

Promotion of Intercultural Understanding: the Role of the State, Media and Other Actors

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Outline

1. Introduction
2. Liberal Egalitarianism and Multicultural Theories
3. The Camden Principles: Principles 5 – 10 (on media, political and other leadership figures, CSOs)
4. NHRIs

Principle 6: Mass Media Role

6.1. All mass media should, as a **moral and social responsibility**, take steps to:

i. Ensure that their workforces are **diverse and representative of society as a whole**

ii. Address as far as possible **issues of concern to all groups** in society

iii. Seek a **multiplicity of sources and voices within different communities**, rather than representing communities as monolithic blocs

iv. Adhere to high standards of information provision that meet recognised **professional and ethical standards**

Principle 9: Media Responsibilities

9.1. All media should, as a moral and social responsibility, **play a role in combating discrimination and in promoting intercultural understanding**, including by considering the following:

- i. Taking care to **report in context and in a factual and sensitive manner**, while ensuring that acts of discrimination are brought to the attention of the public.
- ii. Being alert to the **danger of discrimination or negative stereotypes of individuals and groups** being furthered by the media.
- iii. Avoiding **unnecessary references to race, religion, gender and other**
- iv. Raising **awareness of the harm** caused by discrimination and negative stereotyping. group characteristics that may promote intolerance.

v. Reporting on different groups or communities and **giving their members an opportunity to speak and to be heard** in a way that promotes a better understanding of them, while at the same time reflecting the perspectives of those groups or communities.

9.2. Public service broadcasters should be under an obligation to **avoid negative stereotypes of individuals and groups, and their mandate should require them to promote intercultural understanding** and to foster a better understanding of different communities and the issues they face. This should include the airing of programmes which portray different communities as equal members of society.

9.3. **Professional codes of conduct** for the media and journalists should reflect equality principles and effective steps should be taken to promulgate and implement such codes.

9.4. **Professional development programmes** for media professionals should raise awareness about the role the media can play in promoting equality and the need to avoid negative stereotypes.

- Code of Principles of IFJ (1986)
- The journalist shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media and shall do the utmost to avoid facilitating such discrimination based on, among other things, race, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinions, and national or social origins
- Aidan White: “to meet ethical aspirations journalists must be aware that ignorance and a lack of appreciation of different cultures, traditions and beliefs within the media leads to stereotypes which reinforce racist attitudes. They must be conscious of the impact of the words and images given the deeply-rooted fears and anxieties of different communities that exist within society”.

- Media policy initiatives (AW at Vienna OHCHR workshop on incitement)
 - Support editorial independence and self-regulation
 - Create diversity within the media
 - Raise awareness: media literacy and education programmes
 - Media training and building industry cooperation, including support for structures for dialogue between media, journalism support groups and civil society groups

Principle 10.1.: Political and Other Leadership Figures

10.1. Politicians and other leadership figures in society should avoid making statements that might promote discrimination or undermine equality and should take advantage of their positions to promote intercultural understanding, including by contesting, where appropriate discriminatory behaviour

Principle 10.2.: CSOs

10.2. Civil society organisations should respect pluralism, and promote the rights to freedom of expression and equality in accordance with these Principles. In particular, they should promote intercultural understanding, acknowledge dissenting voices, and support the ability of members of different communities, and particularly marginalised groups, to voice their perspectives and concerns, in a way that recognises the diversity of communities.

4. NHRIs

- Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions adopted by General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993
- Role and responsibilities re: FoE/Equality (para 3)
 - Advice/opinion/recommendations/proposals/reports on basis on request or exercise of its power
 - Publicise issue or advice etc
 - Examination of legislation, bills, recommend new legislation
 - Promote and ensure harmonisation of national legislation, regulations and practices with IHRs, ECHR, EU law
 - Contribute to scrutiny of international treaty bodies
 - formulation of programmes for teaching into human rights
 - **Publicise human rights + efforts to combat all forms of discrimination, in particular racial discrimination, especially through information and education and by making use of all press organs (g)**

- Methods of Operation
- **Monitoring**
- **Developing relations with NGOs devoted to promoting human rights, to promoting economic and social development, to combating racism, to protecting vulnerable groups (para 3(g))**

5. Other (legal) actors / mechanisms

- To support intercultural understanding
 - Judges: judicial training
 - Duty to promote equality in public policy and decision making
 - Duty on socio-economic inequalities
 - Prohibition of dual discrimination
 - Requirement for employers to review pay differences and publish results