

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/3868/Add.1
20 August 1958

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/SPANISH

Thirteenth session

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Views and Suggestions of Governments concerning the
draft Convention on Freedom of Information

Report by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to inform the General Assembly that pursuant to its resolution 1189 A (XII), additional Governments have transmitted their views and suggestions concerning the draft Convention on Freedom of Information, as follows:

HUNGARY

"The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic regards as highly important that an International Convention on Freedom of Information should be concluded. A Convention on this subject could be of great service to the mutual understanding and friendship of peoples and to furthering the expansion of international relations, if, apart from guaranteeing the freedom of information, it would prevent the spreading of false, distorted news jeopardizing international peace and co-operation. Therefore, the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic considers it absolutely necessary for this question to receive priority when discussing the draft Convention at the thirteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly and, further, that the utmost be done to formulate a draft Convention which will be acceptable to all States.

"The competent bodies of the Hungarian People's Republic are studying in detail the draft Convention ... Their comments, or possible proposals for amendment or addition to the draft, will be submitted at a later stage."

INDIA

"The Government of India have no comments to offer on the proposed draft Convention except that in their opinion article 2 - 1 (a) should be amended to read 'The protection in the interest of national safety' and that article 2 - 1 (j) of the draft Convention prepared by the United Nations

Conference on Freedom of Information, 1948, reading 'The systematic diffusion of deliberately false or distorted reports which undermine friendly relations between peoples or States' should be added to the draft Convention now before the Assembly.

"The Government of India are in favour of convening a conference of plenipotentiaries with a view to adopting the Convention and if this is not feasible, the Third Committee of the General Assembly may take upon itself the task of detailed examination of the draft Convention on Freedom of Information."

[Note. The Government of India also transmitted a statement concerning legal provisions relating to freedom of information in India.]

PAKISTAN

"The Government of Pakistan has the following comments to offer on the draft Convention on Freedom of Information:

"1. Article 2 of the draft Convention.

Circulation or dissemination of religious propaganda against the personality and character of the Holy Prophet which would injure the feelings of the Muslim people should be provided against in the Convention. Such a provision should be so worded as to exclude the publication of objectionable material against the Holy Prophet of Islam and, for that matter, against all other holy figures held in religious esteem.

"2. Article 11(b).

It might not always be possible or desirable to give specific reasons for the declaration of public emergency. The Government of Pakistan are, therefore, of the view that the words 'and of the reasons therefore' may be deleted from this article.

"A brief resume of the legal provisions leading to the freedom of information in Pakistan is also enclosed herewith. Terms like 'His Majesty' and 'His Majesty's subjects' occurring in our statutes are being suitably substituted by an Adaptation Order under article 22⁴ of the Constitution of Pakistan. Such an Adaptation Order is being finalized by the Pakistan Government."
