public schools, and through various media of communication, to inform public opinion in all areas mentioned in the second paragraph of the preamble above concerning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and existing decrees and legislation which affect the status of women.

*514th plenary meeting,
17 December 1954.*