

## Communicating with Friends in Restricted Access Countries

Whether you communicate by e-mail, fax or mail, we don't want you to jeopardize anyone's ministry! Think about your letter, e-mail, or phone call as a postcard – anyone may read it; in fact, assume that any and every correspondence will be seen by someone other than the person you are communicating with in a restricted access country.

Here are some tips you can use as guidelines:

### Content

- Be positive and uplifting. An encouraging letter will make their day!
- Talk about day-to-day things.
- Ask professional/business questions; don't ask ministry-oriented questions.
- Never mention politics or comment negatively regarding national affairs or history.
- Do not send missionary prayer letters, tracts, church bulletins, missions magazines, Bibles, information on church stationery, support information, church labels, etc.
  - Sermon tapes should be labelled only with the speaker's first and last name.

### Language

- Do not use the words Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or similar names.
- Use non-religious language. Use 'friends' to refer to Christians and 'get-togethers' to refer to meetings of the church overseas or at home. Do not use real names of Christians overseas.
- Be mindful of not using sensitive words like missions, missionary, mission agency, church planting, evangelism, conversion, witnessing, Bible translation, Bible distribution, spiritual warfare, prayer, support raising, etc.
- Do not use the name of the person's overseas church or home church.
- Refrain from referring to the person's people group information and agency name.

### Format

- Use plain paper and envelopes.
- When emailing, don't send large files, or forward other peoples' emails.
- Check before mailing parcels, magazines or publications.
- Do not encrypt or code your emails to and from restricted access countries as this can bring unwanted attention and suspicion to the sender and receiver.
- Phone can often be even more sensitive than e-mail or letters as the lines are not private.
- Do not give the contact information of your friend to anybody else without having checked with your friend.