



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**DECLARATION OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON THE USE OF  
SATELLITE BROADCASTING FOR THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION  
THE SPREAD OF EDUCATION AND GREATER CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization meeting in Paris at its seventeenth session in 1972,

Recognizing that the development of communication satellites capable of broadcasting programmes for community or individual reception establishes a new dimension in international communication,

Recalling that under its Constitution the purpose of Unesco is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture, and that, to realize this purpose, the Organization will collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image,

Recalling that the Charter of the United Nations specifies, among the purposes and principles of the United Nations, the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights, the non-interference in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, the achievement of international co-operation and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Bearing in mind that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that everyone has the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, that everyone has the right to education and that everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, as well as the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author,

Recalling the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space (resolution 1962 (XVIII) of 13 December 1963), and the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, of 1967 (hereinafter referred to as the Outer Space Treaty),

Taking account of United Nations General Assembly resolution 110 (II) of 3 November 1947, condemning propaganda designed or likely to provoke or encourage any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, which resolution as stated in the preamble to the Outer Space Treaty is applicable to outer space; and the United Nations General Assembly resolution 1721 D (XVI) of 20 December 1961 declaring that communication by means of satellites should be available as soon as practicable on a global and non-discriminatory basis,

Bearing in mind the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation adopted by the General Conference of Unesco, at its fourteenth session,

Considering that radio frequencies are a limited natural resource belonging to all nations, that their use is regulated by the International Telecommunications Convention and its Radio Regulations and that the assignment of adequate frequencies is essential to the use of satellite broadcasting for education, science, culture and information,

Noting the United Nations General Assembly resolution 2733 (XXV) of 16 December 1970 recommending that Member States, regional and international organizations, including broadcasting associations, should promote and encourage international co-operation at regional and other levels in order to allow all participating parties to share in the establishment and operation of regional satellite broadcasting services,

Noting further that the same resolution invites Unesco to continue to promote the use of satellite broadcasting for the advancement of education and training, science and culture, and in consultation with appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and broadcasting associations, to direct its efforts towards the solution of problems falling within its mandate,

Proclaims on the 15th day of November 1972, this Declaration of Guiding Principles on the Use of Satellite Broadcasting for the Free Flow of Information, the Spread of Education and Greater Cultural Exchange:

#### Article I

The use of Outer Space being governed by international law, the development of satellite broadcasting shall be guided by the principles and rules of international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations and the Outer Space Treaty.

#### Article II

1. Satellite broadcasting shall respect the sovereignty and equality of all States.
2. Satellite broadcasting shall be apolitical and conducted with due regard for the rights of individual persons and non-governmental entities, as recognized by States and international law.

#### Article III

1. The benefits of satellite broadcasting should be available to all countries without discrimination and regardless of their degree of development.
2. The use of satellites for broadcasting should be based on international co-operation, world-wide and regional, intergovernmental and professional.

#### Article IV

1. Satellite broadcasting provides a new means of disseminating knowledge and promoting better understanding among peoples.
2. The fulfilment of these potentialities requires that account be taken of the needs and rights of audiences, as well as the objectives of peace, friendship and co-operation between peoples, and of economic, social and cultural progress.

#### Article V

1. The objective of satellite broadcasting for the free flow of information is to ensure the widest possible dissemination, among the peoples of the world, of news of all countries, developed and developing alike.
2. Satellite broadcasting, making possible instantaneous world-wide dissemination of news, requires that every effort be made to ensure the factual accuracy of the information reaching the public. News broadcasts shall identify the body which assumes responsibility for the news programme as a whole, attributing where appropriate particular news items to their source.

#### Article VI

1. The objectives of satellite broadcasting for the spread of education are to accelerate the expansion of education, extend educational opportunities, improve the content of school curricula, further the training of educators, assist in the struggle against illiteracy, and help ensure life-long education.
2. Each country has the right to decide on the content of the educational programmes broadcast by satellite to its people and, in cases where such programmes are produced in co-operation with other countries, to take part in their planning and production, on a free and equal footing.

#### Article VII

1. The objective of satellite broadcasting for the promotion of cultural exchange is to foster greater contact and mutual understanding between peoples by permitting audiences to enjoy, on an unprecedented scale, programmes on each other's social and cultural life including artistic performances and sporting and other events.

2. Cultural programmes, while promoting the enrichment of all cultures, should respect the distinctive character, the value and the dignity of each, and the right of all countries and peoples to preserve their cultures as part of the common heritage of mankind.

#### Article VIII

Broadcasters and their national, regional and international associations should be encouraged to co-operate in the production and exchange of programmes and in all other aspects of satellite broadcasting including the training of technical and programme personnel.

#### Article IX

1. In order to further the objectives set out in the preceding articles, it is necessary that States, taking into account the principle of freedom of information, reach or promote prior agreements concerning direct satellite broadcasting to the population of countries other than the country of origin of the transmission.

2. With respect to commercial advertising, its transmission shall be subject to specific agreement between the originating and receiving countries.

#### Article X

In the preparation of programmes for direct broadcasting to other countries, account shall be taken of differences in the national laws of the countries of reception.

#### Article XI

The principles of this Declaration shall be applied with due regard for human rights and fundamental freedoms.