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## COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
AND OF THE PRESS

## DECLARATION ON PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

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Considering, that the Freedom of man means first of all the choice of one's own law accepted freely and devoid from any external compulsion and that on the after hand the Freedom of mankind as a whole, excludes all action inconsistent with the equality of rights, available to everybody under the same condition the assertion must be made first of all, that only Peace, progress and the well-being of humanity has to constitute the scope and task of the freedom of information.

In view of this scope and the experience of the two horrible wars of this century, all persons and peoples are bound to observe more conscientiously and effectively those principles, the contempt and violation of which constituted the essential elements of the crimes of nazism and fascism. Even for the future this contempt represents a great danger to humanity until it be overcome whatever and in whatever form it reappears.

It is particularly necessary to promote, sustain and encourage with all available means the principle that:

1. The indelible and always prevailing impulse to search, to learn and to hear the truth; that to love it, to say it and to defend it even at the cost of life constitutes the common basis and standard of all highest values of civilization which correspond with objective reality, embracing the whole of humanity and the whole world. In order to come

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near it permanent selfcontrols of one's own knowledge and faith is required and their permanent comparison with the knowledge and the faith of others.

2. The mutual relation among peoples as well as among individuals must be based on the rule, that nobody is allowed to do to others what he doesn't want them to do to himself and that everybody ought to do himself what he wishes the others to do on their part.

3. The force of physical weapons as means of threat, of compulsion and of destruction must not be used except in case of defense against aggression within the limits of international agreements concerning the safeguard of the peace.

4. No intervention into the sphere of self determination and of domestic jurisdiction of states is allowed to anybody with the exception of conditions determined by previous international agreements concluded in order to counteract aggression.

5. The people must mutually respect their own respective ways of thinking, feeling and dealing with problems of their self determination, while exercising patience and tolerance towards the differences of their development and conditions of life.

6. All social, economic and humanitarian problems raised by the incessant progress of technical civilization, being by far swifter than the evolution of moral and legal conceptions, must be solved in co-operation of all nations.

7. All hatred, prejudice, fear and suspicion, caused by ignorance, misunderstanding and by differences in the various conceptions and notions of common interest must be dispersed by a flow of friendly interchange of news, of ideas and opinions made as free as possible.

8. Nations must be protected against lies and any other form of preparation to aggression by codification, either private or legal,

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national or international, of rules of competence, of rights and obligations to which the personnel engaged in the service of information is pledged.

9. The service of interchange of information, be it reserved to governmental services or to private enterprise must not be considered as a trade or profession ruled by profit of individuals or exclusive groups but as a mission submitted to effective control, both preventive and repressive as inspired by public interest.

10. The abuses of freedom must be counteracted in future more consistently and effectively than before the last war. They must be fought in time so as not to be able to cause an evil which is much more difficult to repair later on. However, it is desirable that the freedom to express opinions be not impaired except in cases well determined by public regulations in order not to reduce a useful public interchange of different ideas on vital means and ways which may lead to a common purpose. Accordingly no ill-will should thus be impeded to demask itself.

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