

CARACAS AGREEMENT

Nature endowed man with the ability to reason. Hence, the ability to express his thoughts and to understand his fellowmen is the basis of community life.

In one form or another, man always found the means to communicate his ideas, to spread the news of interest to him and to others, and to make known his dreams and desires.

The need to communicate oneself is so imperative, that man will sacrifice his life, and has indeed done so, in defense. and history has proved how vain are the attempts to immure man in walls of silence.

Any act tending to curtail freedom of expression and thought communication may be considered an attempt to suppress an imperishable natural right. That is why freedom of speech shall never be extinguished.

Bearing in mind these convictions, the President of the Inter-American Association of Broadcasters and the Inter-American Press Association, being met in Caracas, Venezuela, bearing homage to a country enjoying freedom and democracy, **HEREBY DECLARE:**

CONSIDERING that the Boards of Directors of the Inter-American Press Association and the Inter-American Association of Broadcasters, at the joint session held on March 23, 1952 in the city of Panama adopted a resolution titled the "Doctrine of Panama" wherein both associations declared that any aggression against the freedom or the dignity of the individual or any act tending to suppress or curtail freedom of expression of any person or society defending or practicing said freedom by means of the press or radio, shall constitute an aggression against all members of the Inter-American Association of Broadcasters and the Inter-American Press Association;

CONSIDERING that the Inter-American Press Association, at their annual meeting held in October 1972, and the Inter-American Association of Broadcasters at their General Assembly in March 1973, adopted resolutions for the purpose of increasing the efficiency and vigor of the Panama Doctrine;

CONSIDERING the reappearance of various authoritarian forms of government in the Americas, with the consequent curtailment of human rights, especially the right of the people to be informed, the undersigned, in compliance with resolutions adopted expressly by the Associations they represent, **HEREBY AGREE:**

1. To confirm the Doctrine of Panama to its full extent, whereby any aggression against a means of information or opinion is to be considered an aggression against all members of the Inter-American Press Association and the Inter-American Association of Broadcasters;

2. To establish a joint committee, constituted by three members from each Association, for the purpose of creating a functional and orderly course towards a more effective defense of the ideals of liberty through legal channels available to mass communication media, in their struggle for freedom; said media reaffirming the inalienable right of all persons to be informed and to express their opinions; the exercise of said right being an essential condition to be able to participate in the destiny of the community and to conduct their lives with freedom and responsibility;
3. To reaffirm their categorical repudiation of all forms of dictatorship; a dictatorship, whatever form, being the negation of the fundamental rights of man and the community;
4. To reiterate their conviction that material progress and spiritual welfare can only be achieved in an atmosphere of freedom and respect for the human person.

Caracas, August 8, 1973

R. Madrigal Nieto (IAPA) - Félix Cardona Moreno (IAB)
Germán E. Ornes (IAPA) - Héctor Ponsdomenech (IAB)