

OCSE Human Dimension Seminar on Media Freedom Legal Framework Warsaw, 13-15 May 2013

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Introduction to theme

International framework for media freedom

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Historical context: Earlier initiatives to promote media role and freedom

Post-World War One: **League of Nations**

- Resolution on the use of press for peace (1926)
- Projects to promote working conditions of media and to support disarmament (1927-30)
- International court of honour for journalists (1931)

Post-World War Two: **United Nations**

- UNESCO Constitution (1945)
- Conference on Freedom of Information (1948)
- Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR 1948)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR 1966)

Historical context, cont.

During Cold War: **Non-Aligned Movement**

- Concept of information decolonization (summits in Lusaka 1970 and Algiers 1973)
- Concept of new international information order (symposium in Tunis and summit in Colombo 1976)

Global media debate around UNESCO, etc (1970s-80s)

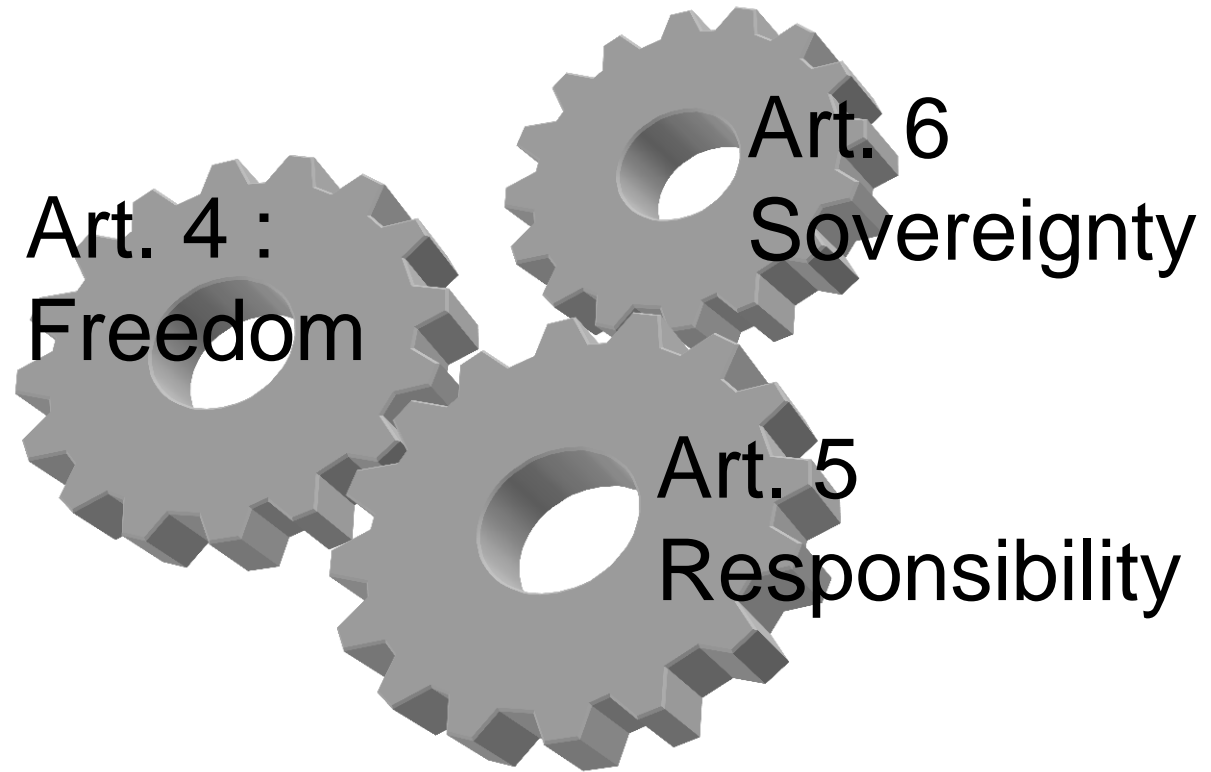
In sum: **Rich historical legacy**

CSCE Helsinki Final Act (1975)

Package deal: Basket One of 10 Principles Guiding Relations between States is linked to Basket Three on Cooperation in Humanitarian and Other Fields, its preamble desiring to strengthen peace and understanding among peoples and promising full respect for the principles of Basket One

Section 2. Information of Basket Three promises to facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds as well as to improve the working conditions for journalists

Same package deal in WSIS (2003)



Freedom in Human Rights instruments

Article 19 in UDHR and in ICCPR as well as Article 10 of European Convention on Human Rights determine that *everyone* has the right to freedom of expression

The subject of this right is an *individual* and – the freedom of expression belongs to people and not to media or journalists

The instruments also determine that the exercise of these freedoms carries with it *duties and responsibilities* – freedom and responsibility are inseparable

Challenges to freedom of the media

Not to mystify media and their role in society,
avoiding a media-centered world view

Not to elevate media as subjects of human rights,
avoiding myths about media freedom, while placing
free media as cornerstones of democracy

Be aware of the history of ideas concerning freedom,
understanding the origins of liberalism

Internet and digitalization has opened up a new
media ecosystem but this does not shake the basic
nature of communication and media

Related texts by the author

Online links available at

<http://www.uta.fi/cmt/en/contact/staff/kaarlenordenstreng/publications.htm>

The League of Nations and the Mass Media: Rediscovery of a Forgotten Story (with Tarja Seppä). Paper presented at the XV Conference of the International Association for Mass Communication Research IAMCR, New Delhi, August 1986., 17 pp.

Helsinki: The New Equation (with Herbert I. Schiller). *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 26, 1/1976, pp. 130-134.

The Citizen Moves from the Audience to the Arena. *Nordicom Review*, 2/1997, pp. 13-20.

A Milestone in the Great Media Debate. *Quardens del CAC*, 21/2005, pp. 45-48.

Myths About Press Freedom. *Brazilian Journalism Research*, Vol. 3, 1/2007, pp. 15-30.

Deconstructing Libertarian Myths about Press Freedom. In U. Carlsson (Ed.): *Freedom of Expression, Press Freedom and Journalism. Reflections from a Nordic Horizon*. Gothenburg: Nordicom (forthcoming).