

## **Code of Athens**

Adopted in 1965 and amended in 1968 and 2009, the Code of Athens is an undertaking of ethical behaviour by members of the International Public Relations Association and recommended to Public Relations practitioners worldwide.

CONSIDERING that all member countries of the United Nations Organisation have agreed to abide by its Charter which reaffirms "its faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person" and that having regard to the very nature of the profession, Public Relations practitioners in these countries should undertake to ascertain and observe the principles set out in this Charter;

CONSIDERING that, apart from "rights", human beings have not only physical or material needs but also intellectual, moral and social needs, and that their rights are of real benefit to them only insofar as these needs are essentially met;

CONSIDERING that, in the course of their professional duties and depending on how these duties are performed, Public Relations practitioners can substantially help to meet these intellectual, moral and social needs.

CONSIDERING that the use of the evolving techniques enabling them to come simultaneously into contact with millions of people gives Public Relations practitioners a power that has to be restrained by the observance of a strict moral code;

CONSIDERING that transparent channels of communication such as the Internet and other digital media, are channels where erroneous or misleading information may be widely disseminated and remain unchallenged, and therefore demand special attention from Public Relations practitioners to maintain trust and credibility;

CONSIDERING that the Internet and other digital media demand special care with respect to the personal privacy of individuals, clients, employers and colleagues;

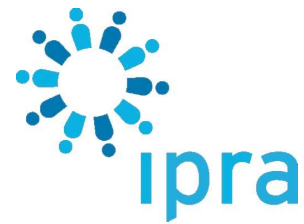
In the conduct of Public Relations practitioners shall:

### **Endeavour**

1. To contribute to the achievement of the moral and cultural conditions enabling human beings to reach their full stature and enjoy the indefeasible rights to which they are entitled under the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

2. To establish communications patterns and channels which foster the free flow of essential information, thereby making each member of the group feel informed. Being included in the communication flow should give every member an awareness of their own personal involvement and responsibility, and encourage solidarity with other members.

3. To conduct themselves always and in all circumstances in such a manner as to deserve and secure the confidence of those with whom the practitioner comes into contact.



4. To bear in mind that, because of the relationship between the Public Relations' profession and the public, the practitioner's conduct – even in private – will have an impact on the way in which the profession as a whole is appraised.

### **Undertake**

5. To observe in the practitioner's professional duties, the moral principles and rules of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

6. To pay due regard to, and uphold human dignity and to recognise the right of each individual to judge for themselves.

7. To establish the moral, psychological and intellectual conditions for dialogue in its true sense, and to recognise the rights of these parties involved to state their case and express their views.

8. To act, in all circumstances, in such a manner as to take account of the respective interests of the parties involved; both the interests of the organisation which the practitioner serves and the interests of the publics concerned.

9. To communicate to avoid misunderstanding, and to show loyalty and integrity in all circumstances so as to keep the confidence of the clients or employer, past or present, and all of the publics that are affected by the practitioner's actions.

10. To act in accordance with this Code with special care with respect to accuracy and privacy when using the Internet and other digital media as channels of communication.

### **Refrain from**

11. Subordinating the truth to other requirements.

12. Circulating information which is not based on established and ascertainable facts.

13. Taking part in any venture or undertaking which is unethical or dishonest or capable of impairing human dignity or integrity.

14. Using any manipulative methods or techniques designed to create subconscious motivations over which an individual has no control.

### **Sanctions**

IPRA members shall, in upholding this Code of Athens, agree to abide by and help enforce the disciplinary procedures of the International Public Relations Association in regard to any breaching of this Code.