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**Workshop II
Formulation of Guidelines For A Legal
Framework Governing Transnational
Broadcasting In The Region**



Workshop II

Formulation of guidelines for an appropriate
code of ethics governing transnational
broadcasting in the region.

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Report of Workshop II
AMIC Seminar on Transnational Broadcast

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SUGGESTED BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMMING AND ADVERTISING CONTENT OF TRANSNATIONAL BROADCASTS.

The Group was aware of the limitations imposed by the fact that legislation even if feasible would not succeed in serving the objective of ensuring respect for national sensitivities.

Moreover, film, television and other audio visual entertainment reflect the temper of each society, and uniformity of perceptions is not possible.

Therefore, the main responsibility of ensuring observance of principles, should be on each country and its media organisations.

The suggestions appearing below have been formulated with a view to making transnational audio visual materials more acceptable and mutually beneficial. Most of these aspects are already contained in the broadcasting codes of almost all nations, but are sometimes rejected when transmitting broadcast material to other countries:

1. Expansion of intellectual horizons in social, economic, scientific cultural and industrial fields with a view to enhancing global understanding and mutual prosperity.
2. Encouraging concepts of democracy, peace and cooperation as well as human values.
3. Avoiding the glorification of crime, violence and obscenity.
4. Recognising and projecting the family as the basic unit of society and inculcating a sense of love and dignity to embrace all ages and both sexes.
5. Promoting, with special care, the healthy development of children and youth as responsible and effective citizens of the future.
6. Creating an atmosphere of understanding, respect and tolerance towards all religions, cultures, languages, nationalities and ethnic groups and eschewing condescending attitudes based on ignorance, prejudice or mis-information.
7. Preserving general health and environment by discouraging hazardous products and habits.

A consensual approach to these guidelines could be promoted through regional and national broadcasting and advertising organisations. Since a large number of Radio and Television

National programming in the respective countries should be improved in terms of quality. Competition should be encouraged. Privatisation should also be considered an option. Particularly national news programmes should improve their credibility by providing timely and more objective reporting of national and regional events.

SAARC Secretariat may consider initiating a dialogue to set up a satellite channel of their own to provide a healthy mix of television programming as an alternative to transnational programming which is not sensitive to the culture of this region.

In view of the fact that, to make any binding regulations and to create legal mechanisms for executing them in an international situation would be very difficult, this seminar recommends:

1. A public awareness campaign be developed in the third world countries, as an indicator of viewers preferences, or for that matter, as a deterrent against abuse of emerging broadcasting technologies.

Regional Organisations like AMIC, who have taken a lead in focusing attention on the critical issues raised by transnational broadcasting, may organise purposeful dialogue between the transnational and national broadcasting institutions, in order to formulate a set of guidelines, which can then be adopted by regional conventions and be further endorsed by an international convention.

2. While some of the quantitative research studies have already been undertaken by Broadcasting Organisations/Research Institutes, and the ones sponsored by advertisers, it would be worthwhile to undertake a comprehensive regional holistic study in order to assess the impact of transnational broadcasting on the traditional societies in the third world, some of whom have as an initial reaction complained about the cultural shock, that such transnational TV services seem to have subjected them to.

For such studies, organisations like AMIC may take an appropriate lead in developing and promoting a comprehensive research project to be executed with the cooperation of established professional institutions and help from social endowments and Governments in the SAARC Countries.
