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DRAFT INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Memorandum by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 833 (IX), adopted on 4 December 1954, the General Assembly invited the specialized agencies to communicate to the Secretary-General any observations they might wish to make with regard to the draft international covenants on human rights, and requested the Secretary-General to distribute to Governments, as soon as they were received, the communications which might be received from specialized agencies.

The Secretary-General has therefore the honour to reproduce below the text of a letter dated 17 May 1955 received from the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization:

Paris, 17 May 1955

"I have the honour to refer to General Assembly resolution 833 (IX), according to which the Assembly invited the specialized agencies to communicate to you within six months of the end of that session, any observations they might wish to make with regard to the draft Covenants on Human Rights.

"This Organization has participated throughout in the preparation of the draft Covenants and at meetings of the Commission on Human Rights. In 1952 a Special Committee of the Executive Board of UNESCO examined the draft Covenants and submitted observations to the Board.

"At its twenty-ninth session, the Executive Board, having studied the report of the Special Committee and endorsed the views and conclusions set forth therein, requested the Director-General 'to present UNESCO's observations on the basis of these views and conclusions, to the various organs of the United Nations responsible for preparing the Covenants on Human Rights'.

"The report was despatched to you on 8 April 1952 (XR 289280) and you transmitted it (document E/CN.4/655, Add.4) to the Commission on Human Rights (eighth session).

"At its thirty-sixth session the Executive Board, on the report of its Special Committee, formulated further observations relating to the draft article on freedom of information and to the implementation procedure. According to the instructions of the Executive Board, I transmitted these observations to you by letter of 16 December 1953. You submitted them to the Commission on Human Rights at its tenth Session (document E/CN.4/692/Add.2).

"At its eighth session, the General Conference of UNESCO, by resolution IV.1.7.4. - reaffirmed the importance it attached to the speediest and fullest possible implementation of human rights in matters of education and culture; and authorized the Director-General to draw the attention of the competent bodies of the United Nations, when they reconsider the draft Covenants, to the drafting proposals and comments already submitted by UNESCO.

"At its most recent session, 21 March to 1 April 1955, the Executive Board considered the General Assembly resolution 833 (IX) above referred to, and invited the Director-General 'to call to the attention of the competent organs of the United Nations the observations on the draft Covenants made by the Board at its twenty-ninth and thirty-sixth sessions'.

"Accordingly, I am writing to ask you to bring to the attention of the General Assembly and of any other competent organ of the United Nations, the comments and observations already made by this Organization.

(Signed) Luther H. EVANS
Director-General"
