



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fourth session

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACCESS FOR NEWS PERSONNEL ACCREDITED TO THE UNITED NATIONS

#### Note by the Secretary-General

1. Pursuant to resolution 59 (I) of the General Assembly and resolution 74 (V) of the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information was held at Geneva from 23 March to 21 April 1948. The Final Act of the Conference is contained in E/CONF.6/79.

2. Resolution No. 9 of the Final Act of the Conference reads:

"Considering that the United Nations, in accordance with the aims and purposes of its Charter, should be prepared to grant all the necessary facilities for enabling media of information to function with full freedom and responsibility in following the course of its work and that of Conferences called by it and its specialized agencies,

#### The United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information

Recommends that the United Nations General Assembly adopt a resolution urging that accredited news personnel of all countries should have free access:

(a) To countries where meetings of the United Nations or its specialized agencies or any Conferences convened by them take place, in accordance with the terms and conditions of agreements made by the United Nations or its specialized agencies with the Governments of such countries; and

(b) To all sources of information connected with such meetings except in cases where, in accordance with the rules of procedure, meetings are held in private."

3. At its seventh session, the Economic and Social Council, by resolution 152 (VII), transmitted, inter alia, this resolution to the General Assembly.

4. During the second part of the third regular session of the General Assembly the Third Committee, at its 225th meeting, considered this resolution. At its 211th plenary meeting on 13 May 1949, the General Assembly adopted resolution 277 (III) B, under the terms of which resolution No. 9 was referred to the Economic and Social Council for appropriate action, at the Council's discretion.

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5. During its ninth session (July - August 1949) the Economic and Social Council referred the item to its Social Committee which considered the resolution at its 88th and 89th meetings. The Committee had before it documents E/1352 and E/1352/Corr.1, which were prepared by the Secretary-General and contained relevant extracts from agreements between the United Nations and Governments and specialized agencies and Governments. At its 302nd plenary meeting the Council decided as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Having considered resolution No. 9 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information\*,

"Recommends the following draft resolution for the consideration of the General Assembly:

"The General Assembly,

"Considering that the United Nations, in accordance with the aims and purposes of its Charter, should be prepared to grant all the necessary facilities for enabling media of information to function with full freedom and responsibility in following the course of its work and that of conferences called by it and its specialized agencies,

"Urges all States Members of the United Nations to grant news personnel of all countries who have been accredited to the United Nations or specialized agencies, as the case may be, free access

"(a) To countries where meetings of the United Nations or specialized agencies or any conferences convened by them take place, for the purpose of covering such meetings, in accordance with the terms and conditions of agreements made by the United Nations or its specialized agencies with the Governments of such countries, or, in the absence of such an agreement, on terms and conditions similar to those contained in agreements made by the United Nations or its specialized agencies with other Member States; and

"(b) To all public information sources and services of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and to all meetings and conferences of the United Nations or of the specialized agencies which are open to the Press, equally and without discrimination."

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\* See E/CONF.6/79 (Final Act of the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information).