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SOCIAL COUNCIL



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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information

and of the Press

Fifth Session

PUBLICITY GIVEN BY THE UNITED NATIONS TO  
RESOLUTIONS NO. 2 AND NO. 3 OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its fourth session, the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press adopted a resolution concerning the application of resolution No. 2 and No. 3 of the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information. In that resolution, the Sub-Commission requested the Secretary-General "to submit to the fifth session of the Sub-Commission a full report... on the publicity already given these resolutions by the United Nations" (resolutions No. 2 and No. 3 of the Geneva Conference). Further to that request, the Secretary-General has the honour to communicate the following information to the Sub-Commission.

2. While the Geneva Conference was still in session, the United Nations European Information Centre published press releases giving accounts of the discussions which had led to the adoption of resolutions Nos. 2 and 3. The text of those resolutions was made public immediately after their adoption and analysed in the round-up published at the end of the Conference.

The United Nations Radio broadcast in all its languages accounts of the discussions which led to the adoption of the resolutions and an analysis of their contents.

The United Nations Bulletin (a fortnightly publication) published (beginning on 1 May 1948) two articles on the work of the Conference including resolutions Nos. 2 and 3.

Subsequently, whenever the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press or the Economic and Social Council dealt with these questions in 1949 and 1950, a report on the discussions and decisions were given in press releases, radio broadcasts and articles in the United Nations Bulletin.

3. It should be added that the United Nations Secretariat in its activities not only bears in mind but is also constantly guided by the text and the spirit of resolutions Nos. 2 and 3. The Department of Public Information, whose principal task it is to keep public opinion informed of the discussions and decisions of various United Nations organs, does not merely abstain, as recommended in resolution No. 2, from "all propaganda either designed or likely to provoke or encourage any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, and all distortion and falsification of news". As recommended in resolution No. 2, it exercises special care in its press releases, radio broadcasts and publications to report on the work of the United Nations in conformity with the purposes of the United Nations as defined in the Charter and "in a spirit of accuracy (and) fairness".