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Introduction

No doubt that information becomes as important element as water and air for the modern human life. It is also agreed that telecommunications make our world a small village where information interchange, vast spread of knowledge and rapid expansion of various information items are basically dominant.

The importance of this unprecedented revolution in the world of technological and societal change is coming from the fact that change in this area is nonstop in different directions. These nonstop directions affect not only the relationship between the human being and the new big or tiny machines, but also widely affect his life in terms of ideas, thoughts, way of thinking and obviously his/her way of life.

As much as information is so important for our present life, the flow of information, the right to have access to information and the right to use them properly is also so important exactly as freedom is an essential element to our life and survival.

This makes us wonder which comes first: freedom or the speedy information carried by human technological tools? In spite of our deep belief that information and knowledge have become the main factors in the structure of modern societies, we can't ignore that the freedom to use information, or to obtain it or to employ it for other needed purposes (like development, or generate other economic or global dimensions) is as essential as information itself. To give an example : if you possess a newly made telecommunication device without knowing how to use it properly, you still have nothing....

What I want to say is that we need information to change our economic, social and developing life, so as to make it better, more peaceful, easier and accurate, but at the same time we are always in bad need for freedom to fulfil our humanity and employ the products of our brains for the service of human kind.

As it is seen, there is a tight and reasonable connection between freedom, as an ethical value, and information carried and transferred to us through electronic new creation, unlimited series of tools and devices.

This paper will try to focus on:

- the concept of freedom in the context of its relation to information
- the meaning of the Information Society
- ideas and thoughts that might be needed in our life of technology.

Freedom comes first

Freedom is the most important issue and form for the human being's life. It was created with his fundamental needs and necessitation. It also can't be segregated from the political, social and cultural human's built up, and among these forms is communications.

Unlimited and uncountable conferences and meetings throughout this century tackled this issue and proposed many explanations to the term "Freedom" and applied it to all aspects of life. It varied from one society to another and it also depends on the explanation given by powers to the term freedom as follows:

- Religion, regardless its name, has called for strengthening the concept of freedom in the life of human beings.
- Many legal constitutions and juridical structures have repeatedly applied the concept of freedom, regardless of the continuous violations made by beneficiary powers.

- The concept of freedom did not appear in the human life easily; it came out clearly after white, black and red revolutions that swept the human societies starting from the agricultural revolution and ending up presently with the technology revolution.

- The schools of thought led by many philosophers and thinkers, have all stressed the concept of freedom with all its types: freedom of life, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of political, social, economical entities.... Freedom to all ways of life.

- As far as the freedom of expression, media and communications are concerned, a lot of international organizations have been formed to deal with this issue..., starting from the United Nations different divisions to UNESCO, to media and scholastic, academic or NGO organizations that deal with the concept of freedom.

So, all permanent and temporary laws coming from Heavens or from the judicial round-tables, or academic concerned thinkers stipulate the right to communicate and free media. However, constitutions have restricted these rights by indulging legal phrases such as “within the boundaries of the law“, “by virtue of the law“, “as per governance of the law “, etc.

Thus, the intellect is the first to admit, openly or secretly, that the right to practice freedom of communication is clearly determined by the regime, which, irrelevant of its nature, limits the practice involved. Consequently, communication very often finds itself bound to the regime, either as affiliate or as opponent.

But the technological revolution has widened the concept of freedom, cornered the regimes and obliged most of them to abide to new rules because the old freedom restricted game has been changed, and also because information flow became bigger than the number of the secret forces of the regimes who find themselves obliged to join the information revolution ... “If you can’t beat him, join him “.

How is the concept of freedom widened by communications technology?

1- The control of all powers related to the practice of freedom has become loose and the grip has become uncontrolled. This gives a freedom - wide range of attitudes and behaviours used by different groups, people, and even ruling powers in some cases that is due to the unlimited number of tools that market information.

2- The pressuring needs of modern life and the developments created by the societal needs opened the doors wide to behavioral interaction within the society itself and international cooperation on the same level.

3- The broad variety of technology choices like TV stations, satellite channels, radio, space radios, digital tech, Internet and other swift vast tools of communication made it impossible for any power on earth to restrict information or minimize the concept of freedom, or even shape it the way it likes.

4- Information isn’t any more a private commodity when it is connected with knowledge and the needs of the human being, and since it is connected tightly with the concept of freedom, no way one can limit the boundaries of freedom knowing that needs of modern life insist on having and obtaining information, technology, exchange of culture and imitating others’ behaviors.

5- The fact of not having the right to free information and new technology will affect the society with information poverty and then isolation from science, culture and economy and keeps it far away behind the new world and outside the new global village or singing alone outside the global orchestra.

Finally, freedom doesn’t cover one level of life but it applies to all levels and all ways of life, especially if we know that freedom and information are the twins of technology. But above all what has been said by all intellectuals, one can easily say without hesitation that freedom is the key to life with all its developments, revolutions and changes – Thus, freedom comes first.

The Information Society

What is the Information Society? Is it really existing? Isn’t it like old human societies? What are the

characteristics of such a society? Why is it called the information society?

Information and knowledge have become a factor sui generis in societal and economic development as well as a growing number of production processes. Information and communication technologies as Hans D'Orville says, "are called generic technologies, because they permeate all dimensions of economic, social and political activity, affecting social institutions, perceptions and thought processes. For instance, digitization of information, the use of satellites and optical fiber have allowed the huge amount of information transfer and knowledge from one medium to other, and from one part of the world to other. This means that information and knowledge provide the basis for the emerging global information society, drive and intensify the increasingly comprehensive globalization process giving rise to the emergence of a late economy with new global and societal organization models.

This understanding of the role of information in society created a different society than the old one with different features; some of them are :

- 1) time is shortened due to the swift performance of connections, and communications.
- 2) places on the globe get closer to each other.
- 3) information is a must for every level in the life of today (news, culture, media, economy, development and all other ways of life)
- 4) capabilities of development (build, operate, change, develop and manage) become easier and possible.
- 5) information gave the society a framework for new approaches to development, especially for the developing countries.
- 6) new technologies have taken society to new industries, new concepts of culture and new ways of life.
- 7) information changed society into a socially connected block and tightened its relations, in terms of sharing knowledge and use of new tools.

Regardless what I've stated as features of the new modern society or as it is called by some intellectuals "information society", there are still wide areas of the globe that lack of information technology or webs that cover them and meet their new increasing needs. Not only that, but there is still a wide gap between the societies that enjoy the technology facilities and those who are still running behind it.

A New Look For A New Life Under the shades of information society

Communication can be useful and fruitful for developing societies in many ways ; some of them are the following :

- 1- Communication can boost and strengthen the concept of freedom and democracy since freedom is the cornerstone of our democracies, and democracy is a prerequisite for peace and development within and between societies.
- 2- Communication can create an independent and pluralistic media that provides individuals of the earth with true and real information that help wedging gaps within and between societies, and at the same time communication can change the global face of information dissemination and accessibility (through many ways and tools such as satellite broadcasting and Internet links), a matter that reduces the national sovereignty over media.
- 3- Communication can promote peace, development, democracy and respect for the human rights as fundamental freedoms, for example communication can:
 - cultivate the capabilities of society and help serving its civil needs
 - defuse conflicts and crisis in areas of conflicts since it can help us to know each other better
 - promote development by giving opportunities to help advance the basic human rights

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- encourage democracy through participation in governance
 - encourage reporting on human rights to adjust it and keep them proper

4- Communication can be a useful tool to enhance culture and economy within and between societies in terms of trade exchange, cultural exchange and building co-operation bridges between societies and groups

The above four major points are not only the main highways of our new life affected by information, but still other signs of information society can be noticed as symptoms of changes within the society itself.

Communication has brought new challenges of development competition and co-operation ; this means that the global society is obliged to think seriously of new regulations, new definitions of new concepts of life and re-shuffle the old international–relations systems in a logical way, in order to enjoy the new horizons opened by the communication era.

Conclusions

- Our civil society is not anymore enjoying a special cultural, economical or information monopoly . It became just a part of the global information village(Global Village).

- The Information Society does exist, and regardless the controversial discussions made by communicators or social experts, this fact obliges us to think of new international systems that facilitate the benefits from the huge communication revolution.

- Plans of development for our civil societies in media, education, cultural, economy , even ethics and human rights should be internationally shared among the members of the global information society to help the development of the human being.

- Unifying systems of communication is a prerequisite for forming an international language among the members of the globe to enhance co-operation, peace and joint interests.