GENERAL STATEMENT

The international debate on infoethics addresses the ethical, legal and societal aspects of the application of ICTs. Ethical principles for the Information Society derive from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and include the right to freedom of expression, universal access to information, particularly in the public domain, the right to education and the right to participate in cultural life.

UNESCO’S POSITION

As agreed in one of the WSIS outcome documents, the Geneva Plan of Action (Paragraph 25):
« The Information Society should be subject to universally held values and promote the common good and to prevent abusive uses of ICTs.

a. Take steps to promote respect for peace and to uphold the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and respect for nature.

b. All stakeholders should increase their awareness of the ethical dimension of their use of ICTs.

c. All actors in the Information Society should promote the common good, protect privacy and personal data and take appropriate actions and preventive measures, as determined by law, against abusive uses of ICTs such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.

d. Invite relevant stakeholders, especially the academia, to continue research on ethical dimensions of ICTs. »
REGIONAL MEETINGS

UNESCO’s active involvement in the Ethical dimensions of the Information Society through the organization of Regional Meetings:

  The participants have convened and agreed on a set of priorities for the region regarding the following themes: universal access to information, freedom of expression and lastly privacy and personal protection.

- **2007**: **European** Regional Meeting “*Ethics and human rights in information society*”, 13-14 September 2007, Strasbourg, France (organized in cooperation with the Council of Europe)

- **2007**: **African** Regional Meeting, 5-7 February 2007, Pretoria, South Africa

- **2006**: **Latin America and the Caribbean** *Infoethics* Conference, 6-9 December, 2006, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (organized in cooperation with FUNGLODE - *Fundacion Global Democracia y Desarrollo*)

The ethical, legal and societal implications of ICTs are also one of the three priorities of UNESCO’s **Information for All Programme** (IFAP).  

Resource document:  
« *Ethical Implications of Emerging Technologies: A Survey* »  
UNESCO. Information for All Programme (IFAP) - 2007  

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