

- ♦ states take all necessary steps to assure the full realization of the right to access to information;
- ♦ with regard to the impact of new information technology on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, these new technologies be considered in light of the same international standards as other means of communication and no measures be taken which would unduly restrict freedom of expression and information — in case of doubt, decide in favour of free expression and the flow of information;
- ♦ with regard to the Internet, on-line expression be guided by international standards and guaranteed the same protection as is given to other forms of expression;
- ♦ all reasonable steps be taken to promote access to the Internet and that governments promote an economic and regulatory environment which encourages the extension of telecommunication lines to rural and other previously under-serviced areas;
- ♦ wherever possible, government information be made available through the Internet;
- ♦ governments take all necessary steps to remove formal and cultural obstacles so that women may exercise their right to freedom of expression, including to receive information and ultimately give effect to all their rights; and
- ♦ in light of the importance of freedom of expression and how it relates to violence against women, a special effort be made to gather and analyse more information on this subject with a view to the preparation of a joint report with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women.

Resolution of the Commission on Human Rights

Under agenda item 8 the Commission adopted a resolution by consensus (1998/42) in which the Commission, *inter alia*: noted the Johannesburg Principles on National Security, Freedom of Expression and Access to Information; noted that restrictions on the rights to opinion and expression could indicate a deterioration in the protection, respect for and enjoyment of other human rights and freedoms; reaffirmed that education is an integral component of full and effective participation of people in a free society; expressed concern at the numerous reports of detention, discrimination, threats and acts of violence and harassment against professionals in the field of information; noted the need to raise awareness of all aspects of the relationship between the availability and use of new media of communications and the rights to expression and information; expressed concern that for women there exists a gap between the rights to opinion, expression and information and the effective enjoyment of those rights; expressed concern at violations related to opinion and expression, including short- and long-term detention, extrajudicial killing and abuse

of legal provisions on criminal libel; expressed concern that these and other violations are facilitated and aggravated by such factors as abuse of states of emergency and too vague a definition of offences against state security; called for further progress towards release of persons detained for exercising the rights of opinion, expression, information, assembly, association, thought, conscience, religion and the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs; urged governments to eliminate the atmosphere of fear that often prevents women who have been victims of violence from communicating freely on their own behalf or through intermediaries; appealed to all states to ensure respect for the rights referred to above and that persons seeking to exercise these rights are not victims of discrimination, particularly in such areas as employment, housing and social services; invited the SR to develop further commentary on the right to seek and receive information; and, invited the Special Rapporteur to assess the advantages and challenges of new telecommunications technologies, including the Internet, on the rights to opinion, expression and information, bearing in the mind the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination related to racism and hate speech.



GLOBALIZATION

Actions by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

At its 1998 session the Sub-Commission adopted two resolutions and one decision that relate, in whole or in part, to issues arising from globalization.

The first resolution (1998/8) was on the relationship between the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, and the working methods and activities of transnational corporations. The Sub-Commission, *inter alia*: noted that the Working Group on the Right to Development of the Commission on Human Rights identified the concentration of economic and political power as one of the obstacles to the realization of the right to development; also noted that the Working Group recommended the adoption of new international legislation and the creation of effective international institutions to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and banks, and in particular the resumption of multilateral negotiations on a code of conduct for transnational corporations; referred to the Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy adopted by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office in November 1977; supported the Declaration on the Right to Development and underlined the multidimensional, integrated and dynamic character of this right; and affirmed that the global and multidimensional approach defined in the Declaration should constitute a basis for