

1286 (XIII). Refugees in Morocco and Tunisia

The General Assembly,

Having examined the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,⁴ and in particular chapter II,

Considering the efforts made by the United Nations Refugee Fund to assist refugees,

Noting the action taken in 1958 by the High Commissioner on behalf of refugees from Algeria in Tunisia,

Considering that a similar problem exists in Morocco,

Recommends the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue his action on behalf of the refugees in Tunisia on a substantial scale and to undertake similar action in Morocco.

*782nd plenary meeting,
5 December 1958.*

1313 (XIII). Freedom of information**A**

The General Assembly,

Noting that the Commission on Human Rights at its fourteenth session requested the Economic and Social Council and, through it, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other specialized agencies concerned to initiate action to consider and implement the suggestions of the Committee on Freedom of Information concerning under-developed countries wherever possible and as expeditiously as possible, with the object of assisting them to build up adequate media of information which could facilitate the free flow of accurate and undistorted news and information within these countries and throughout the membership of the United Nations,⁷

Noting that the Commission on Human Rights will give further consideration at its fifteenth session to the suggestions of the Committee on Freedom of Information and that the Economic and Social Council has requested the Commission on Human Rights to complete its recommendations on freedom of information,

1. *Expresses the hope* that the Economic and Social Council, on the basis of the analysis to be prepared by the Secretary-General in response to Council resolutions 574 D (XIX) of 26 May 1955 and 643 (XXIII) of 25 April 1957, and taking into account recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights to be submitted in response to Council resolution 683 C (XXVI) of 21 July 1958, will formulate at its twenty-eighth session a programme of concrete action and measures on the international plane which could be undertaken for the development of information enterprises in under-developed countries, with an evaluation of the material, financial and professional requirements and resources for the implementation of this programme;

2. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to request the Commission on Human Rights to give particular attention to procedures by which constant review of the problems of providing technical assistance to under-developed countries in the field of information

⁴ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 8 (E/3088), para. 123, resolution 6 (XIV).*

may be assured, and to report regularly to the Council on progress in this field;

3. *Invites* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other specialized agencies as appropriate to formulate concrete proposals to assist in meeting the needs of less developed countries in building up adequate media of information, and to include an account of their efforts on this and other aspects of freedom of information in their annual reports to the Economic and Social Council.

*788th plenary meeting,
12 December 1958.*

B

The General Assembly,

Reiterating its belief in the free flow of undistorted news and information within countries and across national frontiers as the essential basis for an accurate and undistorted understanding of events and situations,

Recognizing however that the development of media of information constitutes only a partial measure in ensuring freedom of information.

Recognizing further that greater freedom of communications would lessen international tension and promote mutual understanding and confidence, thereby allowing countries and peoples more easily to understand and compose their differences,

Recommends that all Member States, as a contribution to building peace and confidence, should encourage better mutual understanding by taking practical measures, in co-operation with the programmes of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, to open their countries to greater freedom of communications by:

(a) Facilitating access to United Nations information programmes;

(b) Supporting the activities of United Nations information centres;

(c) Facilitating the free flow of accurate information through all media.

*788th plenary meeting,
12 December 1958.*

C

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the Secretary-General's report⁸ on the consultations he held with Governments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1189 A (XII) of 11 December 1957 concerning the draft Convention on Freedom of Information,

Bearing in mind the lengthy and heretofore inconclusive discussions which have taken place in various bodies of the United Nations on the draft Convention,

Believing that a convention on freedom of information can play an important role in guaranteeing to the peoples of States parties to it their fundamental right to freedom of expression and of opinion, as enunciated in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Realizing that in view of the importance of the draft Convention it is desirable that additional opportunity be given Member States to crystallize their views thereon,

⁸ A/3868 and Add.1 to 8.

Desirous however of formulating promptly a widely acceptable final text of the draft Convention with a view to opening it for signature as soon as possible,

Decides:

1. To proceed, at its fourteenth session, to a discussion of the text of the draft Convention as formulated by the Committee on the Draft Convention on Freedom of Information,⁹ established by the General Assembly in its resolution 426 (V) of 14 December 1950, giving special consideration to any new proposals that may be made;

2. To request the Secretary-General, in the light of the discussion in the Third Committee on this matter, to invite the Governments of States with which he communicated pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1189 A (XII) to transmit to him any comments, observations, suggestions, proposals or amendments concerning the text of the draft Convention on Freedom of Information and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session.

*788th plenary meeting,
12 December 1958.*

1314 (XIII). Recommendations concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Noting that the right of peoples and nations to self-determination as affirmed in the two draft Covenants

⁹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventh Session, Annexes, agenda item 29, document A/AC.42/7, annex.*

completed by the Commission on Human Rights¹⁰ includes "permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources",

Believing it necessary to have full information at its disposal regarding the actual extent and character of this sovereignty,

1. *Decides* to establish a Commission composed of Afghanistan, Chile, Guatemala, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Arab Republic and the United States of America to conduct a full survey of the status of this basic constituent of the right to self-determination, with recommendations, where necessary, for its strengthening, and further decides that, in the conduct of the full survey of the status of the permanent sovereignty of peoples and nations over their natural wealth and resources, due regard shall be paid to the rights and duties of States under international law and to the importance of encouraging international co-operation in the economic development of under-developed countries;

2. *Invites* the regional economic commissions and the specialized agencies to co-operate with the Commission in its task;

3. *Requests* the Commission to report to the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-ninth session;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Commission with the necessary staff and facilities.

*788th plenary meeting,
12 December 1958.*

¹⁰ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Eighteenth Session, Supplement No. 7 (E/2573), annex I.*

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Other decisions taken by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Third Committee

Draft International Covenants on Human Rights (item 32)

At its 788th plenary meeting on 12 December 1958, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the Third Committee¹¹ that the Assembly, at its fourteenth session, should give priority to the consideration of the draft International Covenants on Human Rights.

¹¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 32, document A/4045, para. 92.*