

INDIA AND THE UNESCO : A STUDY OF THE QUESTION  
OF COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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## Preface

The role of the UNESCO in educational, scientific and cultural arenas of international relations has been significant ever since its inception in 1945. However, the decade of the seventies marks a turning point in the history of the evolution of the organisation. For this decade witnessed a multi-dimensional upsurge of the Third World nations that form the overwhelming majority of the contemporary international community. This upsurge first reflected itself in the demand for a New International Economic Order raised at the United Nations in 1974. As a logical consequence of this demand, took shape another demand, that for a New International Information Order - this time the venue was the UNESCO. Thus lately the UNESCO has been caught up in the vortex of a gathering storm. It is therefore of great importance to examine what role the organisation has now come to play towards reforming the global communication order. This then is the broad focus of the present study.

The present study is of a limited one on both its nature and scope. Its boundaries are delimited by the twin issues which the UNESCO has lately come to be associated with, namely communication and development. The endeavour in the study is to broadly portray the link between the UNESCO on the one hand, communication and development on the other. Wherever possible brief references to the relationship between India and the organisation are also made.

Although the UNESCO was concerned with various activities since its conception, only since late 1960 that communication has started attracting its attention. This study attempts to present the colonial state of communication today, and the extent of dependence the developing countries have been subjected to, and the need for reform and a more just and equitable order. The study underscores the complementarity between the New International Economic Order and the New International Information Order. In the course of its survey, the study also examines albeit briefly, the Sean Mac-Bride Commission's recommendations.

The study is divided into five main chapters.

The first chapter entitled "Emergence of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization : India's Role in the Various Fields" deals with aims, purposes and the general structure and functioning of the UNESCO and India's contribution to the UNESCO ideals.

The second chapter "Communication and Free Flow of Information" attempts to inquire into the meaning and definition of communication, the involvement of the United Nations in the free flow of information and the emerging role of the UNESCO in the field of communication.

The third chapter on "Towards a New International Information Order : International and Regional Trends" examines various normative institutional developments purporting to contri-

bute towards securing equitable distribution of international communication system. In this context, various resolutions and declarations of the UNESCO and the Declaration on the non-aligned news agencies pool, are dealt with. The inter-relationship of new international information order with the new international economic order, is also broadly portrayed in this chapter.

The fourth chapter, on "Communication and Development: UNESCO and the National Search for a Communication Policy" examines how the media of communications are becoming major instruments for promoting development. Also the impact of the media on the modern society is highlighted. The importance of national communication policies is also stressed. In these fields, the UNESCO has played a notable role.

And the final chapter embodies a general assessment of the role of the UNESCO in the context of the demand for a New International Information Order.

The present study does not pretend to be an in-depth examination of all aspects of the New International Information Order or for that matter, of all aspects of communication and development. It, however, at least in the general way, manifests an attempt to highlight, the changing role of the UNESCO in the context of the changes that have taken place in international society.

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## Chapter I

### EMERGENCE OF UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION : INDIA'S ROLE IN THE VARIOUS FIELDS

Scientific and cultural cooperation is essential for building a world of peace, progress and stability. The need for institutionalised international co-operation in educational, scientific and cultural arenas of international relations has long been felt. Thus, the establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1946 merely represented the culmination of a long process of evolution of international functional co-operation among states. In the present chapter an endeavour is made to briefly trace the evolution of UNESCO and broadly indicate India's relationship with the Organization.

#### The Emergence of UNESCO:

After the First World War with the emergence of International Organizations like the League of Nations and its related agencies, an effort was also made to create an International Organization for intellectual cooperation. From the point of view of institutional evolution, the organ of the League paved the way for UNESCO. The organization was confined to educational aspects of international co-operation, like analysis of knowledge

and exchange of experience and ideas.<sup>1</sup> Its immediate aim was to promote the development of human mind.

When the League of Nations died a natural death, mainly owing to its failure on the political front<sup>2</sup>, all related agencies or bodies of the League also came to an end. However, the League's experience in the functional areas indicated fruitful international co-operation in non-political arena and this led to the establishment of a number of functional international organisations towards the end of the Second World War.

Further, after Second World War, many countries, some of which had been under foreign colonial rule for several centuries, started becoming independent. Almost all of them had little material wealth, but they were proud of their cultures, and of their age-old traditions which were ready to blossom forth with the breath of independence. It was natural that they should seek international co-operation for their development, but also to give other people access to the treasures of their history, art and all the riches of their heritage.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, there was a widespread feeling that "the seeds of war are sown in the minds of man" and that therefore, it was essential to create inter-

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1 Walter, H.C., and Charles A., Thomson, UNESCO: Purpose, Progress and Prospects (Bloomington, 1957).

2 Scott, George, The Rise and Fall of League of Nations (London, 1973).

3 Prem Kirpal, "The Thirty Years of UNESCO", in 30th Anniversary Year 1976 Souvenir.



national organisation to "build" peace by seeking to eliminate the ultimate causes of war. All this stressed the need for a specialized international organization in the field of education, science and culture. The San Francisco Conference of 1945 laid the conceptual foundation for creation of such an organisation, whereas the 1946 London Conference gave shape to the organization. India participated in both the San Francisco and London Conference.

The details of the organizational and structural problems were discussed in the preparatory commission of the London Conference. India was elected as one of the fourteen members of the executive committee of the preparatory commission. It played a leading role in that committee.<sup>4</sup>

The preparatory commission began its task of establishing the new institution early in 1946, and the Conference adopted its report in July. The constitution came into force on 4 November 1946 having received the requisite number of ratifications.

The preamble to the UNESCO constitution reads thus:  
"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the mind of men that the defence of peace must be constructed". The first part of this was given by Clement Attlee, the then Prime Minister

4 See for details, Cowell, F.C., "Planning the Organization of UNESCO, 1942-1946", Journal of World History (Paris), vol.10, 1966, p.288.

of the United Kingdom. While the latter is attributed to a poet, Archibald MacLeish who was on the committee which drafted the constitution. Thus, the aim of the UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security by promoting science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and the human rights and fundamental freedoms, to collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of people 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. This evidently encompasses a broad range of areas for international co-operation, to give fresh impulse to popular education and to the sphere of culture, maintenance of all branches of intellectual activity, encourage co-operation among nations in all branches of intellectual activity, initiate methods of international co-operation calculated to give the people of all countries access to printed and published material produced by any of them, and so on.<sup>5</sup>

The-minds-of-men theory has been developed by the Western powers<sup>6</sup> mainly keeping in view the ravages which Germany inflicted on the people of Europe. This kind of Eurocentric understanding of the role of the future organisations readily acceptable to certain delegations at the London Conference,

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<sup>5</sup> UNESCO, What is UNESCO? (Paris, 1968), p.53.

<sup>6</sup> S. Radhakrishna, Recording of <sup>the</sup> General Conference, Fourth Session (Paris, 1949), pp.58-60.

particularly the Indian. According to the Indian delegation, the scope of the new organization's activity should not be confined to the European experience, and that it should not keep an accusing finger at Germany for what it had done. On the other hand, the organization should pardon it for its wrong, infuse a new awareness into it, and work for "a world brain, a world mind or a world culture". The UNESCO should stand for a new way of life, a new outlook, a new philosophy which will inspire humanity.<sup>7</sup> By the phrase "minds of men" what India understood was that the organisation should inculcate in the minds of men a respect for all cultures of the world. This would mean that no nation should have a right to dominate over other cultures or to have a sense of superiority about itself.<sup>8</sup> Even though India agreed that war begins in the minds of men, it had its own understanding of why wars occur. According to it, it was the fears, suspicions, hatred and jealousy among nations, all of which were the offspring of frustration and the continuous unequal treatment, that lead to war. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary that the evils of fear, suspicions and jealousy which begot war, were removed from the minds of men. As Indian representative, Tara Chand, pointed out at the UNESCO General Conference in 1949, although it was true

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7 Ministry of Education, UNESCO and India (Delhi, 1968-69), p.6.

8 Mahendra Kumar, India and UNESCO (New Delhi, 1974), pp.58-59.

that wars began in the minds of men, it should not be forgotten that the human mind "is a complex, almost unfathomable in its intricacies, mode of all kinds of harmonies and contradictions".<sup>9</sup>

According to him, the states of the world could be roughly divided into two classes: viz., states whose main concern was peace, and states whose main concern was welfare. The "peace states", in his view, were chiefly the great powers of the West, whose "policies produce conflict and war", whereas the "welfare states were those states of Asia and Africa whose primary need was freedom from hunger. The welfare states were far too weak to think of wars".<sup>10</sup>

The founders of UNESCO envisaged the organization to function through its three organs, namely, the General Conference, the Executive Board and the Secretariat.<sup>11</sup> The General Conference consists of representatives of all member states. It is a 'sovereign' body as it decides the general policy of the organization. It meets once every two years. The Executive Board is composed of distinguished intellectuals<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Tara Chand, Statements at the Fourth General Conference Vide UNESCO, Records of the General Conference for the Session 1949 (Paris, 1949), vol.14V/Proceedings UNESCO, Paris-509, p.141.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.142.

<sup>11</sup> Lok Sabha Secretariat, UNESCO Aims and Activities (Delhi, 1966), pp.1-9.

<sup>12</sup> The following distinguished persons have served as Indian Representatives on the Executive Board: S. Radhakrishnan, former President of India, A.L. Mudaliar, former Vice-Chancellor of Madras University, Zakir Hussain, former President of India, Hansa Mehta, Mrs Indira Gandhi, present Prime Minister of India, Prem Kirpal, Secretary to the Minister of Education, and former Secretary-General of the Indian National Commission for co-operation with UNESCO; and G. Parthasarathi.

and leaders in the fields of education, science and culture from member states. At present the Board has forty members. The Executive Board acts on behalf of the General Conference between its sessions. The Board generally meets twice a year for a session of three to four weeks.<sup>13</sup>

The Secretariat is the 'executive' organ responsible for UNESCO's normal administrative functioning and for the implementation of decisions taken by the General Conference and the Executive Board, particularly in carrying out its programmes. Responsible for an international task, the Secretariat is itself international in its composition. Its members are recruited on as wide a geographical basis as possible, subject to the paramount consideration of securing the highest standards of integrity, efficiency and technical competence.

The Director-General is the head of the Secretariat of UNESCO.<sup>14</sup> He has the over-all responsibility for creating the administrative conditions of its programmes. In addition, to his functions of representing the organization on all occasions, the Director-General has the important powers of initiative and decision-making in the preparation and execution of programmes. He is assisted by a Deputy Director-General.

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13 See n.3, 200

14 Following is the chronological list of Directors-General of UNESCO: (1) Julian Huxley 1946-48, (2) Jaime Torres Bodet 1948-52, (3) Luther H. Evans 1953-58, (4) Vittorino Veronesi 1958-62, (5) Rene Maheu 1962-74, (6) Amadore Mahtar M'Bow, 1974 to present.

UNESCO activities are financed from a regular budget, approved by the General Conference every two years, and from extra-budgetary funds which the organization receives for programmes carried out jointly with other institutions and agencies of United Nations.<sup>15</sup>

The UNESCO is by now a near-universal organization. Among its 149 members, all the Afro-Asian countries which became its members on the advent of independence.<sup>16</sup>

Peace and security are the central purposes of the entire United Nations family, but the specialised agencies such as the UNESCO have principally adopted a functionalist approach, in preference to the UN's global approach.<sup>17</sup> The UNESCO's mission is to contribute to the building up of peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication, by furnishing within these fields operational assistance to its member states for their social and economic development, through ethical action in favour of human rights and international understanding. What follows herein is a tentative portrayal of the contribution of the UNESCO in diverse fields, and India's role in it.

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15 Prem Kirpal, n.3, p.10.

16 Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, "Thirty Years of UNESCO", see n.3.

17 Mahendra Kumar, n.8, pp.250-54.

## II. UNESCO AND INDIA

### (1) UNESCO's Role in the Field of Education:

The objective of education is not to teach pupils in the formal sense of learning diverse disciplines of humanities or science. But its primary objective is to teach the art of living together and to increase the quality of tolerance and understanding in man. The Indian Constitution guarantees educational rights to all communities in the countries.<sup>18</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nation on 10 December 1948, proclaims under article 20 that "everyone has the right to education". But the understanding about declaration differs from country to country and this has resulted in a good deal of difficulty in translating this right into practice. In developing countries, like India, the simple notion of primary education as a right for every body, without regard to its practicability, seem to have inhibited the quest for a balanced programme of educational development. The UNESCO itself in 1970 has had to emphasise that secondary and higher education should be developed before primary education can be made universal. India's involvement in the UNESCO's educational programmes has been predicated upon three principal assumptions - (i) that without mass education it is difficult to include <sup>peace</sup> in the

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R.C. Aggrawala, Constitutional History of India and National Movement (New Delhi, 1974), 4th edn., p.430.

minds of men; (ii) that such a programme could be made more effective if launched on an international basis, and (iii) India's educational problems can get off by participation in the stream of the UNESCO activities. Though, initially, the main objective of the UNESCO was to reconstruct the war-devastated institutions of education, India has constantly stressed the view that the UNESCO should work, not confine its activities merely to the rebuilding task, but should address itself to the changing needs of the international society. In the first two sessions of the General Conference, the Indian representative pointed out that the role of UNESCO was that (i) it should function as a clearing house; (ii) it should conduct region-wise seminars on educational problems and evolve to solve them; (iii) it should help improvement in the quality of educational material and in teaching; and (iv) it should give more importance to international understanding. He also stressed the need for developing a code of conduct in order to help character building among both teachers and students. Finally, art should get a respectable position in general education. Taking India's suggestion into consideration in its fifth session, the General Conference adopted a ten-point list of priority in the field of education. These are:

- a) To eliminate illiteracy and encourage fundamental education;
- b) to obtain for each person an education conforming to his attitudes and to the needs of society, including technological training and higher education.
- c) To promote through education respect for human rights throughout all nations;



- d) To overcome the obstacles to the free flow of persons, ideas, and knowledge between the countries of the world;
- e) To promote the progress and utilization of science for ~~and for~~ mankind;
- f) To study the causes of tensions that may lead to war and to fight them through education;
- g) To demonstrate world cultural inter-dependence;
- h) To advance through the press, radio, and motion pictures the cause of truth; freedom and peace;
- i) To bring about better understanding among the peoples of the world and to convince them of the necessity of cooperating loyalty with one another in the framework of the United Nations; and
- j) To render clearing-house and exchange services in reconstruction and relief assistance.<sup>19</sup>

The first seminar on rural adult education was held at Mysore from 2 November to 4 December 1949. In the Seminar, the participants stressed the need to eradicate the mass illiteracy

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See Reports of the General Conference of UNESCO 1946,  
(Govt. of India, Ministry of Education), pp. 23-24.

in a time bound period. While the overall output of the Seminar was not impressive, it was at least a good beginning.

With the help of UNESCO, field science co-operation was established in India in 1949.<sup>20</sup> The setting up of the Central Institute of Education in Delhi in 1947 was also an important step in the direction of contributing to the fulfilment of some of the objectives of the UNESCO. One of the main objective of the project was to produce trained teachers. In 1959 with the assistance of the UNESCO, the Delhi Public Library was established, the Library extended its public service facilities by introducing a Mobile Library System.<sup>21</sup>

In 1951, regional Conference for South Asia and Africa was held at Bombay. Its main focus was on compulsory education and procurement of financial aid to developing countries. The Conference suggested the creation of an International Educational Development Fund for financing programmes of compulsory education in developing countries. This suggestion was later included in the UNESCO draft programme for 1955 and 1956 and presented to the Eight session of the General Conference held at Montevideo in 1954. This was finally accepted at the Delhi General Conference in 1956. In the same Conference a major

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<sup>20</sup> For details, see "Role and Function of National Commission for UNESCO by Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO, New Delhi, 1975."

<sup>21</sup> Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO; proceeding of the Eighth Conference 1968, pp.130-31.

project on the extension of primary education in Latin America was launched, which later proved to be a success.<sup>1</sup> So in the tenth session, the member states demanded that a similar project be introduced in the Afro-Asian region. Accordingly, the UNESCO launched a project for the removal of world illiteracy and the production of reading material.

It may be recalled that India was host to a Regional Seminar on Educational Reforms sponsored by the UNESCO which was held in September 1958 in New Delhi. The Seminar conducted a number of surveys on education. The survey results were announced at Karachi, which cumulatively came to be known as the Karachi Plan, aimed at making primary education a reality in Asia within a period of 20 years in 1960-80.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, in the implementation of the Karachi Plan to other levels and types of education, the need for balanced educational development and the integration of long term education plan into overall national development programmes came to be highlighted.<sup>22</sup>

The General Conference at the thirteenth session in 1964 authorised the Director-General to convene a third conference of Ministers of Education and Ministers for Economic Planning, which was held at Bangkok in 1965. For the first time, this type of ministerial conference brought together at the regional level the representatives of different countries, not only to

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See UNESCO Chronicle, Vol. VIII, No. 10, March 1962, p.112.

review the progress of work and the feasibility of the Karachi Plan,<sup>23</sup> but also to examine major policy issues related to the overall development of education in relation to economic and social development in Asia.<sup>24</sup> The Conference discussed the "perspective of educational development in Asia" and a draft Asian model. The main feature of the Asian model was that it was based on the premise that the member states could propagate education in tune with their socio-economic development without losing the basic ideas of the UNESCO programmes.

Meanwhile a World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy was held in Tehran in September 1965.<sup>25</sup> Although the Indian participation in the Tehran Congress was only nominal, it should be noted that the Congress was convened mainly at India's initiative.

India also participated in the UNESCO International Conference on Education in its 36th session held at Geneva from 30 August to 8 September 1977. Its two main themes were educational policies and programmes in the context of the relationship between education and development, and the problem of information at the national and international level which was posed by the improvement of educational systems.<sup>25</sup>

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23 See UNESCO Chronicle, Vol. XI, No. II, November 1965, p. 426.

24 Malcolm S. Adiseshai, Asia in the Minds of Men (UNESCO, Paris, 1972), pp. 137-140.

25 See Final Report International Conference on Education, 36th Session (Geneva: 30 August to 8 September 1977), pp. 32-33, and 43.

In the seventeenth session of the General Conference of the UNESCO, the year 1972 was proclaimed as an International Book Year. Its objectives encompassed "books for all" and use of books in the service of education, of authorship and translation with due regard to copyright, production and distribution of books, including the development of libraries and the promotion of reading habit.<sup>26</sup>

Since then, India has conducted four International Book Fairs in 1977 at Bombay, in 1978 at Delhi, in 1979 at Calcutta and in 1980 again at Delhi with the co-operation of National Book Trust of India, established with the aid and assistance of the UNESCO.

The UNESCO has extended its assistance to India for the establishment of several engineering colleges at Allahabad, Bhopal, Durgapur, Jamshedpur, Mangalore, Nagpur, Rourkela and Trichnapalli. It has also given assistance for the establishment of a college for the training of engineering college teachers at Warangal, for the promotion of a higher quality of instruction, curricula research and the development of other specialised fields of study. The completion in 1966 of the ten year UNESCO project of aid to the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, is a milestone in the educational and industrial history in India.

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UNESCO - 'Thinking Ahead' UNESCO and the Challenge of Today and Tomorrow (Paris, 1977), p.134.

In recent years, three important concepts have gained currency concerning education. First, educational development is of crucial importance to countries which have been formerly colonies, because during the colonial rule, the prevalent education system was catered to the best interests of the ruling colonial elite. The demands for a New International Economic Order and a New International Information Order indicate the new dimensions of educational development. They raise the need for an awareness that the problems confronting states are those confronting mankind as a whole, and that education must contribute to evolving and applying solutions to socio-economic problems of national development, in accord with the genius of each people.

Second, the education planning should be suited to a country's development needs and the successful planning for educational development and innovation depends on the understanding of the dynamics of the educational system and of the economic, social and political factors influencing it both from within and outside the national environment.

Third, the educational policies, originally confined to a few general guiding principles, are increasingly taking the form of a systematic and comprehensive structure of goals integrated with socio-economic and cultural environment.

(2) UNESCO's Role in the Field of Science:

After the Second World War, the colonial system started falling apart in most countries of the Third World. The newly emergent countries, however, now sought to achieve social and economic development. At the same time, the scientific and technological revolution that overtook the international relations and the post-Second World War further widened the economic gap between countries. The developing countries, most of whom are newly emergent, thus started striving for the development of their own science and technology programmes and policies, for science and technology hold the key to accelerated industrial and agricultural development in exploiting natural resources, for industrialisation, in determining methods of agricultural development, and the means for creating optimum living and working conditions. Science and technology have now become extremely important for preparing and implementing long term plans for economic development. All this necessitated international co-operation in this field among states.

The UNESCO has taken steps whereby co-operation on science and technology between Governments can be forged. The main objective is to provide necessary conditions for the training of young scientists from member states. Thus the socio-economic and welfare activities in a state could be promoted. To achieve this goal, the UNESCO has established Regional Science Co-operation Offices. Thus, the South Asian Science Co-operation Office was

set up in Delhi in April 1948. Its purpose has been to facilitate the coming together of the scientists of the region on a common platform to exchange their experiences new discoveries and new methods of handling machines and to serve as a medium for transfer of scientific knowledge from the advanced countries to the less advanced countries.<sup>27</sup> India has benefited in this process. It has for instance, learned rotting of jute bags from Brazil, knowledge of Marine Biology from South America, Egypt and the Philippines.

The UNESCO is equally interested in the study of the impact of advancing science and technology on social change. Scientific advancement opens up new avenues of change in social systems and human behaviour. Because of its social effects, science is not neutral. The activity of the scientist is a social fact. So likewise the exchange of research works and procurement of knowledge may also have a social impact. Monitoring and properly orienting this impact are the responsibilities of institutions integrated within the society.

To study social change, the UNESCO has launched many projects and established an International Social Science Council at Paris in October 1953. An International Research Office on the Social Implication of Technological Change has also been set up.<sup>28</sup> Adapting the same model, the Council of Scientific and

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See n.5, pp.170-72.

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For details, see n.6, p.177.



Industrial Research and a Centre for the Social Implications of Industrialization in South Asia have been set up in India. The main objective of such institutions is to help the members of the region to develop their social science research in both men and institutions, to give useful suggestions for the socio-economic development through scientific methods. India's most important contribution in this respect has been its stress laid on the inter-relationship between pure and applied research on the one hand and the application of science to human welfare on the other. Further, the UNESCO, under the Secondary School Science Teaching Project, has assisted the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, with a team of science teaching experts for the improvement of curricula, production of science text books and teacher guides, and developing samples of model school science equipment. A number of science text books have since been published.

The steps towards the establishment of fairer and more equitable world order, the possible role of the UNESCO can hardly be exaggerated, particularly in assisting the developing countries to develop their scientific and technological potentialities.<sup>29</sup> These countries should be able to choose the right model of technology which is more appropriate for their economic

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and socio-cultural development. In this respect, the developing countries have a number of common objectives to be independent of foreign technologies, to achieve the harmonious integration of cultural tradition with modern ideas and attitudes and to participate fully in the on-going process of scientific and technological development.

In a nutshell, the UNESCO has achieved considerable success in the field of scientific and technical co-operation among member states. It has promoted a number of co-operating endeavour in a wide range of areas such as the science policy and planning, hydrology, oceanography, agricultural education, science, man and the biosphere, and arid zone development.

### (3) UNESCO's Role in the Field of Culture:

The UNESCO's motto is that the culture of every country is a part of the world culture and that hence culture is international. According to John Donne, a famous English poet of the seventeenth century, the culture of a country belongs to the world as a whole. It is through the understanding of each other's culture that we appreciate more and more the fact that this mankind is one, and that there are very few distinctions between human beings living in different parts of the world.

Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 recognizes the right to culture as a human right. Its precursor, Article 27 of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 proclaims the right of everyone to participate in cultural life, and to enjoy the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific or artistic production of which he is the author.<sup>30</sup>

The concept of culture is no longer an object of luxury or a sign of prestige, but in the strict sense it implies a question of life or death for the whole of mankind,<sup>31</sup> and the question of destiny and dignity of man.<sup>32</sup> It evidences the identity of a people, and represents fulfilment of some spiritual need of man. The contribution of the UNESCO in rendering culture accessible to the masses has been significant.

India has participated in the cultural activities of the UNESCO from its very inception, but India's intimacy grew since late 50's when India's representative Homi Bhabha conceived of mental health of man in its two aspects, namely, pathological and sociological, and assigning the former to the World Health Organization and the latter to UNESCO because culture was included in it.<sup>33</sup> In the 1956 General Conference, convened in New Delhi, the UNESCO launched a major project on mutual appreciation of Eastern and Western cultural values.

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30 Hanna Saha, "Human Right" in In the Minds of the Man UNESCO, 1972, p.235.

31 Jeand Grmesson, "Culture" in In the Minds of the Men (Paris UNESCO), 1972, p.96.

32 Ibid., p.101.

33 See, n.8, p.208.

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A decade was earmarked for the programme from 1957-1966. Its main aim has been to stimulate among the peoples of the East and the West, appreciation of one another's culture.<sup>34</sup> This kind of endeavour could lay a lasting foundation for international understanding and peaceful co-operation. The project aimed at exchanging studies, research, teaching, the education of adults, etc. With the financial help of the UNESCO, translation of foreign classics into Indian languages has been done. Some institutions have also been established for mutual cooperation, understanding and research in culture. India also participated in a UNESCO project known as the Associated School Project, which aims at stimulating experimentation in education for international understanding and co-operation in a systematic manner in selected schools. India has also played a part in the Indo-US bilateral project for mutual exchange of culture through national commissions, by participating in seminars, and discussion forms at the university level. The UNESCO is extending its co-operation by giving assistance to Sri Aurobindo Society at Pondichery, in its experiment of universal brotherhood at the Auroville, a city specially constructed for people drawn from all over the world to live together without any discrimination.<sup>35</sup> However, it appears that the experiment has lately

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34 George N. Shusters, UNESCO Assessment and Promise (New York, 1963), p.31.

35 See 14C/Res/19 and 15 session of UNESCO General Conference Report of the Indian delegation, pp.6 & 88.

run into rough weather.

The UNESCO General Conference adopted a declaration of the principles of international cultural co-operation at its 14th session on the 4 November 1966.<sup>36</sup> The declaration purports to guide government authorities, organizations and associations to advance the objectives of peace and welfare as defined in the Charter of the United Nations. While the binding effect of this declaration on member states may be controversial, its political and moral significance cannot be doubted.

The UNESCO has helped to evolve cultural standards to guide governments by drawing up a number of international instruments for protection of cultural property. There is a convention for protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict.<sup>37</sup> The principle underlying this convention is made applicable to archaeological excavations.<sup>38</sup> There are also standards rendering museums accessible to everyone,<sup>39</sup> safeguarding

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36 See for origin and detail study International Cultural Co-operation by Indian National Commission. For co-operation with UNESCO by Minister of Education and Youth Service, 1970, Introductory Chapter, Prem Kirpal.

37 Convention and Protocol adopted on 14 May 1954 by an Inter-governmental Conference convened by UNESCO.

38 Recommendation adopted on 5 December 1956 by the General Conference.

39 Recommendation adopted on 14 December 1960 by the General Conference.

the beauty and character of landscapes and sites,<sup>40</sup> prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property,<sup>41</sup> and the preservation of cultural property endangered by public or private works,<sup>42</sup> conservation of wetlands of international importance and waterfowl habitat,<sup>43</sup> protection of the world cultural and natural heritage,<sup>44</sup> and revised recommendations concerning International Competition in architecture and town planning.<sup>45</sup>

The UNESCO convention of 1970 lays down measures for preventing institution from illegally acquiring cultural property, calls upon the states to prohibit the import of such cultural property. But most of the developed countries have not yet ratified the convention.

India has received the UNESCO assistance in regard to renovation of some of its ancient monuments and cultural property. Thus, for instance, the UNESCO helped India in the renovation of the Srirangam Temple which was damaged by the humidity and changes of temperatures, the sculptures having decayed through the stone disease, and the gate-towers having been defaced by colour washes and modern additions. A UNESCO

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40 Recommendation adopted on 11 December 1962 by the General Conference.

41 Recommendation adopted on 19 November 1964 and Convention of 14 November 1970 adopted by the General Conference.

42 Recommendation adopted by the General Conference on 19 November 1968.

43 Adopted by the International Conference on the Conservation of Wetland and Waterfowl at Ramsar, Iran, 2 February 1971.

44 Recommendation adopted by the General Conference at its Seventeenth Session, Paris, 16 November 1972.

45 Recommendation adopted by the General Conference at its Twentieth Session, Paris 27 November 1978.

mission also studied methods for creating and preserving the painting in the Ajanta and Ellora caves.<sup>46</sup> On the request of the Indian Government, a UNESCO expert Committee visited Konarak, and Jagannath Temple in Orissa, when two piles of stones fell down from the Konarak temple. The expert committee suggested plastering of the gap left by the fallen stones at Konarak so that trees or fungi might not grow on it.<sup>47</sup>

India has on its part extended assistance in preserving the Cuzco-Machu Picchu (Peru) Monuments, the Abu Simbal Temple, and the Temple of Philae in the United Arab Republic.

The Seventeenth General Conference of the UNESCO has given priority to areas like the promotion of cultural studies, cultural development, preservation of cultural heritage, training and research in the field of development of museums, and development of historical monuments. Indeed, much needs to be done in the cultural field. As Rene Mahue, warns, day by day the minority culture is disappearing. Hence it is the duty of the UNESCO to take urgent and appropriate steps and work for cultural pluralism so that the member states will be increasingly interdependent on each other.<sup>48</sup>

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46 Sarwat Okasha, "Protection and Development of Mankind, Culture and Heritage", in The Minds of Men, pp.248-49.

47 Science Reporter (Calcutta), April 1979, p.229.

48 Rene Mahue, UNESCO in Perspective (UNESCO, Paris, 1979), pp.32-34.

Keeping cultural identity is in no way harmful to the process of modernisation and socio-economic development of a country. To assert one's cultural identity is to resolve to be one's own master, choosing one's own path towards development. It is by countries remaining true to themselves that culture can evolve harmoniously, grow stronger and maintain a fruitful give-and-take relationship with other countries. Thus, the preservation of the cultural heritage is necessary. Then only mutual knowledge of, and respect for, different cultures can be built up on a global scale, steering clear of both the domination of a particular culture, as well as complete isolation. For the achievement of New International Economic Order and a New International Information Order, cultural identity is considered as essential component. The new conception of International Economic Order is characterised by an insistence on endogenous and integrated development. Endogenous development means that the entire resources of a country should be utilized for the cultural values and aspirations of the people of that country. The development will then be achieved at international level on the basis of mutual respect for nations. Otherwise, it will lead to disequilibrium or even subjection to external interests.

It is recognised that economic and social development should go hand in hand with cultural development, and that culture has a beneficial effect on the means of production available and on man himself. Every improvement in physical well-



being helps to promote culture, by freeing man from enslavement to physical obligation and by giving him leisure for the activities of mind. The economic progress is generally reflected on the cultural scene, and cultural activity, in turn stimulates economic life. Emphasis has been placed on the need to integrate science with culture, and to study the way in which culture evolves under the influence of science and technology. Literary programmes and cultural development form an indivisible whole. It is the cultural advancement of the whole people that imparts momentum to the literary movement.<sup>49</sup>

The above presentation, in short, highlights the nature and order of the UNESCO's commitment to the cause of global educational, scientific and cultural development. And the efforts of the UNESCO seeking to establish a New International Information Order as an adjunct to a New International Economic Order reflect a logical extension of the commitment.

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See UNESCO Cultural Policy : Preliminary Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies, vol.1, p.2.

Chapter II

## COMMUNICATION AND FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION

The focus of the present chapter is to broadly present the role of communication in the contemporary world and then to portray the extent of the UNESCO's involvement in developing an equitable global communication system as a means to achieve its educational, scientific and cultural objectives.<sup>1</sup>

Communication<sup>1</sup> has a vital role to play in the present decades at both national and international levels. Throughout history, man's progress has had a direct bearing upon his ability to communicate with other men. His failures and frustrations have often resulted from his inability to communicate. Communication has always been a necessary element in all human societies, but the methods of communication have differed among societies and over time. As a medium for expression or conveying ideas, communication encompasses human signs and symbols, inter-personal communication, the Press, radio, telegraph network, the visual tools like the film, television and space satellites. In recent decades, the means of communication have progressed at an astonishing speed in reproduction and transmission of word and image, mainly thanks to the techno-

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<sup>1</sup> The word communication is derived from the Latin word 'Communis' which means to make common, to share, to impart, to transmit.

logical revolution of the present era. Each medium with its special techniques, has improved day by day and its operatinality has expanded rapidly.

"Communication" is understood herein as the institutional means and form in which ideas, information and attitudes are transmitted and received. Communication is the process of transmission and reception".<sup>2</sup> The process of communication takes place when someone says something in some way else for some purpose. The someone is the sender, something is the message, someway is the channel, someone also is the receiver.<sup>3</sup> Communication facilitates transmission of ideas, knowledge and information from person to person, from country to country. It engenders in man an awareness about his fellowbeings, and about the life around him. Between nations, it leads to mutual understanding and economic and social progress. It also helps nations to influence each other's decisional processes. Small wonder, the role of communication readily recognized in international relations.

International organisations have played a role in the context of the global communication system although the level of their involvement depended upon the nature and degree of international concern about obtaining at a given point of time.

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<sup>2</sup> Williams Raymond, Communications (London, 1976), p.1.

<sup>3</sup> See UNESCO, Interim Report on Communication in Modern Society (Paris, 1978), p.26. and also see Hadley Read, Communication Methods for All Media (London, 1972), p.1.

In 1927, the League of Nations convened a meeting of representatives of News Agencies, Newspapers, International Organizations of Journalists and Government Press Service in Geneva to provide news at cheaper rate, to cement mutual understanding and to reduce risks of international misunderstanding and to improve the communication methods and the training of journalists.<sup>4</sup> It also convened meetings in 1932 and 1933 to deal largely with measures to prevent the diffusion of false and inaccurate news. Although the League's role in regard to communication was of rather marginal importance, it did signify two principal aspects of the communication problems; namely their global significance, and the international organization's potential to serve as a negotiating forum on communication matters.

The freedom of thought and expression ~~are~~ one of the fundamental human rights, has been given a name under the United Nations: the free flow of information. The concept of free flow of information originally took the form of a proposal submitted to the first General Assembly of the United Nations which considered "that it is the urgent duty of the Organization... to ensure the establishment, the functioning and flow of a free press throughout the entire world".<sup>5</sup> Free flow of information has assumed importance in the constitution of the UNESCO itself;

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4 Mass Media in the Developing Countries. A UNESCO report to the United Nations, UNESCO Reports and Papers on Mass Communication no.33 (Hereafter R.P.M., 1961), p.7.

5 MacBrid Commission discussion documents, "From Freedom of Information to the Free Flow of Information", no.8.

The UNESCO Constitution of 16 November 1945 sets inter alia the following task of the Organisation: "to 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".

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Free flow of information was initially identified principally with the free access of journalists to information sources and their right to make subsequent use of news and the ingredients of news, for communication purposes. The concept of free flow of information is tending to broaden out so as to encompass both the rights of the individual as well as those of the media, occupational groups and local, national and international community, to be informed themselves and to inform others without hinderance. It implies the abolition of all obstacles to the exercise of freedom of thought and expression.

Communication has lately come to receive a very special focus of attention in the UNESCO activities. While no explicit mention has been made of it in its constitution, the role of the UNESCO in the field of communication is readily implied in the very objectives of the UNESCO, because fulfilment of these objectives are dependent upon, and catalysed by, the development of a viable and equitable global communication system. The main tasks of the UNESCO in the field of communication include:-

- (a) to help the war-devasted countries to rebuild their information media,

- (b) to promote the free and more balanced flow of information and the development of the means and techniques of mass communication, respecting the various cultures and individual priorities of each country,
- (c) to develop the use of the media and techniques in the service of educational understanding, particularly by publicizing the activities of the UNESCO and of other organizations of the United Nations family which purport to contribute to peace and human welfare through international co-operation,
- (d) to promote the use of mass media in strengthening peace and international understanding through education, science and culture and in combating war propoganda, racism and apartheid,
- (e) to assist the member states to establish training institutions for journalists on a regional basis,
- (f) to promote the widest possible circulation of information, knowledge and ideas, without, however, neglecting protection for the rights of their creators,
- (g) to encourage new ways of thinking about the process of communication and its role in modern society, and

(h) to help bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries in the field of communication development.<sup>6</sup>

At its first General Conference, the UNESCO took a decision to launch a survey of the needs of the information media in the war-devastated countries.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, the General Conference extended the scope of the survey to cover other countries which were faced with the war-devastation.<sup>8</sup> In 1948, the first agreement for facilitating the international circulation of visual and auditory materials of educational, scientific and cultural character, known as Beirut Agreement, was adopted by the General Conference at its Beirut Session.<sup>9</sup> A second broader, agreement on the importation of educational, scientific and cultural material known as the "Florence Agreement" was adopted by the General Conference during its Florence Session in 1950.<sup>10</sup> These two agreements were designed together to remove tariff and trade obstacles to the movement of books, films, recording, scientific equipments and works of art. These two agreements have been revised in 1967 and then in 1972 to include new items. India is not a party to the UNESCO

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6 "Communication - More Than A Oneway Street", in The UNESCO Courier, March 1977, p.30.

7 UNESCO First Session, Mass Communication Project 1.

8 Second Session Resolution 2.2.1.

9 See UNESCO Chronicle (Paris, 1968), vol.XIV, no.2, p. February, p.48.

10 Ibid., p.45.

agreements. Though the Government of India has followed a liberal practice in importation of education, scientific and cultural materials,<sup>11</sup> the only restriction that it has placed is on the import of pornographic literature, and of books of which Indian reprints are already available in adequate numbers. The import of books is duty-free and there are no serious tariff and transport obstacles to the free circulation of the scarce materials. India has, at present, three collaboration programmes with the Government of U.K., U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. for making available their standard texts and reference books at low prices, for the use of Indian university students. Translations and adaptations of American books are also republished in India under the respective schemes in low-priced editions. India plans to enter into similar collaboration programmes for reprint of German books. It has also reduced freight charges for books.

As already seen, the United Nations has taken keen interest in the matter of "free flow of information".<sup>12</sup> In 1946, the UN Declaration on Freedom of Information made the initial reference to the flow of information. It suggested that "all states should proclaim policies under which the free flow of information within countries and across frontiers,

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11 Reports on the session of First Conference by the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO, April 9 and 10, 1948, P. 21 (Ministry of Education, New Delhi, 1948), p. 24.

12 MacBrid Commission Preliminary discussion document no. 8, pp. 5-9.



will be protected. The right to seek and transmit information should be insured in order to enable the public to ascertain facts and appraise events.<sup>13</sup> In March-April 1948, the UN convened a Conference on Freedom of Information at Geneva. The Conference revealed differing views on free flow of information. The United States conceived it as a "free and unrestricted flow of information". The Soviets maintained that no true freedom of communication existed so long as the means of communication in the West are controlled by a small wealthy group. A third view, called for a "freedom with responsibility."<sup>14</sup> The bane of free flow of information has been that there is no genuine desire on the part of states and other participants in the flow for free flow information. On the other hand, the information flow is manipulated to suit the interests of the manipulators. The Americans demand free and unrestricted flow, because they possess most sophisticated modern media technology and they would be in an advantageous position both politically as well as commercially if they can sell and have access to news without any restriction. The USSR contends that as long as the media are in the hands of few agencies of the West, it is difficult to achieve the free flow of information in its true

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<sup>13</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution 59(I), 14 December 1946.

<sup>14</sup> See D.R. Mankekar, One Way Free Flow Neo-colonialism Via News Media (New Delhi, 1978), pp.95-98.

sense. Additionally, it apprehended that the American doctrine would undermine state control of the media in the socialist countries. The developing countries are afraid that freedom of information without responsibilities would seriously impair their developmental goals, political and social system, and the cultural identity of their peoples. Hence they demand freedom with responsibility.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 has been a watershed in many ways. Article 19 of the Declaration proclaims that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Though the Declaration of Human Rights is not legally binding, yet it gives great moral boosting to the member states.

With the help of the UN, the UNESCO was able to mobilise the resources when the world was facing acute newsprint shortage. Research has also been conducted with a view to meet these requirements.<sup>15</sup> The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations appointed Salvador P. Lopez as

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See, n.4, p.8.

the rapporteur for 1952-53 "on matters relating to freedom of information".<sup>16</sup> In his report, he highlighted the need for co-operation between professional journalists and the specialised agencies. Consequently, Economic and Social Council recommended aid and technical assistance to the developing countries to build up their own information centres to promote freedom of information. This decision was approved by the General Assembly in 1954.<sup>17</sup>

In the meantime the UNESCO also followed suit giving aid to member states to assist them in building up their information media. Formalising these activities, the General Conference of the UNESCO adopted a decision to provide aid to member states, at their request for the development of their mass communication systems.<sup>18</sup> The Conference at its ninth session, held in New Delhi, authorised the Director-General to establish an international association for communication research. Thus in the history of UNESCO's role in communication, New Delhi Conference has been a milestone.<sup>19</sup> UNESCO next organized a symposium at Strasbourg (France), which came out setting up an

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16 Freedom of Information. Report presented by Salvador P. Lopez, United Nations Economic and Social Council (New York, 1953), (Doc.E/2426).

17 UN Resolution 839(IX).

18 UNESCO Eight session Resolution IV 1.5.6.

19 See UNESCO Chronicle, vol. XI no. 3, 1957, p.242.

interim committee for the purpose of preparing a programme in co-operation with the UNESCO Secretariat, appropriate institutions and individuals. The programme encouraged a constituent assembly to establish the international association of communication and drawing up a preliminary programme for coordination. The main principles of the association envisaged by the symposium are as follows:

1. "The aims of the Association should be exclusively scientific. Its objective should be -
  - (a) to promote exchanges between institutions in different countries, and personal contacts among specialists;
  - (b) to encourage the establishment and expansion of communication research and study centres in countries where they do not yet exist;
  - (c) to strive for the recognition of the study of mass communication as a separate scientific discipline;
  - (d) to establish research services for the use of the association members;
  - (e) to circulate information on significant events connected with teaching and research on the media of mass communication;
  - (f) to undertake in co-operation with appropriate national and international institution, any scientific activities, techniques, and inference of the media of mass communication;

(g) should the need arise, to contribute, by appropriate research to the development and improvement of the training of journalists.

2. The Association should cover all sectors of communication research (Press, Radio, Television, film and all aspects thereof).<sup>20</sup>

Thus the symposium laid down the theoretical foundation for the operational aspects of the UNESCO's communication activities.

At the request of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in January 1960, the UNESCO organized a Conference at Bangkok to survey the extent of illiteracy in South East Asia. The Conference recommended that the countries in this region suffered most acutely from poverty, illiteracy and that they were also the poorest in communication facilities. It stressed the urgent need for programme to develop press, radio, films and television in the region and to improve the quality of all media, particularly the training of journalists and technicians. It also emphasised that the region was much diversified culturally, socially and economically. It recognized that to promote mutual co-operation and understanding, the media had a very vital role to play and that therefore they should be

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strengthened. India was one of the supporters of the Bangkok recommendations. It also requested the Director-General of the UNESCO to make adequate provision in the programme and budget of the organisation for organizing regional seminars on mass communication on the lines of the Bangkok Conference. After the Bangkok Conference, the popularity of the UNESCO increased rapidly. More and more members joined in its communication activities. In short, the 1960's proved to be the golden period in the history of UNESCO in terms of both the expansion of its membership as well as its operations.<sup>21</sup>

Two regional conferences were held, in Santiago in Chile from 1 to 15 February 1961<sup>22</sup> and the second in Paris from 24 January to 6 February 1962.<sup>23</sup> In the first, experts from Latin American countries, and in the second, experts from African countries participated in the discussion on the development of the media in respective regions. In a nutshell, these regional conferences also highlighted the need of the developing countries for all facilities to improve the mass media such as financial and technical assistance, equipment, schools, libraries, laboratories, training of journalists, seminars, and so on.<sup>24</sup> On the basis of the UNESCO reports, the ECOSOC recommended to the member states to carry out general measures for the establish-

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<sup>21</sup> UNESCO Chronicle, 1960, November, vol. VI, no. 11, p. 427.

<sup>22</sup> For details see UNESCO MC/41, Paris, 31 May 1961.

<sup>23</sup> See Developing Information Media in Africa, Reports and Papers on Mass Communication (Hereafter RPMC), No. 37, UNESCO, 1962.

<sup>24</sup> See Professional Training for Mass Communication, RPMC No. 45, (Paris, 1965), pp. 13-14.

ment and expansion of national agencies, newspapers and periodicals, radio broadcasting, films and television in their territories.<sup>25</sup> The regional conferences suggested that radio and other media, could contribute to removal of <sup>illiteracy</sup> promotion of modern methods of farming to increase food production and introduction of measures to improve health and nutrition among the people. India was the second country (after Canada) to implement many of these programmes with the help of UNESCO. It also started communication experiments in six states. In this regard, the Director-General of the UNESCO said with reference to the Indian rural communication project: "Because of the work held The Satellite Instruction Television Programme (SITE) by India in the field of fundamental education and of the existence in your country (i.e. India) of a well developed broadcasting service, I believe that the project would yield fruitful results if it were carried out in India".<sup>26</sup> The project was carried out with massive efforts and it has become a trail-blazer for other developing countries. It demonstrated how radio communication can be the vehicle of not only cultural exchange but also of modernization.<sup>27</sup> After the regional conferences, the UNESCO organized training courses for for journalists.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See UNESCO Chronicle, June 1961, vol.VII, no.6, p.219.

<sup>26</sup> UNESCO, Radio Broadcasting Service, Rural Development, 1965, RPMC, no.48, Preface page.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., See work of the Forum.

<sup>28</sup> Centre for Higher Studies in Journalism at Quito (Ecuador) Mass Communication Institute at the University of Oakar (Senegal), Lebanon and Philippines. The Manila Centre, the Beirut Institute, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Kenya, Nigeria, Malaysia, Caribbean.

In the meantime, fast developments have been taken place in the developed countries in the field of communication. The space age brought in a new era in communication. The launching of the TELSTAR by a telecommunication satellite consortium of the West brought to light the ominous implications of this new technology to the developing countries, if it were to be monopolised by the developed countries alone. For the first time, the UNESCO was set to think about a "balanced" flow of information. The word "balanced" came to be used because of the insistence of the developing countries. They started demanding for equitable two-way transfer of information. With the introduction of T.V.-cum-Satellites in communications, the developing countries readily saw the possibility of cultural penetration and domination by the developed countries looming large. Hence the efforts of the UNESCO in seeking a reorientation of the new technologies for the benefit of all states.

In the Thirteenth Session of the UNESCO, a resolution was passed, which recognised the possible benefits of satellite communication for mankind, facilitating contact among all the peoples and the world. At the same session, the Director-General was authorized to convene a meeting of experts in 1965 to define the principles and the basic guidelines of a long-term programme to promote space communication for free and balanced flow of information, rapid spread of education and greater cultural exchange, and to submit a special report on the subject to



the fourteenth session.<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, a meeting of experts was held at the UNESCO house in Paris between 6th to 10th of February 1965. Malcolm S. Adiseshiaiah, the then Deputy Director-General of the UNESCO, prophesied in his inaugural speech: "The day may not be far distant when communication satellite will bring the people of an entire country, children and adults alike, into a single class room".<sup>30</sup> The experts stressed the urgency of international co-operation, urging that space communication was to be used in the interest of all peoples. The fourteenth session of 1966 authorised the Director-General to undertake studies to formulate proposals and international arrangements, designed to ensure development of space communication in the interest of all member states and to promote and undertake studies and research in the use of satellite communication for the free and balanced flow of information, rapid spread of education and greater cultural and scientific exchange.<sup>31</sup> In the fourteenth session, India's representative presented a proposal relating to long-term programme for the use of space communication.<sup>32</sup> The Indian delegation moved a resolution recommending that the UNESCO may institute a pilot project at a suitable centre in South Asia to examine the potentialities of satellite communication system for educational,

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29 Record of the General Conference Resolution 13C/Pro/4.2123 (Paris, 1964), p.72.

30 UNESCO Chronicle, vol.XII, 1966, p.57.

31 14C/8(4.13), p.67. See 14C/S.C.1/SR.0.1, 14C/PRG/SR.11,17.

32 See Doc. 14C/25.

economic, cultural and social development of the developing countries. It also offered to meet its share of the considerable cost involved in the project, should the UNESCO decide to locate it over India.

At the request of the Indian Government, the UNESCO sent a five-member expert mission<sup>33</sup> to assess the educational potentialities and the cost of using satellite communication for national development. In its report they stated that India was well advanced in satellite communication, both in studies and plans. The mission felt that "satellite communication offered the particular advantage of permitting the rapid introduction of television service capable of reaching all parts of the country". It also noted that a satellite could have covered the whole country, had it been in operation since a decade earlier.<sup>34</sup> The programme commission of the Executive Board took action at its seventy-eighth session to assist in the further study, research and training that would be required in the implementation of the plan outlined by the experts mission.<sup>35</sup> On the basis of all facts, the fifteenth session of the General Conference agreed to assist India in both techniques and training of staff to launch the satellite in 1972.

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33 See Doc. 15/C/21.142.

34 See UNESCO Chronicle, June 1968, p.255.

35 See Executive Board Resolution 76-86 session 1967-70, p.19.

This then paved the way for India's recent success in the satellite instructional television experiment (SITE).

The developing countries have been successful in moving the international organizations to develop international co-operation in harnessing the space technology for peaceful purposes. Particularly, the UN Special Committee on the peaceful uses of outer space has contributed a good deal in this regard. Supporting the UN work in the fields, the UNESCO also passed a resolution to convene a meeting of government experts to evolve international arrangements for promoting the use of space communication and for furtherance of the UNESCO objectives, specifically in the field of free flow of information, copyright and the assessment of the requirement of education, science and culture in the future allocation of the frequencies of the radio spectrum in space.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, a meeting of government experts on international arrangements for space communication was held at the UNESCO headquarters, from 2 to 9 December 1969.<sup>37</sup> At the meeting, the experts opined that the question of free flow of information through space communication sounded good in a general sense, but in practice, it would not be well served unless and until the small countries and developing area started using mass media as well as the satellite system.<sup>38</sup> Through space

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36 Resolution 7.141, 15th Session of General Conference, 15C/5, Approved paragraph 1282.

37 Indian expert T.R. Jayaraman, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education and Youth Service, participated.

38 UNESCO, RPMC no.60, 1970, p.25.

communication, collection and dissemination of news ought to have been achieved to equalize the flow of information. As this is not happening in reality, the developing countries put forth some genuine demands which the broadcasters should follow. Among them have been the following:-

1. "The highest priority in planning the utilization of satellite be given to providing a service for those countries whose needs were greatest".

2. The UNESCO, in co-operation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Development Programme and other appropriate authorities, take all possible steps to develop and progressively put into effect plans aimed at providing satellite facilities for such countries to enable their peoples to receive directly the national television transmission which, in future, powerful satellites could make available to them through normal home receiver."<sup>39</sup> The developing countries also demanded that the broadcaster should have obtained the prior consent of the nation or group of nations receiving the communication. The experts stressed that international co-operation had to govern the entire application of space communication, if it were to serve the cause of peace and mutual understanding among peoples. There was, however, general

agreement that many of the issues raised could be dealt in a Declaration of Guiding Principles.

In the light of the suggestions of the experts meeting, the Director-General appointed two experts to prepare a Draft Declaration of Guiding Principles.<sup>40</sup> The draft was finally submitted at the 17th session of the General Conference under the title "Draft Declaration of Guiding Principles on the Use of Satellite Broadcasting for the Free Flow of Information, the Spread of Education and Greater Cultural Exchange". At the outset of the session, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and some other countries suggested that the Seventeenth UNESCO General Conference should not consider the Draft Declaration as the U.N. Committees on Outer Space had not yet sent its comments on the Draft Declaration and that this matter should be put off till the Eighteenth General Conference.<sup>41</sup> This, indeed, put a damper in the zeal of the developing countries. The Director-General suggested a via media, namely that the Draft Declaration could be considered and the comments of the present conference could be sent to the UN Committee on Outer Space. He stressed the need for unanimity. India and France attacked the American and

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40 Hilding Eek (Sweden) and Fernand Terrocl (France), See 17C/76 p.2. The Report about the unexpected New facts seems 1954 in the Domain of Freedom of information. Hilding Eek, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, New York, 1961, (Doc. E/3443).

41 See 17C/98 Rev.

and Japanese proposals. India pointed out that the question had been dragged on for a whole decade. The Committee on Outer Space had gone through the matter very closely. Hence, the UNESCO should not run away from its responsibility. Ultimately the draft declaration was adopted by 47 votes to 9 with 13 absentions.

The Declaration contains eleven Articles.<sup>42</sup> Among the most controversial Article among them is Article IX which reads: "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". A heated debate took place between countries of the East and the West on this. One school of thought advocated by the Soviets contended that the broadcasting countries should be legally bound to take prior agreement from the receiving countries. The other view asserted by America, was that such a legal requirement would render Article 19 of the Declaration of Human Rights uneffectual. The debate between the two concepts, viz, the free flow of information and national sovereignty, points to the problem of balancing both in the communication field. The developing countries strongly apprehend

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See Doc. 17C/76, pp.4-5.

that economic, social and political systems will be overwhelmed and undermined by foreign communication media, if space transmission were to take place without the consent of the receiving state. On the other hand, there are entrenched political and commercial interests of the countries of the West. While no considerable consensus has been reached on this issue, efforts have been going on to strike some generally acceptable formula, for the benefit of all groups of states. The trend is, however, overwhelmingly in favour of the consent formula. Despite the "great deal of work", the UNESCO has done to achieve free flow of information between developed and developing countries,<sup>43</sup> the global communication system is still left much to be desired. "The dissemination of information", points out M'Bow, the Director-General of the UNESCO, "is largely a one way process, issuing from a few centres mainly located in the industrialized countries. Such information perforce reflects the concerns and aspirations and even the point of view of the societies in which it originates and on whose media it depends,

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The establishment of an Asian Institution for Broadcasting Development in Malaysia in co-operation with the Asian Broadcasting Union,

(2) assistance in the development of national and regional news agencies (BERNAMA in Malaysia, Caribbean News Agency in Caribbean, individual countries' assistance to Somalia, Libya, Cameroon, Nepal, Malaysia, Upper Volta and Thailand),

(3) the establishment of a national centre for documentary film production in Latin America, Costa Rica;

(4) the promotion of radio as an instrument of rural press - (Togo, Mali, Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania, Tobago), and

(5) the promotion of radio - as an instrument of rural development (Ghana and Senegal).

and their mass communication organizations tend, whether they will or not, to exercise a de facto domination which may impose cultural models".<sup>44</sup> The lopsided information system is partly based on the lingering links between the former colonial countries and colonial powers in operating mostly to the advantage of the latter, reflecting their views, interests, policies and values. Besides, the concept of free flow of information is also facing many physical obstructions, in most societies. Some reasonable restrictions to the freedom of the individual are necessary in the interest of the community, and this equally applies to freedom of information.<sup>45</sup> In this context, "Convention on the International Right of Correction" adopted by the United Nations on 16 December 1952, this has been clearly recognized in Article II, "Recognizing that the professional responsibility of correspondents and information agencies requires them to report facts without discrimination and in their proper context and thereby to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedom...." The obstacles to free flow can be classified into two categories, evident obstacles, curbs and pressures, and non-evident obstacles and impediments.<sup>46</sup>

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44 Quoted from Makaminan Makagianar, "UNESCO and World Problems of Communication", in The UNESCO Courier, April 1977, p.6.

45 See Frank Giles, "Obstructions to the Free Flow of Information", in CIC Document no.8.

46 For details see Sean MacBride Commission's Final Report (Provisional), Paris, UNESCO, 1980, pp.235-76.



To facilitate free flow of information, both the international and the regional organizations have adopted many international and regional instruments setting up a range of norms,<sup>47</sup> but the domination of the Western media in the field would not, yet be effectively combatted. For free flow of news, India has recommended to the UNESCO that rates of international cable and air transmission be reduced. There is also an attempt to evolve a code of conduct for the operation of mass communication on the international plane and in order to prevent the misuse of their powers by journalists to the detriment of peace, order and progress of humanity.

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More important of these are: (1) Convention on the International Rights of Correction, UN, 16 December 1952, Article I to IV; (2) International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (UN Adopted on 21 December 1965, Articles 4 and 5, Para "D" and 7); (3) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UN adopted on 16 December 1966, Article 17 to 21); (4) International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, UN adopted on 30 November 1973, Article II, Para 1 and c only; (5) International Telecommunication Convention (ITC) signed in Malaga-Torremolinos on 25 October 1973, Article 4, 18 to 20, 22, 33, 35, Regional Scope; (6) Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Council of Europe, held in Rome, on 4 November 1950, Article 8, 10 and 11; (7) American Convention on Human Rights - "Pact of San Jose, Costa Rica" (Inter-American Conference on Human Rights) Signed in San Jose, Costa Rica, on 22 November 1969, Article 11, 13 and 15; (8) Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Done in Helsinki, on 1 August 1975)  
Declarations: (1) Universal Scope:  
 (i) Declaration on the Promotion Among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual respect and Understanding Between People, UN adopted on 7 December 1965) Principle I to IV), (2) Regional Scope; (2) Declaration on Mass Media and Human Rights, Council of Europe, Adopted on 23 January 1970.

### Chapter III

#### TOWARDS A NEW INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION ORDER: INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRENDS

The year 1969 marks a watershed in the history of the development of international communication. The main focus of the activities in the communication field during 1946-1968 has been on the free flow of information. The 1969 meeting of the UNESCO at Montreal (Canada) highlighted the need for balancing the free flow of information with a "two way circulation of news". This terminology became very familiar at the subsequent UNESCO meetings.<sup>1</sup> Alongside this, the concept of collective self-reliance started gathering momentum, among the regional news pools to foster self-reliance by promoting ideologies indigenous development. However, the singular factor that gave a shot in the arm for a demand for a New International Information Order was the acceptance by the United Nations of the need for a New International Economic Order in 1979.<sup>2</sup>

The present chapter endeavours to portray the norm-setting role played by the UNESCO leading to the call for a New International Information Order, its promotion of regional attempts at collective self-reliance and the linkage between the NIIO and NIEO.

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1 Hifzi Topur, "UNESCO and the Role of Mass Communication", The Democratic Journalist (DJ) (Czechoslovakia), February 1978, p.16.

2 M. Dubey, "Problems of Establishing a New International Economic Order", International Studies (New Delhi), vol. XXXII, no.3, 197 , pp.269-88.

## I. Evolution of the 1978 UNESCO Declaration:

At the sixteenth session of the UNESCO General Conference India played a leading role in the field of information. For the first time at this session, the UNESCO activities concerning free flow of information came under pointed criticism. The term "disequilibrium" in news flow also started being heard within the portals of the UNESCO. During inter-governmental meeting on the programme for the free circulation of information, the Indian delegate I.K. Gujral, significantly observed:

When we are speaking of the free circulation of information, we always forget this: who is to benefit from this circulation? The world has arrived at a stage in which, in the name of the free circulation of information, the developing countries are invaded by ideas coming from abroad. The tragedy is that this is not information, but propoganda. The information media make propoganda in the countries in which they are installed... The Press agencies are at present being developed in various countries. But in the international sphere it is only in four or five countries that they are most developed. These agencies have at times bilateral and at times multilateral agreements with the agencies of the developing countries which serve to export news towards those countries, but not to disseminate the news coming from the developing countries to other countries... Is the free circulation of information, therefore, in our own interest? There would be no free circulation of information at all without the international community being in a position to construct its own news network - an equality of possibilities in both the receiving and the sending of news. In the present context, there is no free circulation of information if the monopoly and technical control and technology exercised by the developed countries are not suppressed. The free circulation of information is therefore a myth.<sup>3</sup>

This does not mean that the need to balance the free flow of information had not been left earlier. The question of 'unbalanced circulation' of information took firm roots in a symposium on 'the information media and international understanding', organised in 1968 by the Yugoslav National Commission for the UNESCO in Ljelblgana. Thereafter, a Montreal study did point out that free flow of information "at the present~~ed~~ is often in fact a one way flow rather than a true exchange of information".<sup>4</sup> But it is to the credit of India that it raised the question for the first time in a General Conference in 1969. This led to a UNESCO sponsored two years study on the flow of TV programmes under the leadership of Kaable Nordenstfengl and Tapio Varis, which started in 1971-72 at Tampere University in Finland. Their findings proved crucial in the controversy that followed. The report entitled: "Television Traffic - Oneway Street", revealed that except Japan and China all the Asian countries were completely dominated by the United States and the United Kingdom Television Programmes. This automatically led <sup>to</sup> cultural and economic domination over these countries.<sup>5</sup> The experts said that the domination of the West over the developing countries encompassed not only Television Programmes but

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4 UNESCO - Mass Media in Society - The Need of Research Reports and Paper on Mass Communication (Hereafter RPMC) No.59, (Paris, UNESCO), 1970, p.27.

5 See Television Traffic - A Oneway Street, RPMC No.70.

also the press, radio, film and other internationally circulated mass media. They contrasted this reality with the main purpose of information which<sup>is</sup> to help peoples understand each other to learn each other's culture for the making of world peace, through co-existence and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, and to eliminate all kinds of discrimination between human beings.<sup>6</sup> Evidently, the one-way free flow of information would seriously hinder the achievement of the objectives of the UN family.

At seventeenth session, the Indian representative, I.K. Gujral, stressed that there should be news exchanges among the developing and developed countries, and that to this end formation of regional news agencies should be promoted. The idea of regional news agencies in its turn paved the way for the establishment of the "non-aligned countries' news pool in the developing countries.

The question of the existing disequilibrium of information was taken up again by a meeting of experts on communication policies and planning, organized by the UNESCO during July 17-28, 1972. The experts contended that the insistence on unrestricted right to access was ridiculous, when transfer of information was itself lopsided. Free access thus would perpetuate the neo-colonialism of communication and cultural imperialism by the West.<sup>7</sup> The question of disequilibrium

6 D.R. Mankekar, One Way Free Flow (New Delhi, 1969), pp. 106-07

7 See, n.3, p.11.

related to supply of newsprint was raised by the Indian delegates at the eighteenth session of the General Conference.<sup>8</sup> They pointed out that as long as the shortage of paper and disparities in the use of newsprint exist in the world, the real free flow of information would remain a far cry. Unless such operational problems were resolved much of the discussion on the free flow of information would only have theoretical value<sup>9</sup> The Indian delegation, in this connection, suggested the establishment of a World Paper Bank which would hold or identify stocks of newsprint available to meet urgent educational, cultural and communicational needs. I.K. Gujral said, the member states should restrain themselves from the luxury of over-consumption of the newsprint. Indeed, over-consumption has not been a characteristic feature of the developed countries in the communication field alone; it is a trait that runs through the whole of their social and economic life.

It thus became clear, thanks mainly to the delegates from the developing and socialist countries, at the UNESCO Conference, that the concept of free flow as traditionally conceived was out dated, and inequitable to an overwhelming majority of nations of the contemporary international community.

<sup>8</sup> See 18C/Dr; 27, 28, 152 Rev.2.

<sup>9</sup> See Report of Indian Delegation to 18th Session, Pub. Minister of Education, p.78.

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10 Kaarle Nordenstreng, Tapio Varis, New International Information Order, JD, no.4, 1977, p.2.

However, logically enough those who have benefitted both politically and commercially from the hitherto unrestrained "free-flow" should be now reluctant to give up their "communication hegemony", and naturally enough they insisted on the 'free-flow' doctrine by raising the issue of freedom of the Press. Thus the current ideological struggle to reform the global information order has revealed two storm-centres, namely free flow of information versus an equitable information system, and the freedom of the Press versus the possibility/reality of state censorship.<sup>10</sup>

The UNESCO adopted at the sixteenth session of its General Conference resolution aimed to promote the process of detente and mutual help among member states to protect their communication systems and improve their capabilities for access to information. The resolution noted that mass communication media played an important role in promoting international understanding and co-operation in the interest of peace and human welfare. States were invited to take necessary steps, including legislative measures, to encourage the use of information media against propaganda inciting war, racialism and hatred among nations, and to provide the UNESCO with information on the subject.<sup>11</sup> At its seventeenth session,

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Kaarle Nordenstreng, and Tapio Varis, New International Information Order, J.D., no.4, 1977, p.2.

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Doc. 16C/Res.4.301.

the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a resolution to work out a Draft Declaration on this theme under the leadership of Hilding Eck.<sup>12</sup> A preliminary Draft Declaration entitled "The role of Mass Communication Media in Strengthening peace and international understanding and in the Fight against war Propaganda and Racism", was thoroughly examined and modified by an expert committee<sup>13</sup> and submitted to the eighteenth General Conference<sup>14</sup> and where detailed discussion took place.<sup>15</sup> Finally, it was decided to call a conference of category II Governments experts to elaborate the final version of the resolution.<sup>16</sup>

At the Conference of the Government experts held in December 1975, in Paris, almost half of the UNESCO member states attended, but the Western states avoided concrete discussion on the principles of responsibility for using mass communication media in international relations, with the excuse that they could not agree with a remark included in the Yugoslav proposal for a paragraph as the preamble of the UNESCO resolution 3379, in which Zionism was condemned as one of the forms of racism.

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- 12        Doc. 17C/Res.4.113  
13        See Doc. Com.74/Conf 616/3.  
14        Doc. 18C/35.  
15        Doc. 18C/123.  
16        Doc. 18C/Res. 4.111.



They walked out of the Conference. However, without the participation of the Western states, a text was drawn up and finally approved by 41 votes to eight, with three abstentions, and it was then submitted to the nineteenth UNESCO General Conference.<sup>17</sup>

At the nineteenth session, the Western countries opposed the draft declaration tooth and nail, particularly Article XII which had been introduced by Russia, asserting that states are responsible for the activities in the international sphere of all mass media under their jurisdiction. The Article was hotly debated because of the basic ideological differences<sup>18</sup> between the Soviet Union and America<sup>19</sup>, and also their respective systems of social values. The Soviet representative observed that when the mass media were directly under the jurisdiction of states, there was more possibility of balanced flow of information. Whereas the American representative argued that if the Government controlled all the mass media, there would not be any free flow of information. He pointed out that media in many of the developing countries were controlled by the state governments. The main preoccupation of the media in these countries has been propagation of the ideas of the government of the day or the party in power, and censor of all ideas that impaired this objective. Therefore, state control in mass communication would imperil free flow of information.

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17 Doc. 19C/91.

18 For the Soviet viewpoint see, Yassen N. Zasuksky and Yuri I. Kashlev, "The Mass Media and Society - A Soviet Viewpoint" Courier, (Paris) April 1977, pp.24-27.

19 See on this William G. Harley, "The Mass Media & Society - An American Viewpoint", Courier (Paris), 1977, pp.28-31.

The Indian Government, on the other hand, supported the Draft Declaration. According to it, the Declaration should not be an end in itself, but it should provide protection to economically weak countries, who were vulnerable to external interference. The Declaration should not end with giving responsibility to the member state, but it should also give a role to the international bodies to pursue the ideas embodied in it.<sup>20</sup>

At the nineteenth session, an acrimonious debate ensued. The Western countries demanded rephrasing of Article XII relating to "state responsibility over the activities of mass media in their jurisdiction". Finally, at this session a common agreement was arrived at about the state control of the media. The same session, as will be seen later in this chapter, saw the emergence of a new term, viz. a "New International Information Order". Other most controversial provisions of the Draft Declaration of this session were Articles II and X. Article II reads:

With a view to the strengthening of peace and international understanding and to combating war propaganda, racialism and apartheid, it is essential that the mass media should contribute to promoting human rights, in particular by giving expression to those who combat colonialism, neo-colonialism and foreign occupation, apartheid and other forms of racial discrimination, and who are unable to make their voices heard within their own territories. This should be done with due respect for the sovereignty and legislation of the countries in which these media are located.

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Indian delegation to the eighteenth session of the General Conference of UNESCO, Paris, 17 October-23 November 1974. Report, New Delhi, Indian National Commission for UNESCO (1975), pp.79-81.

Article X reads:

Action by the international community, and more especially by Unesco, is regarded as essential for the application of the present Declaration. In particular, it is the responsibility of the international community to endeavour to create a freer and more balanced flow of information, promote a professional status for journalists and other agents of the mass media, and give expression to those who, in their struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, apartheid and other forms of racial discrimination, are unable to make their voices heard within their own territories.

The initial controversies surrounding these provisions were of procedural character. One group of states wanted to postpone the discussion to the twentieth session whereas another wanted the negotiations to be conducted within a small working group.

The sharp controversies that spurred by the first draft of the UNESCO Declaration on the role of the mass media during the nineteenth session (Nairobi) of the UNESCO General Conference in 1976, led to the establishment of an "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems", now known as the MacBride Commission. This Commission consisted of 16 experts with MacBride as its Chairman. The tasks of the Commission were:-

- (a) to study the current situation in the field of communication and information and to identify problems which call for fresh action at the national level and a concerted, overall approval at the inter-

national level. The analysis of the state of communication in the world today, and particularly of information problems as a whole, should take account of the diversity of socio-economic conditions and levels and types of developments;

- (b) to pay particular attention to problems relating to the free and balanced flow of information in the world, as well as the specific needs of developing countries, in accordance with the decisions of the General Conference.
- (c) to analyse communication problems, in their different aspects, within the perspective of the establishment of a new international economic order and of the measures to be taken to foster the institution of a "New World Information Order";
- (d) to define the role which communication might play in making public opinion aware of the major problems facing the world, <sup>in</sup> sensitizing it, to their problems and helping gradually to solve them by concerted action at the national and international level.<sup>21</sup>

The Director-General informed the Executive Board at its 103rd session, (October - November 1977) of the measures taken to

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Sean MacBride Commission's Final Report (Provisional), Paris, 1980, pp.70-71.

set up the commission. He anticipated that the commission would probably submit only an interim report to the next session of the General Conference, with its final report due to be published in 1979 and examined by the Conference at its session in 1980. The Executive Board approved the action and expressed its satisfaction at "the vigorous way in which the Director-General had initiated action to .... establish an international commission for the solution of communication problems".<sup>22</sup>

The interim report of the Commission presented to the 1970 UNESCO General Conference, highlighted the Third World's demand for an NIIO. However, it provoked virulent criticism in the Western quarters. It was alleged that the report itself was the handiwork of the UNESCO Secretariat, and not of the Commission that it betrayed beneath "mass of intellectual muddle and appallingly obscure language", a distinct bias towards state control of the media, and that therefore it did not deal with free and balanced flow of information at all. But then this was a typical Western reaction.<sup>23</sup>

The Indian delegation appears to have played a role in reaching a behind-the-scene compromise between the various groups

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<sup>22</sup> Quoted from Interim Report on Communication Problems in Modern Society, UNESCO, 1978, p.13.

<sup>23</sup> Rosemary Righter, "What reply to the Third World Plea for Justice", International Press Institute (London), September 1979, p.11.

involved. Finally, according to the compromise formula, and that thereafter, they would be referred to the Drafting and Negotiating groups, set up by the Conference. Over 50 countries took part in the two-day debate that ensued. G. Parthasarathy, the then Chairman of the Policy Planning Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs, the Govt. of India, was unanimously elected Chairman of the Negotiating group. Finally, the Conference decided to take up the matter again at the 20th session, with a revised draft declaration. The Western reaction was not confined to the MacBride report. The UNESCO activities as such also came to be roundly criticized. Taking an extreme position, as stated, the New York Times asserted "If it turns out to be impossible to reject this attempt to tamper with our basic principles, there is always the alternative of rejecting UNESCO itself."<sup>24</sup> The Times wrote on November 8, "The good it does is not worth the price it demands". The New York Times wrote that: "To American there can be no 'free speech' or 'balanced' news unless those who advocate racism and apartheid and, yes war are also free to speak".

Perhaps to allay some of the Western apprehensions, the Director General of the UNESCO sought to drop Soviet Article XII of the Draft Declaration, which led to controversies.<sup>25</sup> Despite

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Quoted from Elena Androunas and Yassen Zassoursky, "UNESCO Mass Media Declaration: A forum of three worlds" - Journal of Communication, 1979, Spring, vol.29, no.2, pp.188-89.

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UNESCO, See Cause for dropping the Article in Amadou Mibows speech at the close of the twentieth session of the General Conference" in Declaration of Fundamental Principle concerning the... incitement to war, 1979, pp.6-7.

this, however, the main idea of state control is still clearly visible in the declaration one way or the other.<sup>26</sup> In view of the controversies, it is no surprise that the draft declaration underwent three revisions through eight years of negotiations before it was adopted by acclamation on 22 November 1978 at the Twentieth session of the General Conference of the UNESCO, held in Paris.<sup>27</sup>

The preamble to the 1978 Declaration on Fundamental principles concerning the contribution of the mass media to strengthening peace and international understanding, to the promotion of Human Rights and to countering racialism, apartheid and incitement to war" refers the UN resolutions and conventions in which war and racial propaganda are condemned from the international legal view point. The third paragraph of the preamble recites the aims and principles of the United Nations, incorporated in the Charter - principles such as sovereignty, non-interference and self-determination, and international understanding and co-operation in the interests of peace and human welfare. Free flow of ideas by word and image, condemnation of all forms of propaganda designed to provoke or encourage threat to peace of acts of aggression, and elimination of all forms of racial discrimination including apartheid.<sup>28</sup>

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26 Kleinwachter- "UNESCO Declaration on the role of Mass communication Media", The Democratic Journalist, no.78, 1979, p.6.

27 Doc. 20C/20

28 UNESCO; Preamble of "Declaration of Mass Communication", 1978, pp.9-11.

Article II reads: "Journalists must have freedom to report and the fullest possible facilities of access to information". Landable though this objective is, the recent incidents have shown how difficult it is to follow it up. Recently, the Pakistan Government detained a Journalist, Salamat Ali of the Hong Kong based Far Eastern Economic Weekly on a charge of presenting a "slumming picture of the situation in Pakistan".<sup>29</sup> Despite the requests by leading journalists to the Pakistani Government to release Ali, the Government put him behind the bars for six months.<sup>30</sup> It is clear that the Declaration of mass communication is only morally, but not legally binding. Hence its conscientious implementation is completely dependent upon the discretion of the State.

Article III of the Declaration emphasises that important role of mass media towards, elimination of racism, apartheid and incitement to war, but does not provide guidelines how this role is to be played.

Article IV recognises that the mass media "have an essential part of the play in the education of young people in a spirit of peace, justice, mutual respect and understanding, but fails to suggest how the media should play" the play."

29 The Times of India (New Delhi), 11 November 1979.

30 Asian Recorder, vol. XXVI, no. 3, January 15-21, 1980, pp. 152-78.



Article V provides that the points of view of those who consider that the information published or disseminated about them has seriously prejudiced their efforts to strengthen peace and international understanding should also be disseminated. But the Declaration is silent on how this should be achieved.

In Article VII, the mass communication media are urged to contribute to strengthening peace and international understanding, and to the promotion of human rights and to the establishment of a more just and equitable International Economic Order, disseminating widely all information on the aims and universally recognised principles on the matter adopted by different agencies of the United Nations, and bilateral and multilateral exchanges of information especially among states with diverse social systems aimed to bridge the communication among them. The main purport of the Declaration is to reduce the technological domination and control of the Western countries over the Less Developed Countries. The notion of equality of communication is acknowledged.<sup>31</sup> The Declaration reflects a balanced idea of a human right to communicate.<sup>32</sup> It highlights the need to develop the news circulation within developed and developing countries more effectively.

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31 n.26, p.15.

32 See L.S. Harms, Jim Richstan, Evolving Perspectives on the Right to Communicate (Honolulu: East-West Centre, 1977),

Article VI states the aim of achieving a balance in the flow of information, more favourable conditions for attaining a just and lasting peace, as well as economic and political independence of the developing countries.<sup>33</sup>

Article IX holds out a promise to contribute to the creation of conditions for a free flow and wider and more balanced dissemination of information. The journalists and their professional organizations are called upon to act in such a way that the principles stated in the Declaration are translated into action. To that end, professional organizations are expected to lay particular emphasis on these principles by drawing up codes of ethics. The Press Foundation of Asia held a meeting to formulate guidelines for Journalists to follow certain code of ethics. If seen objectively, these Articles should seem not only unobjectionable but most relevant and essential. The Declaration also gives due importance to preservation of cultural heritage of the member states and endeavours to promote and protect their cultural identity through mass communication.

The Declaration has received both bouquets and brick-bats appreciation. Veteran Indian journalists, S.M. Moolgaokar and A.S. Abraham have been critical of the Declaration. According to Moolgaokar, "the declaration casts responsibility on promoting human rights in particular, by giving expression to those who

combat colonialism, neo-colonialism and foreign occupation, apartheid, and other forms of racial discrimination and who are unable to make their voice heard with their territory". But the declaration also stated that "this should be done with due respect for the sovereignty and legislation of the countries in which these media are located". This qualification, according to Moolgaokar, makes nonsense of the very basis of the press freedom.<sup>34</sup> In Abraham's view, the proposals of the declaration of mass communication look to be liberally but not in practice, in general. The developed countries never reported why the developing countries wanted to free themselves from the colonial imperialism. They reported, what the Government in power says. Hence as long as the state controls the mass media, there is no use of making declaration which is more beneficial to the developed countries. And who is opposing the strengthening of peace and international understanding and combating war propaganda, racialism and apartheid.<sup>35</sup> Kaarka Nordenstrey, on the other hand, points out that the Declaration "is not inviting state control". The mass media do not work in a vacuum. They work in a national and international framework.<sup>36</sup>

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34 Indian Express (New Delhi), 21 September 1978.

35 Times of India (New Delhi), 22 September 1978.

36 International Press Institute Report (London), vol. 27, December 1978, no. 11, p. 4.

Indeed the states which negotiated the Declaration have themselves aware of some of its short-comings. Thus, for instance, Article II, para (1) and Article V deal with the freedom of information as something abstract, unrelated to the concrete social and economic conditions. The representatives of some of the developing countries pointed out that in view of the millions of illiterates on the earth, on the one hand and poverty and inequality of resources endowments, the right of information should not be clubbed with the right to education, because the two things can not go hand in hand in their implementation. Similarly, the demand for variety of sources of information and communication media (Article II, para 2) and for representation of all standpoints while putting out information (Article V) is rather unrealistic, because the mass media are always a powerful instrument in the ideological struggles. For this reason, a provision, like Article V was regarded by some Western delegates with skepticism. Bourgeois newspapers will be just as unwilling to disseminate the ideology of the working class as the socialist press will not become the disseminator of the bourgeois ideology.

Leaving aside these criticisms, the Declaration represents a first and significant step in elaborating internationally acceptable guiding principles for balanced and equitable utilization of mass communication media in the exchange of information across national frontiers. It will remain an important frame of reference in the quest for a constructive role for mass communication media in development of communities. However, its long-term

relevance will be determined by its impact on states, the media, the men behind them and organisations, and on the global communication system as a whole.<sup>37</sup>

The Soviet delegate said that "the declaration clearly affirms the need to combine, the idea of freedom of information with the concept of the responsibility of mass media and of journalists stemming from the particular nature of their work". It is "an important step in the decolonization of the media".<sup>38</sup> According to D.R. Mankekar, the Declaration strives to synthesise the fundamentals of three concepts of the role of media, namely, "the Western viewpoint where media are concerned essentially to record facts, events and situation in terms of market requirements, the concept of socialist countries where media lay the emphasis first and foremost on the major problems faced by its people and on their educational and cultural needs, and in the Third World where media are seen as an instrument of development".<sup>39</sup> In his view, the Declaration would protect and promote the media interests of the developing countries and seek to shield them against foreign cultural domination and neo-colonialism.

In short, the 1978 Declaration represents the highpoint of a decade of norm-setting by the UNESCO . It embodies the clarion call for a New International Information Order, as a tool to the New International Economic Order.

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37 See n.26, p.8.

38 See n.37, p.8.

## II. A Regional Approach to Information Order : Non-aligned News Agencies Pool and UNESCO:

As already noted, the UNESCO has taken keen interest in promoting regional co-operation among communication media. The idea may be traced to a meeting of experts on the development of news agencies in Asia (at Bangkok, December 1961). At this meeting, participants from 14 countries recommended the establishment of a regional news agency for Asia. Accordingly, the Organization of Asian News Agencies (OANA) was established in 1963 and has since been actively promoting collaboration and news exchange between its members. But most news agencies of the developing countries did not enjoy functional independence, as they operated as functional adjunct of the giant international news agencies of the West. The report on "Development of Information Media in Africa" thus recommended that "the news agencies and information services of the region should study the possibility of setting up of a pool or central bureau for the exchange of photographs as well as news and feature articles."<sup>40</sup>

The numerical strength of the developing countries in all international organizations has constantly increased since 1958-60. Having achieved political independence, they realised that colonialism and exploitation has not altogether disappeared and that they often continued in the new forms of economic and

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UNESCO, Developing Information Media in Africa:  
RPMC No. 37, 1962, p.16.

cultural imperialism. They also realise that political independence has no meaning without economic independence and freedom of communication. The transnational corporations rooted in the West have become the main torchbearers of economic and cultural imperialism. In the communication field, the developing countries have come to realise that as long as they depend upon the developed countries for information, the cultural and economic domination of the latter will continue.<sup>41</sup> They also realise that in order to remedy the situation, it is necessary to find an alternative to the Western communication media and that this can be achieved to a degree by collaboration and co-operation among themselves and developing and promoting regional arrangements of collective self-reliance to be better informed about each other on political, economic, cultural and social affairs. Thriving on sensational commercialism, the Western news media have mostly generated and distributed the destructive news about the developing countries such military coups, ethnic strife, terrorist acts and natural calamities. Further, these news media view news only from the looking glass of the Western value system. Hence the need of the developing countries to develop their own news agencies to distribute news about their political, social, cultural and educational aspects of development, and learn from each other's developmental experience.<sup>42</sup>

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Juan Somavia, "Transnational Power Structure and International Information", Media Asia (Singapore), vol.3, no.3, 1976, pp.1

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D.R. Mankekar, "The Media and the Third World", Indian Institute of Mass Communication (New Delhi, 1974), p.27.

The 1972 meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Andean group of countries in Latin America took a serious view of the global information situation which adversely affected the fabric of the developing societies. The Algiers Summit of the non-aligned countries came out with a specific demand for reorganization of the existing information channels in 1973. At the Summit Conference, Articles 13 and 14 of the Action Programme that was adopted by economic co-operation, specifically referred to communication. They also suggested promotion of contacts between the mass media, universities, libraries, planning and research bodies to exchange the experience and expertise in the field.<sup>43</sup> The Algiers Summit stressed that "the developing countries should take concrete action in the field of mass communication in order to promote a greater inter-change of ideas among themselves and should reorganise existing communication channels which are the legacy of the colonial past and which have hampered free, direct and fast communication between them".<sup>44</sup>

It, therefore, called upon the non-aligned countries to exchange and disseminate mutually information concerning their achievements in all aspects of social and economic life of their

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43 See for details, W. Lazarus, "Origin of the News Pool", Media India, April-June 1978, p.547.

44 MacBrid Commission, Preliminary Documents, Serial No.8 1979, p.20.



societies through newspapers and periodicals, radio, television and other mass media of their respective countries. They should formulate plans for sharing experience in the field, inter alia through exchanges of reciprocal visits of delegations from information media and through exchange of radio and television programme, films book, photographs and through cultural events and festivals.

The cultural alienation of the peoples of the developing societies and imported civilization - the direct result of imperialism and colonialism - should be countered by a repersonalization and constant and determined recourse to the indigenous and social and cultural values.<sup>45</sup>

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Journalists all over the world have also contributed to the formulation of the non-aligned countries' News Pool. The Foundation convened a Seminar at New York in 1975. At the Seminar, it was emphasized that the developing countries had to protect themselves from the distortion of their culture and way of life caused by the current state of dependency of their communication structure and the predominantly ethocentric prejudices.<sup>45</sup> The UNESCO studies Reports and Papers on mass communication have also amply

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See for details, Gunnar R. Naesselund, "Introduction to a New Information Order", in TDJ, no.4, 1977, p.4.

revealed that there is an unbalanced flow of news from non-aligned world broadly in three respects (a) qualitative flow; (b) character and content of the news served by the major wire services and (c) the technological gaps between major wire services and the national news agencies. In 1974, the scope of the discussion widened and took on added dimensions at the United Nations sixth special session of the General Assembly on the role of information in the new international economic order. Immediately afterwards the matter was examined in detail at Lima (Peru) by the Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Non-aligned Countries in August 1975. The Lima Conference passed a resolution which called upon the participant countries to promote and achieve "cooperation among non-aligned countries in the field of mass communication including the commencement of a pool of news agencies of non-aligned countries".<sup>47</sup>

In the meantime, fourteen non-aligned countries met in Belgrade to prepare the agenda for a non-aligned symposium on information to be held in Tunisia in March 1976. The Tunisia symposium was held in 26-30 March 1976. The final report on "the emancipation of the mass media in non-aligned countries" the

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By then the "Telegrafske Agenaja Nave Jugoslavija" (Tanjug) the Yugoslav News Agency, agreed to take up the pool activities and to run the pool with the help of twenty-six non-aligned countries. By the end of 1976, it relayed 3,500 news items successfully. The Pool today has over forty-four national agencies, participating in the mutual exchange of news. It has also received encouragement from the UN, the UNESCO, the World Bank, the Associated Press, and the United Press International.

need for development of self-reliance in mass media within these countries and of regional exchange centres for journalists and technologies, for future development of communicational infrastructure. The symposium authorised the Indian Government to take up the matter in detail and to sketch out the nature, objectives, functions, co-operation arrangements and financial matters.<sup>48</sup> Accordingly, the Conference of Ministers of Information and Communication Media of non-aligned countries was held in New Delhi from 8 to 13 July 1976 which drafted a constitution for the non-aligned press agencies which was approved by the Fifth Non-aligned Summit at Colombo in August 1976.

The definition of objectives of the Pool clearly indicates) that the basic task of the pool is to improve and broaden the mutual exchange of information and further strengthen co-operation among the non-aligned countries, whereby objective, truthful, and accurate information can be disseminated. The form of co-operation to be adopted should enable the existing gap in the domain of information to be narrowed while at the same time assuring a more rapid and continuous flow of information about the non-aligned countries and their policies on the national and international plane.<sup>49</sup> As for the function of the pool, the basic principle is that all news agencies shall enjoy equal rights

~~to be disseminated~~

48 For details, Study of Pool Objectives, Functions, Etc., Ibid., pp.88-94.

49 See documents ministerial conference of non-aligned countries on the Press Agencies Pool, New Delhi, July 8-13, 1976, pp.39/A/10-44.

with regard to the broadcasting and redistribution of news and information. The proposal that all agencies which were technically adequately equipped should operate as regional centres for the redistribution of news within the framework of the pool was unanimously adopted. It was hoped that such a practice would assure a more rapid and comprehensive flow and exchange of news and information.

The constitution also stresses that co-operation between the participant countries would be based on full respect of equality and democratic principles. The overall activities of the Pool will be directed by a coordinating committee consisting of representatives of all participating governments and national agencies. The Committee will follow up the decisions adopted, and coordinate the initiatives and proposals for the promotion of co-operation in the field. India was elected the first Chairman of the coordinating committee.

The New Delhi Declaration was ratified later at the Colombo Summit in 1976. The declaration highlights that:

Non-aligned countries note with concern the vast and ever-growing gap between communication capacities in non-aligned countries, which is a legacy of their colonial past. This has created a situation of dependence and domination in which the majority of countries are reduced to being passive recipients of biased, inadequate and distorted information. The fuller identification and affirmation of their national and cultural identity, thus requires them to rectify this serious imbalance and to take urgent steps to provide greater momentum in this new area of mutual cooperation ... The emanci-

pation and development of national information media is an integral part of the overall struggle for political, economic and social independence for a large majority of the peoples of the world who should not be denied the right to inform and to be informed objectively and correctly. Self-reliance in the source of information is as important as technological self-reliance since dependance in the field of information in turn retards the very achievement of political and economic growth. Non-aligned countries must achieve these objectives through their own efforts as well as by more active cooperation on a bilateral regional as well as inter-regional basis and by coordinating their activities in the United Nations and other international forums. It is particularly necessary for non-aligned countries to strengthen their existing infra-structure and to take full advantage of the scientific and technological break-through already made in the field. This would facilitate more complete dissemination of objective information amongst their own public as well as the world at large about development in non-aligned countries in the social, economic, cultural and other fields and their growing role in the international community.<sup>50</sup>

It is clearly understood that the Non-aligned Press Agencies Pool is not a supra-national News Agency. All participating News Agencies have the same right in terms of the circulation of the material each makes available to the Pool.<sup>51</sup> The pool also functions as a self-paying project in the sense that the sender of news pays the cost of transmission. It does not have any staff or central headquarters to look its activities. The non-aligned news pool has created (1) a coordinating committee for cooperation in the field of information at international level

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., A/8/Res.1, July 13, 1976, p.31.

<sup>51</sup> See n.49, p. A.110, p.36.

as seen earlier, (2) a coordinating committee of the non-aligned news agencies pool; (3) a co-ordinating committee for the cooperation of broadcasting organisations and (4) an international committee of experts for telecommunication. The main aim of the last-mentioned committee is to see for balanced and free flow of information between developing and developed countries.

In non-aligned news pool, the UNESCO involvement is in terms of financial aid and provision of technical guidance. This has been assured in the Nineteenth session of the General Conference of the UNESCO. At its Eighteenth session of the Conference, communication has been introduced as one of the four problem areas" around which UNESCO's four year medium-term programme for 1977-1982 was to be concentrated.<sup>52</sup> The UNESCO sponsored a number of regional conferences on communication policies, such as the Conference in Costa Rica to discuss Latin American communication policies. The UNESCO had to face criticism for supporting the Non-aligned News Pool. A United Press International report contained a suggestion of a private expert committee that the United States should withdraw from the UNESCO if it were to be associated with the Third World News Agencies Pool.<sup>53</sup> Herbert Gold, author and faculty member of communication, one of the members of the committee. pointed out that the committee was a rescue mission because the UNESCO "on the way to self-destruction" while Rober Mertorn, Professor of Columbia University, accused the UNESCO of "having become a political agency, chiefly under the domination of the oil-producing nation".<sup>53</sup>

<sup>52</sup> For detail see Median Term Programme, 1977-82.

<sup>53</sup> Guyde Fontgalland, "News Pool Background to the Controversy", Media Asia, vol.3, no.3, 1976, p.144.

Arnold Beichman, warned that "great injury could be done to the free press of the world if the proposal for the news agencies pool were accepted." Evidently these criticisms indicate that the non-aligned countries have set an example in collective self-reliance in the field of communication.

### III. New International Information Order: The Objectives of:

The demand for New International Information Order is raised by the developing countries, as already indicated, because of their bitter experience of the colonial days. While the fact that such a demand should arise at the present juncture is understandable in terms of the inexorable logic of the international events of the post-war world; as a specific demand of and it can be traced to the Tunisian symposium of the Non-aligned Countries in 1976. The symposium noted that "since information in the world shows a disequilibrium favouring some and ignoring others, it is the duty of the Non-aligned countries to change this situation and obtain the decolonization of information and initiate a New International Order in Information."<sup>55</sup>

As highlighted by the debates of the seventies in diverse international fora, the demand for a New International Information Order is the response of the developing countries to the existing colonialist order. The ever-growing gap between the

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> See, n.10, p.1.

developing and developed countries was largely the result of the colonial era. Colonialism has nurtured the present situation of dependence and domination in which the majority of the countries of the Third World have to receive the biased, inadequate and distorted information subserving the political, commercial and cultural interests of the West.<sup>56</sup> This information goes against the interests of the developing countries and hinders their social and economic development, and creates crises of national identity. Hence the attempts of the developing countries to form new mechanisms and procedures for mutual cooperation as an immediate measure to alleviate the situation. The Western developed countries, have come to acquire an effective monopoly over all aspects generation and dissemination of global information. Commercial sensationalism often prevented information about the developing countries from percolating through the mass media. The world news media are controlled by five major transnational agencies.<sup>57</sup> These agencies tend to cover the more dramatic and overt stories and endeavour to dominate the media, not only in news coverage but also in copy-righting, radio frequency, and other source of media.<sup>58</sup> A glance at the world

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56 See, The Role of Information in the Development of Cultural Interaction Between Non-aligned Countries, Paper presented by the Indian delegation at the symposium on Information Media in Non-aligned Countries, Tunisia, 26-30 March 1976, pp. 1-2.

57 (a) Associated Press; (b) United Press International (America); (c) Agence France Presse (France); Reuter (British), Tass (Soviet).

58 For detail see, Mutapha Mustaphai, "The New World Information Order", in Journal of Communication, Spring, 1979, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 173-78.



consumption pattern of mass communication (See Annexure I) clearly indicates the commercial interests dominating in the focussing of information to a select audience. Indeed, all this is part of the imperialist production system.<sup>59</sup>

As already seen, the Sixth Non-aligned Conference at Algiers (September 5-9, 1973) noted that "the existing communication channels which are the legacy of the colonial past have hampered free, direct and past communication between them".<sup>60</sup> In the San Jose Conference of the countries of Latin America and Carribean, some delegates frankly accused the industrialised countries of having consistently committed cultural aggression, in order to keep the developing countries in a state of permanent dependency on them.<sup>61</sup> The demand for a New International Information Order, thus, aims to bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries.

The demand for a New International Information Order has set a range of radical objectives for the international community. The main aim of the New International Information Order is to establish relations of equality in the communications field between the developed and the developing countries. It also seeks greater justice and greater balance in the global information

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59 For details see, MacBride Commission Discussion Serial 33 "Call for a New International Information Order : Preliminary Remarks", pp.5-10.

60 Old RchBures (ed.), Towards a New World Information Order by International Organization of Journalists, 1979, pp.5-11.

61 UNESCO, Inter-governmental Conference on Communication Policies in Latin America and the Carribean. Final Report, San Jose (Costa Rica), pp.12-31, July 1976, pp.8-11.

system to give equal chance to inform and be informed for the developing countries, to preserve their independence against big power hegemony to protect human rights, and to protect human rights, and to propogate elimination of all kinds of discrimination which hinder the development of world peace.<sup>62</sup> It envisages a world in which states, which develop their cultural system in an autonomous way and with sovereign control of resources, participate as independent members of the international community".<sup>63</sup>

The New International Information order also sets tasks for both the developed and the developing countries. The tasks of the developing countries should be as follows:

(a) The developing countries should define their communication policies for the development of their national economic, social, educational and cultural spheres. They should make communication accessible to each other by mutual exchange of cultural programmes, technical expertise, training facilities and so on.

(b) The developing countries should establish news exchange centres to receive and exchange news between the developing and developed countries for fostering a free, balanced and equitable flow of information.

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62 See n.58, p.178.

63 UNESCO, McBride Commission's Preliminary Discussion Document No.34, "The New World Information Order", p.13.

(c) They should promote, the objectives of the New International Information Order by conducting conferences, seminars or symposia to facilitate understanding of each other's viewpoints on communication and to help to assess the gap between the countries.<sup>64</sup>

The media in developed countries should try to make the public opinion in these countries more receptive of the developing countries and try to understand them and their cultural economic, social and political life. The journalists in the developed countries should respect the laws of the land and cultural values of the different peoples, and help to put an end to the pernicious activities of foreign stations established outside national frontiers.<sup>65</sup>

The New International Information Order also sets tasks for international organisations. The international organizations should endeavour to provide aid and assistance to the developing countries as much as possible for their all-round development, helping them to promote their own media to achieve collective self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The organisations should also act a sort of monitors in transnational information flow, promoting the right to the developing. They should support the developing countries in their communication policies to promote

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64 Masmoudi, see n.58, pp.178-79.

65 Ibid., pp.179-82.

research, particularly on the implications of transfer of technology, and to set up documentation centres on communication. They seek to extricate the developing countries from all debts in the international exchange of cultural programmes and activities. They should also assist construction of training centres and research institutes of mass media in developing countries. The organisations should also help these countries in developing a clear-cut policy on the use of satellite communication system respecting the sovereign rights of the individual states, encouraging the testing, evaluation and dissemination of new low-priced and easy-to-use communication technology so as to enable the development to reach the masses. The New International Information Order also envisages transfer of legal, technical and financial expertise among nations for strengthening its goal.<sup>66</sup>

IV. The New International Economic Order and the New International Information Order : The Linkage:

The recommendations of the Delhi Conference of the Non-aligned Countries endorsed subsequently by the Fifth Conference of the Heads of the States of Non-aligned Countries at Colombo in August 1978, stated categorically that "A New International Order in the field of information and mass communication is as vital as a New International Economic Order".<sup>67</sup> The Delhi Declara-

66 Ibid., pp.182-89.

67 MacBrid Commission, Preliminary discussion No.35, p.1.

tion highlighted the linkage between the Economic Order and the New International Information Order.

The historic decisions of the Sixth Special Session of the UN General Assembly calling for a New International Economic Order represented merely a point of culmination of a long drawn process of coming together of the developing countries in international fora in an attempt to combat and eliminate the lingering vestiges of "colonialism", and to assist their right to be the masters of their own economic destiny. The Western colonial power were exploiting the natural resources of these countries with the help of modern technology and large private capital investment.<sup>69</sup> The very life blood of the poor countries was thus drained out by the developed countries. In the result, the poor nations were reduced to the state of permanent dependency on the developed countries for economic and technological aid - which gave the latter an opportunity to dictate terms in international relations.

The resultant economic disparity between these groups of countries is rather striking. According to Lazar Mojsov, "The population of the developing countries which represent over three quarters of all mankind receives only 6.5 per cent of world income.

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Origin of the Concept, See Branislav Gosovic and John Gerard Ruggie, "Origin and Evolution of the Concept", in International Social Sciences Journal (Paris), 1976, vol. XXVIII, no. 4, pp. 639-45.

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For more details see, M.S. Rajan, Sovereignty Over Natural Resources (New Delhi), 1978, p. 7.

The per capita income in these countries is eighteen times lower than that enjoyed in the developed states as a whole. The third world possess 80 per cent of existing raw materials but its share of overall industrial production is under 7 per cent".<sup>70</sup> The economic woes of the non-oil producing developing countries further deteriorated when the oil prices started shooting up. The focus of these economic problems, the UN convened the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly which was held in April-May 1974. At the end of the special session, the General Assembly adopted without vote a declaration on the establishment of a New International Economic Order in May 1974,<sup>71</sup> and International Economic Cooperation was adopted at Seventh Special Session.<sup>72</sup> Under the Declaration, the members of the UN solemnly proclaimed to work together urgently for the establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, justice, sovereign equality, interdependence, and common interest and cooperation among all states, irrespective of their economic and social systems, which would make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and ensure accelerated economic and social development, peace and justice.<sup>73</sup> The Sixth Special session also adopted a Plan of Action to achieve the goals set by the Declaration.<sup>74</sup>

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70 Mohammed Bedjaoui, Towards a New International Economic Order (Paris), 1979, p.27.

71 Resolution 3201 (S-VI) of the UN General Assembly, Sixth Special Session.

72 UN Resolution 3362(S-VII).

73 UN Resolution 3201 (S-VI).

74 UN Resolution 3202 (S-VI).

Two main concepts on which the New Economic Order is to be founded are sovereignty or complete control of states over their own natural resources. This would automatically lead to interdependence because no state in the world can be completely self-reliant.<sup>75</sup>

The call for a New International Economic Order is obviously of not only economic, but also of social, scientific, technological and cultural relevance for the whole world. The General Conference of the UNESCO at its eighteenth session adopted a resolution, which laid emphasis on the socio-cultural factors involved in development and spoke of the establishment of a new international economic and social order. The same resolution declared that the establishment of a New International Economic Order depended not only on political and economic factors, but also on socio-cultural factors.<sup>76</sup> Such an order, "is crucial in the peoples' struggle against all forms of domination".<sup>77</sup>

Thus the New International Economic Order also implies all-round development. It encompasses in itself planning policies in education, cultural and scientific development and

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75 MacBride Commission Preliminary discussion document no.32, pp.46-49.

76 18C/Rev. 12.11

77 See UNESCO, Moving Towards Change (Paris), 1976, p.18.

communication. In the field of education, it envisages remodelling of the present educational system, so that it can take greater account of the economic, social and cultural realities of each country and develop indigenous intellectual resources suited to the environment of individual country.<sup>78</sup>

The spread of education is completely dependent upon the economic position of a state. If the state is self-sufficient in capital resources, it can channel more of them towards research and technical development. One of the means suggested for the increase in capital resources in the developing countries, has been debt relief to the countries. The developing countries have been paying 20 to 30 per cent of every new loan to redeem a previous debt. And as a result they are left with insufficient capital resources for developmental purposes.<sup>80</sup> Further, much of the country-to-country flow of aid is in the form of goods, and not capital resources. Thus debt relief may go a long way in accelerating the developmental projects in the developing countries.<sup>81</sup>

In the field of culture, the NIEO aims to achieve objectives, viz., to arrive more rapidly at an independent and integrated cultural development, and to maintain cultural identity.

78 Ibid., p.89.

79 J.D. Sethi, "Education and New International Economic Order", in Yojana (New Delhi), vol. XXIII, no.17, 16 September 1979, p6

80 See Bedjaoui, n.64, pp.44-73.

81 According to some recent reports, the per capita share of total national debt of India is Rupees two hundred in other words 12 paise of every rupee we have to pay towards debt. See Times of India (New Delhi), 15 April 1980.



The promotion of cultural exchanges between countries and appreciation of each other's civilization have been considered as important task.<sup>82</sup>

Thus the New International Information Order is a subsystem as it were, of the New International Economic Order, because it aims to promote development and spread of knowledge and technology, industry and channels for distribution. And mass media would play a crucial role in this regard.<sup>83</sup>

The maladies of the existing information order are also maladies of the existing economic order, as Amadou-Mahtar M. Bow, Director-General of the UNESCO observed: "Only a few countries, and what is more serious, a few transnational companies are in a position to control both the production of infrastructure and the transmission of programme. The defects monopoly is opposed to the establishment of a new International Economic Order. Their monopoly enables them to dominate the information market to an extent which borders an cultural aggression".<sup>84</sup> This is a point at which the two Orders meet, join hands and pledge support to each other, for the achievement of their mutual objectives. The developing countries should take steps to achieve self-reliance and develop cooperation at the

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82 UNESCO, see n.77, p.97.

83 UNESCO, MacBride Commission discussion document no.57, p.3.

84 UNESCO, see n.77, p.29.

horizontal level, i.e. a South-South dialogue whereby there are more chances for collective development and reduction of the economic gap. There is need to reorient the information order to help the establishment of the New International Economic Order.<sup>85</sup> Both the news orders share the same perspective, the same quality of norms and values, of policies, and of institutional arrangements determining the structure of international decision-making.<sup>86</sup> As MacBride Commission's interim report rightly observes, "the building of a New World Information Order is intimately bound up with the aspiration to establish a New International Economic Order". However, the objectives of the NIIO ~~is~~ more limited than those of the NIEO. The Information Order can not change the basic structure of the society. Only International Economic Order aims to bring about a complete change in power-structure. But without the help of an equitable global information system this cannot happen.<sup>87</sup> The existing inequity in the global communication system has been not only a result of the anachronistic features of the international of communications, but it reflects the dominant global social, political and economic relationships. Therefore, the struggle for a new international order in the field of communications cannot

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85 Wilfred L. David, "Dimension of the North-South Confrontation" in Issues and Prospects for the New International Economic Order by William G. Tayler (ed.), Toronto, 1977, p.26.

86 MacBride Commission, Preliminary discussion document no.35, pp.2-18.

87 Mayl Snijber, "New Information Order Incompatible with Democracy", in Gazettee (Netherlands), 1978, vol.XXIV, no.1, p.12.

be separated from the larger struggle for a new international economic order. Both share the same social and political basis. MacBride Commission points out:

Both the Orders call for a global, universal albeit necessarily pluralist-approach, since the major problems besetting the mankind can be solved only at the world level. There is a coherent correlation between these two Orders stemming from the fact that information is now a specific kind of basic economic resource (and not just a commodity) which performs an essential social function but which is today unevenly distributed and badly used. In some other respect, the new communication order is a prerequisite of the new economic order, just as communication is the sine qua non of all economic activities between groups, peoples and nations.<sup>88</sup>

To sum up, the burden of the present chapter is to highlight a decade of contribution of the UNESCO in evolving revolutionary norms culminating in a call for a New International Information Order, and in promotion of regional attempts at collective self-reliance as reflected in the Non-aligned News Agency Pool; It also points to the close linkage between the struggle for a New International Information Order and that for a New International Economic Order. Indeed, there is an inextricable inter-relationship between communication and development.

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Sean MacBride Commission's Final Report, Provisional Version, 1980, p.66.

Chapter IVCOMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT : UNESCO AND THE  
NATIONAL SEARCH FOR A COMMUNICATION POLICY

The present chapter attempts to focus on (a) the importance of a national communication policy, and (b) development support communication. The UNESCO has clearly highlighted that the role of communication in development is perhaps the most urgent policy issue deserving attention,<sup>1</sup> in the context of the New International Information Order and New International Economic Order. This then is the theme of the present chapter.

I. Importance of National Communication Policy:

Communication occupies a significant place in the national development. It provides for a climate for national development. It makes the expert knowledge available, where it is needed. It facilitates discussion and provides a medium for leadership and decision-makers. It helps to raise "a revolution of rising expectations" which in turn can build up sustained pressure upon the decision-makers to deliver the goods at the earliest. It can be effectively employed to promote consensus on the new economic and cultural goals of the nation and on the instrumentalities of achieving them. It can be an effective vehicle of modernization of all aspects of the society.

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Ithiel de Sola Pool, "Rise of Communication Policy Research", Journal of Communication (Philad), Spring 1974, vol.24, no.2, pp.37-39.

Increasing flow of information plants the seeds of change, by making one part of the country aware of other parts and one part of the world about the other parts, about its diverse customs and traditions and economic and social developments. Communication is a ready medium for the national leaders to get across to the people, and the people to the national leaders and to by keeping the national goals and accomplishments always in view. Modern communication, if solely used, to weld together different isolated communities helps to develop a rapport between the ruled and the ruler. Communication is a pre-requisite for speedy development. National planning is supported by communication. The important role communication plays in planning of the national future is clearly evident from the emphasis India's five year plans have placed on communication,<sup>2</sup> particularly so in the first five year plan. The first five year plan was widely publicised by the mass media to create planning consciousness in general and more particularly, to attract a largest number of private individuals to support the government's policy of mixed economy. The gap between the promise and performance by national leaders often tends to engender social tension. At the critical time,<sup>3</sup> communication has played a significant role in controlling this social tension. In the words of Schramm, "The flow of information is of the greatest importance in regulating the level of social tension."

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S.C. Dubey, "Development, Change and Communication in India", in Wilbur Schramm and Daniel Lerner (ed.), Communication and Change the Last Ten Years - And the Next (Honolulu, 1976), pp.97-118.

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R.K. Chatterjee, Mass Communication (New Delhi, 1972), pp.147-71.

Communication is a kind of temperature controlling agent. It can raise the social temperature. For example by raising aspirations when the developing economy is not ready to satisfy them. It can reduce temperature by providing explanation by permitting changes.<sup>4</sup>

The important determinants underlying a national communication policy as well its ramifications do not confine themselves to the national level, but they have their fall-out internationally and regionally. All the three dimensions are undoubtedly interlinked. It is therefore essential to determine national communication policies not only to further overall national development and to enlist public support, but also to incorporate in these policy measures aspects to encourage co-operation and to step up exchange at the sub-regional, regional and international levels.<sup>5</sup>

Further, the communication policies of the countries should have a comprehensive substantive canvas; it should not restrict cultural information and exchange. It should aim at cutting down the barriers and inequalities inside and as between different societies. Thus, the formation of communication policies according to the MacBride Commission, should "(a) serve

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4 Schramm Wilbur, Mass Media and National Development (UNESCO, 1964), p.37.

5 MacBride Commission's Final Report Provisional Version, 1979, p.358.

to marshal national resources, (b) strengthen the coordination of existing or planned infrastructures, (c) facilitate rational choices with regards to means, (d) help to satisfy the needs of the most disadvantages and to eliminate the most flagrant imbalances, (e) help in strengthening cultural identity and national independence, and (f) enable all countries and all cultures to play a more prominent role in the international scene.<sup>7</sup>

The term 'communication policy' seem to have attracted the attention of the UNESCO at the sixteenth General Conference in 1970, as the world organisation was coming to grips with the totality of problems of global communication system. The Conference authorised the Director-General "to help member states in the formulation of their mass communication policies".<sup>8</sup> It recommended that an inter-governmental conference on communication policies be organized in Latin America in 1975 and that preparations for a similar inter-governmental conference in Asia in 1977 be undertaken.<sup>9</sup>

The first regional conference on communication policies was held in San Jose (Costa Rica) in July 1976. The Conference unanimously suggested formulation of new national and international

7 Ibid., p.359.

8 Under this programme, M.V. Desai of India has authored the work "Communication Policy of India" in 1977.

9 UNESCO Inter-governmental Conference on Communication Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, Final Report, San Jose (Costa-Rica) 12-21 July 1976, p.5.

communication policies. It also suggested setting up of National Communication Councils, Scientific Research Institutes, and regional and National News Agencies. The San Jose Declaration highlighted the role of communication today as a pre-eminent factor in national renaissance, and as a powerful force in relations between nations. According to it, "national communication policies should be conceived in the context of national realities, free expressions of thought and respect for individual and social right."<sup>10</sup>

The second regional inter-governmental conference was held in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) during 5-14 February 1979 to discuss on the policies of Asia and Oceania. The Conference stressed the role of communication both as a means of affirming a nation's collective identity and an instrument of social integration, as well as a tool for social democratization forming a link between the people and the government. The conference also discussed the traditional methods of communication, its problems and implications.<sup>11</sup>

In the meantime, twentieth General Conference of the UNESCO (1978) with a view to promoting a better understanding and appreciation of the process and role of communication in society, and of high professional standards authorized the Director-General to carry out activities corresponding to the following themes:

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<sup>10</sup> See, n.7, p.68

<sup>11</sup> For details see, Inter-governmental conference on Communication Policies in Asia and Oceania, Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), 5-14 February 1979, pp.21-30.



(a) Studies on social communication systems and promotion of research on the role of communication in social change and development, and

(b) Information exchange on communication research and policies and encouragement of co-operation between research institutions.<sup>12</sup>

The same Conference also adopted two other decisions with a view to promoting policies, infrastructure and training in the fields of communication, and encouragement of a better use of the media for social ends. The Director-General was authorized to carry out activities corresponding to the following themes.<sup>13</sup>

- a) Formulation of communication policies and plan at national, regional and international level;
- b) Promotion of the development and application of methodologies for communication planning and training of specialists in this field;
- c) Development of modern communication systems and infrastructures and adaption of new technologies;
- d) Training of communication specialists and development of training institutions.

Promotion of access to the mass media and of greater participation by the public in media production and management. The Director-General was also asked to carry out the above mentioned

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<sup>12</sup> Resolution 4/9.3/1 of the Twentieth General Conference of UNESCO adopted on 28 November 1978.

<sup>13</sup> Resolution 4/9.4/1 of the Twentieth General Conference of UNESCO adopted on the 28 November 1978.

activities in such a way as to:"encourage better use of the communication media for progress in education, science and culture, and greater participation by the community in the process of communication; and promote, within the context of indigenous development, increased relevance of communication system and to the needs and aspirations of the peoples".<sup>14</sup>

The main purpose of the communications policy, ~~it~~ may be reiterated here, is to develop the nation in all spheres of activities and "communication policies are sets of principles and norms established to guide the behaviour of communication systems. Their orientation is fundamental and long-range although they may have operational implication of short-range significance. They are shaped in the context of society's general approach to communicate. Emanating from political, ideologies, the social and economic conditions of the country and the values on which they are based, they strive to relate these to the real needs and prospective opportunities of communication".<sup>15</sup>

The communication policy of India is based on some constitutional guarantees, such as the freedom of speech and expression. However, this does not mean that the government has no delegation with respect to it. These constitutional guarantees are subject

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Resolution 4.9.4/2, see. n.11.

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For details see, Reports of the Meeting of Experts on Communication Policies and Planning, Paris, 17-28 July 1978, Com/MD/24, 1 December 1972, pp. 21-30

reasonable restrictions imposed by Parliament or government. This gives the government a role in the communication policy. Further, the Directive Principles of State Policy are also to be promoted by the government, for which communication will be an effective medium of promotion. However, so far as the Press is concerned, it has to have its own responsible communication policy. The government does not regard the Press to be servile nor a ~~bonded~~<sup>un</sup> ally to it. In the common task of national development, the government expects the press to extend co-operation even by being critical of it as occasions would demand. The media in India is, therefore, expected to voice their views freely. This is the basic philosophy that governs the communication process in India.<sup>16</sup>

## II. Communication in Support of Development:

The first move to highlight the link between communication and the development was by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in <sup>a</sup> development direction plan was announced in a letter to the Specialized Agencies, inviting them to a meeting in Rome in October 1968 on support communication. The motivation was that "we have until now generally underestimated the importance of an obviously needed element for many projects. The systematic use of communications techniques and materials to

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G.N.S. Raghawan, and V.S. Gopal Krishnan, Towards a Nation Policy and Communication in Support of Development The India Case, MacBride Commission document, Serial no.43, pp.5-7.

mobilize that support which is indispensable to the fullest possible attainment of project objectives.<sup>17</sup> The inspiration for this initiative had been given in a paper to the global meeting of the Resident Representatives of UNDP in Virginia in February 1968.<sup>18</sup> The Specialized Agencies met in February 1969 in Geneva to discuss what was then termed development support information procedures, mostly on the basis of UNDP experience from its own centre in Bangkok, Stressing active ties in the field for building up development support activities with the governments of member states, which would appear to include strengthening of the communication. The UNESCO's mass communication department in an internal note of March 1970 gave its full support to the implementation of project support information.<sup>19</sup>

The UNESCO endorsed the principles of development support information and project support communication officially in June 1971, indicating its readiness to (a) promote the awareness of the potential of communication in development in media-training programmes, (b) to increasingly include development support information oriented activities into own public in relation to work, and (c) to assist projects in need of communication support, finding the expertise and means for its implementation.

17 Letter of 11 September 1968 from Meyer Cohen, Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Operation and programming, UNDP, to UNESCO.

18 Global meeting of UNDP Resident Representatives, Hot Spring (Virginia), 22-27 February 1968, Report from working groups I & II Development Support Information.

19 For detail see the Note from Director MC to acting Director General, COM, March 11, 1970.

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The Director-General of UNESCO had in his Draft Programme for 1969-70 noted that "information in its two-fold aspect - documentation, which is memory and communication, which is interchange of all forms of expression and stimulation - is essential to the spiritual life and the mission of UNESCO. UNESCO's real progress should be measured above all by what it can do to make available to each and all a fund of knowledge and a system of communication that are both universal".<sup>21</sup>

From the beginning of the First Development Decade, the UNESCO proposed as a minimum goal for this communication infrastructure, Ten copies of daily newspapers, five radio receivers, two television sets and two cinema seats per 100 inhabitants, (against the standard India's figures for the year 1975 are incredibly low, Radio per 1000, 2, TV receiver 0.1, Cinema seats 5).

In addition, said the Director-General, stress should be placed not on a quantitative expansion of these media, but also on the cultural needs. "An integrated communication policy, enabling member states for socio-economic development, call for

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20 Letter from Deputy Director-General, UNESCO to Meyer Cohen, Asstt. Administrator and Director of the Bureau of operations and programming, UNDP of 29 June 1970.

21 Introduction to the Draft Programme and Budget for 1969-70 UNESCO General Conference, Fifteenth -

a depth study of the productivity of any communication system. The factors to be considered include the demographic, social and linguistic characteristics of the region concerned and the optimum relationship between school and out-of-school education... the development of a new form of regional and national co-operation should enable news coverage to be expanded and the sources of information to be diversified".<sup>22</sup>

But the strategy adopted for the "Second Development Decade" starting from January 1971, in the view of UNESCO, failed to deal adequately with the contribution of media of communication to development.<sup>23</sup> Media of communication were seen only as a means for the mobilization of public opinion in both developed and developing countries, as laid down in the Development Support Programme (para 84). Whereas communication is the life-blood of development as it supplies knowledge, ideas and technology.

Indeed, it also depends upon what exactly one means by development. Development cannot <sup>be</sup> described in a concrete form or in a standard definition. Development is a continuous process

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Evaluation by the Director-General of the Results of the First Development Decade in UNESCO's fields of competence and draft programme of the organisation for the Second Decade - UNESCO General Conference, Sixteenth session, Paris, 1970 (16C/13), Chapter V Communication.

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For details see Gunnar Naesselund, "Communication in the Second Development Decade" in UNESCO and the Second Development Decade, reprinted from UNESCO Chronicle, vol. XVIII, no. 10, 1972, pp. 27-31.

seeking improvement in quality of life and social change. Indeed, there are different definitions of what development means. This was proved by the two definitions of Everett M. Rogers. First, he defines "Development as a widely participatory process of social change in a society intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment."<sup>24</sup> Secondly, "Development is a type of Social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita income and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organisation".<sup>25</sup> The second definition is more true in the present context, because the main aims of the communication are to introduce new methods for social change of cultural, religious and personal attitudes which have stubbornly stood against change.

Development also means differently to different countries. Indeed, "One man's progress is another man's disaster".<sup>25</sup> According to the developing countries "development" means at the outset, achievement of basic requirements of human life. To the developed

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24 Everett M. Rogers, "The Rise and Fall of the Dominant Paradigm" in Journal of Communication (Philadelphia), no.1, Winter 1978, p.68.

25 Daniel Lerner, "Communication and Development" in Daniel Lerner and Lyle M. Nelson (ed.), Communication Research A Half Century Appraisal (Honolulu, 1977), p.151.

countries, it implies achievement of some new method or a process to make life more luxurious. In the UN parlance, "development" is a process which comprises a welfare or consumption component, usually defined as levels of living, and a growth component as embodied on economic structures and their progressing potential.<sup>1/26</sup>

At the Annual meeting of the International Broadcast Institute at Cologne (FRG) in 1975, a Report of the Working Committee on Communication in Support of Development has defined the key terms like "development" and "communication". According to it, "development means the improvement of the well being of the individual and the betterment of the quality of his or her life". Whereas "communication" is defined as "the transfer of information between individuals or groups of individuals by human or technical means". And "development supports communication" refers to "the system use of communication in the planning and implementation of development".<sup>27</sup>

For the purpose of present analysis and in order to demonstrate the interlinkages of communication and development, three aspects may be identified, namely:

- (1) Communication and Agricultural Development  
(or Rural Development);

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<sup>26</sup> DDG/68/3, p.1, DDG mean Deputy Director-General.

<sup>27</sup> Intermedia (London), vol.3, no.2, October 1975, p.5.



- (2) Communication and Economic Development; and
- (3) Communication and Social Development.

A. Communication and Agricultural Development:

Agricultural Development may also be called as "rural development"<sup>28</sup> Eighty per cent of the population lives in rural areas whose livelihood is completely depend<sup>ent</sup> upon agriculture. Development in agriculture automatically improves the conditions of the rural people as well. The role of communication at the grass roots cannot thus be over-emphasised. It is in the context, Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania; has remarked: "Others try to reach the moon, we try to reach the village". This, no doubt, should be the practical aim of mass communication in India, as it should be so in other developing countries.

There can be four principal methods whereby communication can help the development of agriculture, viz. (1) the radio forum model, (2) the package programme, (3) the diffusion model, and (4) the local strategy.

a. The Radio Forum:

With the help of the UNESCO,<sup>29</sup> India started an experiment in farm radio forum in selected areas of Poone, Ahmednagar, Nasik,

<sup>28</sup> For details, see, The UNESCO Chronicle, Henry R. Cassirer, "The Role of the Communication Media in Rural Transformation" vol. XVII, no.4, pp.138-48.

<sup>29</sup> J.C. Mathur and Paul Neurath, An Indian Experiment in Farm Radio Forum, UNESCO 1959, pp.19-21.

North Satara, and Kohlapur. The forum weekly radio broadcasts, suggested innovations to farmers and their families, following the broadcast they discuss the programmes,<sup>30</sup> in the village usually chaired by a village level worker. The Rural Forum taught the farmers some lessons in agricultural development.

The main objectives of the experiment were: (1) to examine whether radio forum could be used to transmit new knowledge, (2) to study group discussion as a mean of transmitting knowledge, and (3) to study the role of radio farm forum as a new institution in village life and as an instrument in general village uplift.<sup>31</sup>

The experiment has proved that the transmission of knowledge was spectacular, when compared to the non-forum villagers. By group discussion, the target-villagers learned how to conduct orderly discussion. The radio farm forum became an important instrument in village democracy. It provided courage to participate in decision making freely and frankly.<sup>32</sup>

The pilot programme of the Forum in Poona produced an extraordinary amount of innovation, but when an endeavour was made to expand the programme from 150 forums to about 25,000, the result was not particularly significant. However, the idea is still appealing to developing countries.<sup>33</sup>

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30 Ibid., pp.32-38.

31 Ibid., pp.62-63.

32 Ibid., pp.105-111.

33 MacBride Commission Preliminary text discussion serial document, no.42, Mass media and National Development, UNESCO, 1979, p.6.

The forum introduced new methods of farming in the village. But this did not have much success for various reasons. The farmers not interested to introduce new methods in their lands, because they did not have sufficient control over the land they worked, or because they were inhibited by the traditional methods. Besides, they did not have enough money to make experiments.<sup>34</sup>

## 2. Package Programme:

These problems paved the way to the institution of the "package programming" sponsored by the Ford Foundation. In India, India's Intensive Agriculture Districts Programmes (IADP) were started first in fifty districts and then extended to one thousand districts, which were the earliest extensive implementation of the package approach.<sup>35</sup> Under the package programme, the farmers were helped to obtain seeds, fertilizers, loans and expert advice in order to make conditions as favourable as possible for adoption and productivity. This system of development proved more fruitful, when interpersonal communication was sound, and expert advice was on time.

## 3. The Diffusion Model:

The Diffusion Model is based on the observation that in any agricultural setting some farms are demonstrably more productive than others. Under this method, the Japanese model

34 Ibid., p.5.

35 See for details Bryant E. Kearl: "Communication for Agricultural Development", in Wilber Schramm and Daniel Lerner

of agriculture was put to practice in India, and to make it more popular and to adequately instruct the farmer, communication has played a significant role. But this model may not be readily suitable for all developing countries, because it involves substantial financial investments.<sup>36</sup>

#### 4. The Local Strategy:

The 'Local Strategy' is also known as "labour intensive strategy"<sup>37</sup> or the indigenous method. Throughout the world now the indigenous method has been is being utilized extensively for development purposes. This method makes it possible for more people to participate by evolving a locally suitable model of agriculture. This also aims to alleviate the unemployment problem. The communication has to play a significant role to attract the peoples of the developing countries to use the local model. The local media have to explain which specific model is more useful to whom and under what conditions, where there is lack of transportation facilities, and contact between urban and rural places highly limited. Communication must be relied on, for transmission of information and education in a two-way flow from the centre to the hinterland and vice-versa.

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36 See n.33, p.9.

37 Harry T. Oshima, "Development and Mass Communication - A Re-examination", in Wilbur and Daniel (eds.), n.35, p.24.

The local model is completely different from the other three models. It does not begin with the experts or Radio Forum. It begins with local planning, local decision, local organization, and they follow on the foot steps of local leadership.

B. Communication and Economic Development.<sup>38</sup>

The most outstanding project of Y.V. Lakshmana Rao started with two questions: "Does economic development make possible communication development? Or do improved communication facilitates economic and social development".<sup>39</sup> Rao conducted the field work at two villages, Kothuru, a new village was already coming away from the traditional pattern. It had a variety of small industrial units, thus offering employment to villagers.<sup>40</sup> Pathur in contrast, an old village, was still lingering in the traditional state of culture, relying heavily on the barter system, observing caste system and farmers working in the landlord's farms.<sup>41</sup> Pathuru was not wholly without signs of development, but the differences were clear between the two villages.

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38 While the term 'economic development' encompasses agricultural development too, the emphasis here is on the generality of the economic development.

39 UNESCO, The Role of Information in National Development, p.12.

40 For details see, Y.V. Lakshamana, Communication and Development (Minneapolis, 1966), pp.13-32.

41 Details, Ibid., pp.33-48.

When information comes from an isolated community it triggers change, says Rao. The first change is made use of by the wealthy and powerful, gradually, however, the changes are noticed by the masses and questions are asked. Where information channels are available, then questions are answered and others begin to take advantage of the opportunities available. Where the channels of information are varied and broad-based, the changes resulting from economic, social, or political ideas creeping into the community are tight and controlled by the few. Changes then are difficult to percolate in the masses and often leads to a worsening of factionalism.<sup>42</sup>

The amount of information available and the broad range of its distribution are thus a key factor in the speed and smoothness of development. If information is freely available, says Rao, competition for new jobs and opportunities takes place in a climate of realistic knowledge rather than suspicion and jealousy. The stresses and strains created by new knowledge acts as spurs to activity. The existence of parallel sources of information is also important because these channels act as checks on each other. Lack of such sources leads the villager to distrust the leadership. That is why Rao found such distrust in Pathuru, where less information is available as compared to Kothuru

Where sufficient information is available, it contributes to a spiral of developmental activity. It helps farmers to improve

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methods and produce more. More productivity leads to improved income, to widening community habits, to increased economic activities within the village and for consumer goods, seeking after new opportunities, and so on in chain of related development.

Similarly, this process also spurs education. Educated people make possible more sophisticated industries. Education will demand a community library. This is an example of the development spiral. The flow of information leads to broadening of the human horizon. It increases the ability to think and generate confidence thus further contributing to development.

Economic and social development make education more attractive and purposeful and education in turn further contributes to economic and social development.

Rao reaches the conclusion that each element in the developmental process acted on others. While it is true, economic development leads to an increase in the flow of information through the greater purchasing capacity of the people, reflected in subscription to newspapers, magazines, radio, etc. It is also true as Rao pointed out, increased information in turn furthers economic development. It is futile to attempt to treat this interaction between communication and economic development simply as a cause and effect relationship and isolate the chicken from the egg. The interaction is constant and cumulative.

The economy in many ways relies on a constant flow of information which is vital for the economic life of the people. Information is itself a great economic force with incalculable potentialities. It is a decisive factor in development. According to a specialist in communication economy as far as distribution of communication resources are concerned throughout the world, there exists inequity. Some countries have a full capacity to collect information regarding their needs. While many have little capacity to do so, and this is a major handicap in their development.<sup>44</sup> Evidently, communication can make important contribution for developing cause.

C. Communication and Social Development:

Communication has ability to activate, socialise, homogenise and even adapt people to their own culture. It helps to blow up the myth about the superiority of one culture over another. It highlights the equality of dignity and identity of all cultures. Communication educates the audiences social behaviour. The media have a significant capacity not only to reflect but also to shape opinion, and to play a part in forming attitudes.

How far the communication is helpful in social change was demonstrated through two experiments by UNESCO in India. The first experiment was labelled as: "communication in India



experiments in introducing change".<sup>45</sup> The Committee started an experiment with the UNESCO's help.<sup>46</sup> The main object of the experiment was to determine the impact of different means of communication on the spread of agriculture, health and family planning. Three types of villages were chosen, each type with basic difference with the other and the types were identified as (1) radio farm forum villages, (2) literacy villages, and (3) control villages.<sup>47</sup>

In the first type, the villages got information by radio. The literacy villages received information by printed matter, whereas the controlled villages did not get any information. The experiment demonstrated among these three types, the radio farm forum villages showed a higher degree of adoption of information, translating it into behaviour and introducing new methods.<sup>48</sup>

The second experiment, namely, "social education through television" was started with the UNESCO assistance with a view to making available the experience gained by the project to other member states in south and south-east Asia.<sup>49</sup>

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45 Josepr E. Kivlin and Others, Communication in India Experiments in Introducing Change (Hyderabad, 1968).

46 See for details, Ibid., pp.4-6.

47 See for details, Ibid., pp.8-9.

48 See for details, Ibid., pp.15-56.

49 UNESCO, Social Education Through Television - An All India Radio UNESCO - Pilot Project (RPMC no.38), 1963, p.12.

The main purpose of the enquiry was to assess the effectiveness of special social education televasts in helping members of tele-clubs to acquire knowledge on some civic issues and to modify behaviour with regards to the relevant civil problems. The theme of the project was the "responsibilities of citizenship". The programmes<sup>50</sup> were viewed by about 71 group of people called the tele-clubs which were formed in different parts of Delhi City and its remote regions which consisted largely of lower middle class citizens. They viewed the programmes every Friday between 7.30 and 8.00 pm. Immediately after viewing every programmes, the tele-clubs discussed the issues raised in the programmes, freely expressing their views and the convenor of the tele-clubs who recorded the proceedings sent a report to the TV unit of the All India Radio.

The experiment results indicated positive trends. While change in attitudes and behaviour were not so pronounced, the results, scientifically measured and evaluated, were both positive and encouraging.<sup>51</sup> If the human beings adopt themselves according to the needs of the society, it would automatically lead to development because human beings are the centre of any developmental programmes.

Thus, both the experiments described above, demonstrated the role of communication as an important catalytic agent of change

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<sup>50</sup> Traffic and the Road sense, Danger to Community Health, Adulteration of Foodstuffs, Drugs, etc. Manner of Citizen, and encroachment on public property and town planning.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp.35-38.

and action. Broadcasting and telecasint can be an effective vehicles of transition to new customs and practices and very often to different social relationships. Behind changes in behaviour, there always lie changes in attitudes, beliefs, skills and social norms.

Social development cannot take place without educational and cultural development. The radio and community TV can play an immensely valuable role in educating masses, where the drop-outs from schools are of considerable number, because of the economic compulsions of parents.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, education is a life-long process. According to the UNESCO, the life-long education is "the animating principle of the whole process of education, regarded as continuity throughout an individual's life from his earliest childhood to the end of his days and, therefore, calling for integrated organisation. The necessary integration should be achieved both vertically through the duration of life, and horizontally to cover all the various aspects of life for individuals and societies".<sup>53</sup> Both auditory and visual methods of communication play this life-long educative role.

Communication promotes education and education in turn promises development. Thus both communication and education are parts of the growth components of the development equation.

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But recent survey conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training on the utilization of education television in schools under the Delhi Administration was insignificant. For details, see "The Times of India, 5 July 1980. But then, this may be due to wrong timings of the telecasts or under-utilization by the schools.

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See n.44, p.13.

First, education provides the specific skills needed for the proper performance of a number of occupations. Second, it creates, influences and conditions the socio-cultural framework which is an indispensable element of the infrastructure for development. Communication or generation of "educational environment", i.e. education, is an essential tool for teaching men to communicate better and to draw greater benefits from the social exchanges established between them. Thus, there is a growing reciprocal relationships between communication and education.<sup>54</sup>

Broadcasting has particularly been helpful in imparting education at various levels. The main achievement of broadcasting for the school education are: First, enriches the class room lessons given by the teacher, provides illustrations, introduces new material not available in text books and links the school closer with the outside world. Second, it effectively supplements and updates the teaching where teacher fails, of material, or competence. It also acquaints the student with current events, which most of the teachers may not refer to. And finally, and more importantly, the teacher himself receives a refresher course, as it were. On the other hand, the university education through broadcasting is very useful to these students who are not able to attend to the regular colleges. But this process is not fully being utilized in Asian countries, or for that matter in many developing countries. Broadcasting,

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if properly used, can break the monopoly of any particular class and domination of knowledge by it, and make the knowledge available for each and every citizen of a country. Development can achieve when the people at the grass roots level participate in the national endeavour.<sup>55</sup>

Similarly, there is no doubt a close link between the communication and the achievement of cultural goals of a society. Communication is regarded as a culture carrier. The media of communication are cultural instruments if properly oriented, to serve to promote or influence attitudes, to motivate and foster the spread of behaviour patterns, and to bring about social integration. Communication is involved, too, in the management of knowledge, the organization of the collective memory of information in particular the collection, procuring and use of scientific information.

Communication and culture goes hand in hand in development. Culture and custom account much for social change in any society. Any custom or practice that is to be replaced or introduced will be linked with a culture. Often economic change is not possible without cultural change. Social organization is a web, a change in any of which reverberated in other parts, and equally, a change in any one aspect of a man's behaviour will

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will be reflected in other aspects of his behaviour. Therefore, communication as a tool of change needs to take an integrated approach to the social organisation, and the complete man.

Another aspect of complexity of social change is the group relationship of man. It is the individual who must change, but that individual lives in groups, works and leisures in groups. Many of the beliefs he holds most strongly are group norms, commonly held, and mutually defended by the group. It is very difficult for any individual to turn against a strongly held group norm. In such a case, the whole group or atleast a significant part of it must change, unless the individual walks away to a new group. Group change is possible only by mass communication, by its various methods and means and by effective and pragmatic use of them.<sup>56</sup> Communication thus plays a significant role for mass socialization and mass change, thus paving the way for development.

D. Communication : Problems of a Tool:

Be all that as it may, operationally, however, communication is merely a value-neutral, tool. It promotes or disrupts development according as the way in which it is employed. The crucial questions would then be: Who handles it? How is it handle

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See n.39, p.18.

To whom is it targetted? What objectives does it serve? Significance of questions like these will be readily brought home, if some of the operational problems of communication are taken note of.

First, communication thrives on freedom of information. But the freedom of information is ill-defined. Every country interprets it according to their will and wish. Hence, there can be no universally acceptable standard whereby to measure compliance with the freedom. The concept of the freedom of information, it may be recalled, was traditionally used to serve the interests of the powerful countries or groups, which all too frequently enabled them to ensure or to perpetuate their cultural domination in weaker countries under the cloak of generous ideas of modernisation. In the result, the developing countries are now faced with a gap between formal and actual rights - a gap which is unfortunately tending to widen. Should not then freedom of information be more equitably for the benefit of the developing than the developed countries?

Second, the divergence of approaches with regard to the relationship between the state and the media is another puzzling problem. One school of thought stressed that the media need to be left free to decide for themselves the responsibility with which they would handle the rights as the constitution guaranteed them freedom of information and freedom of information. A second school of thought feels that since the media are social

institutions, the state as the ultimate trustee of a nation's aspirations, objectives, goals on the pattern of organization and administrating of the economy and society, has the social responsibility to set out clear guidelines for the media and, if necessary, own orient and control some or all of the media in the interests of its peoples welfare. There is still a third school of thought that felt although the media should enjoy complete freedom, yet in a developing country they have a responsibility to share the burdens of the developmetal effort. A chase, therefore, needs to be made by the national decision-makers as the exact role they would like to ascribe to communication.

The third, communication promotes popular culture with a different kind of potential tragedy. With the diffusion of popular culture through mass media in developing countries, even the sense of national identities may become endangered. The foreign popular culture does not serve to promote national identity and nationalism. While diffusion of old culture is achieved, it is not often replaced by another appropriate to the social organisation of a country.

The developing countries try to reach the internationalism sometimes without adequately cementing, through mass communication. This can prove fatal to their development, because development can be more lasting when national unification and integrity



is achieved. At the initial stages of nationalism the developing countries ought to be more inward-looking in respect of values.<sup>57</sup>

Fourth, the new media of communication have such a developing countries that gradually their traditional trusted media of communication like the travelling story tellers, the street singers, and the street dancers<sup>58</sup> are on the verge of extinction along with them, is a part of culture.

Finally, increased use of the mass media in developed countries with the help of technology leading to rapid communication seems to have resulted in the lessening of inter-personal communication and thus accentuating a sense of isolation among the people.

The upshot of the present chapter is that a carefully formulated national communication policy is crucial to development. And the UNESCO has played a significant role in bringing home this point effectively to the developing countries.

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57 Hidetoshi Kato "Global Instantaneousness and Instant Globalism" - The Significance of Popular Culture in Developing Countries in Wilbur Selaramm and Daniel Lener (eds.), n. , p.256.

58 Ibid., p.157.

Chapter V

## AN ASSESSMENT

The UNESCO came into existence in 1945 after the bitter experience of the second world war. Since then it has been responding to the changes that have continually overtaken the post-war international relations and in the result expanding, changing, and reorienting its activities constantly. Initially, its main activities were to reconstruct the war-devastated fabric of educational, cultural and scientific institutions, particularly of Europe. After a period of time it started giving aid and assistance and suggestions for the development of the member states, which were often not suitable to the developing countries. For instance, the type of education promoted was not suitable to the developing states. So was the case in the field of science and culture. But then this was only to be expected of an organisation which at that time was dominated by the west. Sixties, however, were the turning point, as the membership of the organisation considerably expanded as a result of large-scale emergence into independence of a number of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which started dominating the decisional processes of international organisations. Since then the orientation of the activities of the UNESCO completely underwent change. The UNESCO now became more responsive

to the needs of the developing countries. No longer does it regard the Western ideas, concepts, values and institutions readily applicable universally. The present study does not deal with the broad canvas of the UNESCO activities in educational, cultural and scientific fields, but is confined to its role with respect to communication. Indeed, the UNESCO is a global organisation with a comprehensive field of operation.

Only lately did communication receive any serious attention of the UNESCO. Neither the nomenclature nor the stated objectives of the UNESCO do expressly mention about communication, save for the brief reference in Article 1(2) of the UNESCO constitution. However, communication is implicit in all the activities of the UNESCO. Indeed, the very success of the organisation depends largely on its achievements in the field of communication. Small wonder, communication has become a major focus of the UNESCO.

The concept of "free flow of ideas by word and image" found in Article 1(2) of the UNESCO constitution has been, however, the response of the 1945 world to the travesty of information perpetrated by the Nazi regime in Germany. Although it was understood by different countries in different perspectives, it received importance when the UN and its related agency, the UNESCO, came to endorse the concept of free flow of information. A special section on

free flow of information was created in the mass communication division of the UNESCO Secretariat. The UN Economic and Social Council established the Commission on Human Rights in February 1946 and shortly afterwards empowered it to set up a sub-commission on freedom of information and press. The UN declared that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and is a corner stone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated, and that the freedom implies the right to gather, transmit and publish news anywhere and everywhere without any limitation, restriction or restraint. Evident in this is the imprint of the Western value system and perception of the freedom of information. This then was the foundation of the slogan : "free flow of information".

In the early 1960's, with the emergence of a large number of developing countries into independence, the UNESCO endeavoured to conclude, in cooperation with preeminent professional organisations, an arrangement relating to international exchange of news. Projects were worked out to set up national news agencies and to establish links between them in order to increase the means of expression for the developing world, and to gather and exchange news, films and various broadcasts for the mutual benefit of these countries. Various possibilities of holding regional conferences were explored with a particular view to establishing regional press agencies. India did not

adhere to the free flow of information in exchange of films and other things. Nor has it signed the "Agreement of Beirut" and the "Florence Agreement", probably because it apprehended that its foreign exchange position might be seriously affected. Besides, quite understandably, India also did not support UN General Assembly Resolution 59(1) which proclaimed the freedom of information.

It may be of interest to note the context in which the concept of free flow of information which caught the imagination of the UNESCO in its early years. Originally conceived as a measure of redemption, after the Nazi experience, the western countries used the word "free flow" as political weapon against the USSR and the East European countries at the height of the cold war. Thereafter it stayed on in international vocabulary as an ideological offensive against these countries. The issue came time and again at the UNESCO and it did so even during discussion of the question of Draft Declaration of Mass Communication and space Draft Declaration of Guiding principles on the Use of Satellite Broadcasting for the free flow of information. The concept of free flow of information still lingers on now in the official records of the UN system, as all the media of communication are controlled by the developed countries. These countries are financially and culturally more powerful than the newly emergent Third World countries. Many studies have shown that the free flow of information is a myth. The

so-called free flow of information is not "free flow" but a one-way street. Many developing non-aligned countries have pointed out that the idea of "free flow" is obsolete. It is being used by the West as an ideological smokescreen to cover the one way flow of information. It has been revealed that a handful of five largest world news agencies control four/fifths of the international news that gets printed and circulated. However, they do not devote more than twenty to thirty per cent of their news items to the benefit of the developing countries which account for three-quarters of humanity. The sad state to which the free flow concept has brought the global communication system, has been graphically portrayed by Director-General M'Bow thus:

Despite the progress in technology, many countries remain deprived of the elementary means of transmitting and receiving information and ideas, .... Operating on a world wide scale, certain information organisations which, for the most part, have their head offices in one of the industrialised countries, have acquired through their equipment and their capital a strong position which, without doubt, permits them to offer the best services, but which also leads them to vehiculate a "one way" type of information reflecting only the point of view of these countries and above all ensuring them of a domination of the 'information market' which borders on cultural aggression.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Quoted from Kroloff and Scott Cohen, "New World Information Order" report to the committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate - November 1977, p.25.

The developing countries realise that the neo-colonialism and cultural imperialism practised by the developed countries have helped them in penetrating into the social and economic fabric of the third world societies, in the name of free flow of information. They also feel that political independence is meaningless without economic freedom and genuine freedom of information. They highlight the existing imbalance in communication between the rich and poor countries. Hence the trend towards a "free and balanced flow of information". The first international meet for free and balanced information was held in Ljubljana in 1968 followed by another in Montreal in June 1969. From here onwards, the concept of 'free flow' of information metamorphosed into "free and balanced flow" of information. In the meantime, every aspect of freedom of information took new dimensions as a result of the opening up of space for communication and of the utilization of Satellite Broadcasting, thereby making it possible to disseminate news instantaneously throughout the world. The Declaration of "Guiding principles for the Use of Satellite Broadcasting for the Free Flow of Information, the Extension of Education and the Development of Cultural Exchange" is a significant landmark in this regard. Yet to many developing countries a communication satellite is a "spy-in-the sky", and this calls for strong assurances about their security.

The question of imbalance was raised for the first time at the sixteenth General Conference of the UNESCO. The question was raised by the Indian delegate, I.K. Gujral, and delegates from a number of developing countries stressed the need to ensure that the free flow of information and international exchanges should be a two-way operation. They asserted that the international communication programmes must emphasize the rights of less privileged nation to preserve their own culture. Their demands for a free and balanced flow of information was approved by the General Conference of the UNESCO at its seventeenth session. The Director-General was authorised to continue to assist the developing countries in communication research, particularly research of potential value for the formulation of communication policies and national strategies aimed at placing communication in the service of development. At its eighteenth session in 1974, the developing countries insisted that the UNESCO should facilitate communication between nations and peoples, and promote a better understanding of the role played by the media in the implementation of national development policies and plans.

In the meantime regionalism caught the imagination of some of the developing countries which formed a Non-aligned News Agencies' pool to narrow the evergrowing gap between



developing and developed countries and to promote collective self-reliance. The group came out with a demand for a new order which later became the New International Information Order, the main aim of which is to give more opportunities for participation in communication discussions and distribute news equally between the developed and developing countries. This demand, evidently drew ready inspiration from the decisions of the UN General Assembly in 1974 as the New International Economic Order. This issue was taken up to the nineteenth session of the UNESCO General Conference which held at Nairobi in 1976.

The New International Information Order (NIIO) and the New International Economic Order (NIEO) are multi-dimensionally correlated. The NIEO aims at greater international economic distributive justice. It involves transfer of resources - capital and technology - from the developed to the developing countries. Communication plays a crucial role in revealing and assessing the economic disparities, in evolving and making known solutions to them, in facilitating transfer of technology between the developed and developing countries and in assisting the latter to feel their way to economic and social development. But then, as shown above in the field of communication too, the developed countries have established their stranglehold subjecting the developing countries into a state of dependency. This then calls for a new international

information order as a necessary adjunct of the new international economic order. The role of the UNESCO is to help achieve the objectives of the new international information order. There is need for rectification of the existing imbalance in information transfer. There is also need for harnessing the internal resources of the developing countries so that they be channelled to developmental goals. These are the immediate communication tasks for the UNESCO.

The New International Information Order seems to have created a fear psychosis for the developed countries of the West. They apprehend that the developing countries may develop their own agencies for their own dissemination and distribution of news. As a recent report to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee observed : "Whether we like it or not there will be a 'new world information order'. It would be the driving force and the fuel for the 'new world economic order' called for the less developed countries".<sup>2</sup> And the report ominously warned that the United States had more to lose than any other nation if the "order" became a fact.<sup>3</sup> Such a reaction is, however, understandable. However, what is not understandable is the unwillingness of many of these developed countries to see justice on a world

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2 Kroloff and Cohen, see no.1,p.1.

3 Ibid.,

scale and to help the unfortunate on road to development. What is significant in the field of communication is that the greater and the more balanced the flow of news, movies, television programmes, books, scientific and cultural information, paving the way for closer relations and better understanding among societies and individuals of the world, the less chance of war, the more opportunities for increased education, health, well-being and, indeed, all-round development. This, however, calls for an integrated view of the global communication problems.

The Non-Aligned Agencies: News pool is doing notable work for the developing countries as an agency promoting collective self-reliance. But the pool has fallen far short of some of the desired objectives such as setting up a third world news agency. In its present form, the pool agreement, for all practical purposes, provides for no more than a clearing house for exchanging officially sanctioned information or news handouts.<sup>4</sup> The pool should establish permanent headquarters, and try to designate its own journalists throughout the world for quick and equitable distribution of balanced and objective news.

Meanwhile, the UNESCO has achieved signal success in setting up radical international norms on global communica-

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4 Narinder Aggarwala, "Media, News and People : A Third World View", Media Asia, vol.5, no.2, 1978, p.80.

tion with a view to bridging the ever-growing gap between the developing and developed countries. The 1978 UNESCO declaration on mass communication is a standing testimony to this. However, as irony may have it, the declaration has faced criticism from both governmental representatives and professional (journalists) of both developed and developing countries. Some critics have even characterised the UNESCO declaration as an anathema to the free flow of information. Some organs of information went so far as to denounce the UNESCO itself as an enemy, and publically called their respective governments "to stop UNESCO before it is too late".<sup>5</sup> What, however, escapes the attention of most of the critics is that the UNESCO declaration does not call for an entirely brave new world. It does recognize the existing state system, with diverse political, economic and cultural diversities. Given this, much of the criticisms are myopic and unfair.

At the ninth session of its General Conference, the UNESCO appointed an International Commission under the leadership of Sean MacBride, to study communication problems in detail and recommend improvements on the present system. The Commission has prepared a 576 page report to be submitted to the Belgrade session of the UNESCO in 1980. The reports of the Commission deal with historical facts of communication.

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5 Sean MacBride Commission - Final Report - 1980, (UNESCO), p.69.

and free flow of information and the diversity amongst the countries. They vividly portray the maladies of the present information order. However, the commission appears to have failed to make specific recommendations on how to make free flow between countries or guidelines to achieve the core objectives of the New International Information Order. Many of the recommendations seem to be a ragbag of views which contradict each other. However, one high-point of the Commission's reports are their stress on the need for the developing countries to formulate well-conceived national communication policies closely welded to their respective developmental policies. The reports also indicate the role of the UNESCO in this crucial respect.

In the realm of communication, the role of the mass media can hardly be exaggerated. The media, if properly oriented, can inculcate in individual awareness (the individual's first introduction to a new idea or practice), interest (the stage at which he actively seeks further information and background data), capacity for evaluation (the stage of assessment on theoretical grounds), and trial (a limited phase of experiment) and finally acceptance or adoption. The duration of this process naturally depends upon personal factors, which vary according to the individual, as also other factors like the felicity of

there is need for well-considered experimentation, policy planning and organisation, in developing countries. This is a field where the UNESCO should more actively catalyse and provide more aid for this kind of experiments on a long-term perspective of development.

It has been suggested that mass media are at their best in creating awareness, providing stimulation, motivating, and giving ready access to information. They can also be employed to contact field workers to pass on necessary information, describe new techniques and methods, and keep communication channels open between headquarters, bureaucracy and extension workers as the development campaign continues.

The idea of development as the basis of education, science and culture derives significance from the assumption that development would contribute to peace. In the field of communication it can be said that India has not played a very significant role. This is not to say that India did not play any role worth the name. India's suggestions for establishment of World Paper Bank and self-controlling of the newspapers have been valuable. India's major contribution in this field has been to raise the question of free and balanced flow of information at the UNESCO General Conference, for the first time in 1970. India also took initiative in regard to the formation and strengthening of the Non-Aligned News pool which in turn spurred the demand for New International Information Order. With the

technological advance it has already achieved, India is well placed to make substantive contribution to the demand for a new international information order.

Finally, some suggestions may be hazarded, with a view to further improving the role of the UNESCO in the field of communication. First, the UNESCO should allocate more of its time, energy, manpower and knowhow for the promotion of communication, because eighty per cent of the population live in the developing countries, most of the people being illiterate. The disparity between the developed and developing countries is rather marked in the communication field. According to the World Bank figures there is one communicator for every 4000 human beings in developed countries, whereas in the developing countries the ratio varies from 1 to 8000. The communicators work as a link between urban and rural people, assist the free and balanced flow of information between urban and rural, and between developed and developing country. In this regard, the UNESCO should give more emphasis on agriculture-cum-communication study programmes and centres the main activities of which should be to evolve efficient methods of how to communicate to the illiterate people in a simple and precise manner.

Second, language is an important factor in the free flow of information. Language can easily reinforce the

hegemony of dominant elite minority elements in the society keeping the rest of the society into a position of subjection. Hence the UNESCO should give more importance to national and regional languages to communicate with in all mass media. This may also go a long way towards the rural-urban problems of development.

Third, the UNESCO should promote a more pronounced regional approach while evolving policies in regard to education, culture, and science. Particularly in the field of communication, the regional approach would cater better to the diversity of developmental problems of developing countries. This is an area where a blind fold internationalist approach is bound to fail.

Fourth, since national communication policies are linked to overall social, cultural, economic and political goals of the nation, such policies should be based on adequate, and well coordinated inter-ministerial and interdisciplinary consultations with broad public participation. The UNESCO can help the developing countries in this regard.

Fifth, the new world order will have to be based on cooperation maintained amongst the developing countries. It is to be suggested that the Unesco should strive to induce a cooperative spirit among the developing countries and also between the developed and developing, instead simply side one group as against the other.



Sixth, there is an urgent need to reduce the tariffs for newspapers, periodicals, books and other mass media, so as to promote the transfer of information and cultural data to the developing countries and between the developing countries themselves. The UNESCO can promote cheaper production of communication materials for the developing countries.

Seventh, the UNESCO can contribute to planning for the transfer of technology to meet the needs of the developing countries. It could set up an independent international centre, to orient these countries on the choice and use of appropriate communication technology.

And finally, the UNESCO should create International Press agencies under its supervision and control. This will also contribute towards balancing of the existing communication imbalance.

Broad indeed, is the communication vista! While the UNESCO cannot be expected to cure all global communication maladies, even as a multilateral negotiating forum, the UNESCO will surely have numerous opportunities to play a positive role in the field.

ANNEXURE I

A Scenario of the World Consumption pattern of Mass Communication

Major Areas	No. of Dailies		Circulation in millions		No. of Book title (in 1000)		Manuscript consumption (in mill.)		No. of cinema seats (in mill.)		No. of Radio Receivers (in mill.)		T.V. Receivers (in mill.)	
	1965	1975	65	75	65	75	65	75	65	75	65	75	65	75
World	8,000	7,900	342	408	426	568	17	21	689	77	553	918	182	36.6
Africa	200	190	3.4	6	7	11	0.20	0.3	1.6	2	12	28	0.6	2.1
Asia	2,200	2,230	75	90	61	88	2.0	4.1	10.8	12	59	108	20	36
North America	2,200	2,300	72	74	64	100	8.3	9.1	10.2	28	268	450	79	13.8
Latin America	640	710	11	15	13	21	0.6	0.9	5.9	19	25	52	5	20
Europe	2,000	1,660	114	115	200	264	4.7	5.3	28	1	118	158	59	112
Oceania	100	120	5.3	7	5	5	0.5	0.6	1.1	25	7.7	6	2.4	4.6
USSR	640	690	61	101	76	79	0.7	1.1	12.3		7.9	116	16	53

Source : UNESCO, World Communication, 1975, p.200.

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