Resolution 553 (1973)[1]

Violation of freedom of expression

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that freedom of expression constitutes one of the splendours and servitudes of any democracy worthy of the name ;

2. Reasserting the right of artists and writers to express their views on the evolution of the society in which they live, even if their opinions are critical of the existing system ;

3. Deploring the persecutions of which intellectuals and artists are victim in several European countries, and condemning all violations of the freedom of expression now perpetrated in Europe and other continents ;

4. Keenly regretting that at a time when a desire for a more open approach in international relations was becoming evident in the East, and particularly in the Soviet Union, severe measures were taken for the political control of cultural activities ;

5. Noting that this evolution leads to the growing isolation and regimentation of Soviet culture by comparison with the outside world and that it is in danger of compromising progress in respect of one of the major objectives of the CSCE : the free movement of persons and ideas ;

6. Recalling that, in its Recommendation 521, it advocated in 1968 "an overall multilateral policy aimed at restoring the cultural unity of all Europe",

7. Holds that this aim cannot be achieved as long as freedom of expression is not guaranteed in all European countries in accordance with the spirit of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

1. Assembly debate on 28 September 1973 (14th and 15th Sittings) (see Doc. 3329, report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 28 September 1973 (15th Sitting).