

# **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION**

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FORTY-THIRD SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 21 (A/43/21)



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#### NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-fourth session, the **General** Assembly decided to **maintain** the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and **Activities**, established under Assembly **reso**lution **33/115 C** of 18 December 1978, which would be known as the **Committee on Information**, and to increase its membership from 41 to 66. In its resolution **34/182** of 18 December 1979, the Assembly requested the Committee on Information!

"(a) To continue to **examine** United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past **two decades**, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the **new** international economic order and of a new world **information** and communication order ;

"(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations **system** in the field of information and communications;

"(c) To promote the establishment of a **new, more just and more effective** world information and **communication** order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the **General Assembly**;"

and requested the Committee on Information and the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

2. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on **information**, approved the report of the Committee and the recommendations of its **Ad Hoc** Working Group, **1/** reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in Assembly resolution **34/182**, decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67 and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (resolution **35/201** of 16 December 1980). The Committee on Information agreed, at its **organizational session** in 1980, that the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to **all the officers** of the **Committee** and that they should be elected for two-year terms of office.

3. At its thirty-sixth to forty-second sessions, the **General Assembly** expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the reports of the Committee **2/** and its recommendations, reaffirmed the mandate given to the **Committee** in resolution **34/182** and requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its next (thirty-seventh to forty-third) sessions (General Assembly resolutions **36/169 B**, **37/94 B**, **38/82 B**, **39/98**, **40/164 A**, **41/68 A** and **42/162**).

4. At its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly appointed two new members of the **Committee**, namely China and Mexico; at its **forty-first** session the Assembly also appointed Malta as a new member of the Committee, **bringing** the total membership to 70.

5. The Committee is **compose** of the following Member **States**:

Algeria  
Argentina  
Bangladesh  
Belgium  
Benin  
**Brazil**  
Bulgaria  
Burundi  
Chile  
China  
Colombia  
Congo  
Costa Rica  
**Côte d'Ivoire**  
Cuba  
Cyprus  
Denmark  
Ecuador  
**Egypt**  
El Salvador  
Ethiopia  
Finland  
France  
German Democratic  
Republic  
Germany, Federal  
Republic of

**Ghana**  
**Greece**  
**Guatemala**  
Guinea  
**Guyana**  
India  
Indonesia  
Italy  
Japan  
Jordan  
Kenya  
Lebanon  
Malta  
Mexico  
Monyolia  
Morocco  
Netherlands  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Pakistan  
Peru  
Philippines  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Singapore  
Somalia

Spain  
**Sri Lanka**  
Sudan  
Syrian Arab  
Republic  
Togo  
Trinidad **and**  
Tobago  
Tunisia  
**Turkey**  
Ukrainian Soviet  
Socialist Republic  
Union of Soviet  
**Socialist** Republics  
United Kingdom **of**  
Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland  
United Republic **of**  
Tanzania  
United States **of**  
America  
**Venezuela**  
**Viet Nam**  
Yemen  
Yugoslavia  
Zaire

## II. OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS

6. Pursuant to consultations undertaken by the bureau of the Committee with the respective regional groups, it was agreed to merge the previously planned two-day **organizational** session with the regular substantive session and to shorten the latter by one week.

7. The tenth session of the Committee on Information took place at United Nations Headquarters from 27 June to 13 and on 8 and 9 September 1988. The Committee held 15 meetings.

### A. Opening of the session

8. At the 1st meeting, the Chairman of the **Committee** emphasised the important role of the Department in attaining success for the **Organization**, which was currently facing a crisis of credibility. He called for a careful examination of all information possibilities and all initiatives that can be undertaken in order to make better known the purposes and achievements of the United Nations. He cited **recent** examples of information **activities** that had contributed to the enhancement of the role of the Organisation in solving problems before the international community, thus projecting an **image** of the United Nations in general. He **recognized** the Committee as a unique forum, in which discussions and negotiations allowed for an **intensity** of convictions, a **wealth** and **diversity** of cultural **horizons** and a depth of aspirations joined in the quest for a single world with many voices. He urged members of the Committee to have, as their central objective, the attainment of consensus in the **session's** deliberations and to exercise their imagination and flexibility to that end (see annex I).

9. In her opening statement, the Under-Secretary General for **Public** Information reviewed **the** Department's accomplishments both in pursuance of its multifaceted mandate and in addressing the multiplicity of expectations voiced by a wide spectrum of **people**, media, non-governmental organisations, United Nations associations, educational institutions, and parliamentarians from many countries and continents. She spoke of the restructuring in the Department, as mandated by the General Assembly and described the information activities undertaken by the Department during the past 12 months. She asked for the Committee's guidance for the Department, as its **members** review the documentation **before** them, and wished them to reach solutions that would **result** in **more** effective information and communication abilities for the Organisation (see annex II).

### B. Organization of the Bureau

10. The Chairman informed the Committee of the resignation of two Vice-Chairmen, Mr. **Nabil** Osman (Egypt) and Mr. Aneesuddin **Ahmed** (Pakistan), and of the **nominations**, on behalf of their respective Governments, of **Mr. Waguih Said** Moustapha Hanafi (Egypt), and Mr. Mansoor Suhail (Pakistan), to **replace** them.

11. **Having** decided, under the provisions of rule 101 of the rules of procedure of the General **Assembly**, to dispense with secret ballots, the Committee elected by acclamation, Mr. Waguih Said Moustapha Hanafi (Egypt) and Mr. **Mansoor** Suhail (Pakistan) as its Vice-Chairmen for the remainder of their predecessors' terms of office.

### **C. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

12. Pursuant to proposals made by the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Trinidad and Tobago, the **Committee** decide to include a new sub-item, to be considered under agenda item 5 (b), entitled "Maintenance and enhancement of the role of all regional units".

13. The **Committee** then adopted without objection the following agenda and programme of work:

1. Opening of the **session**.
2. Statement by the Chairman and by the Under-Secretary General for Public Information.
3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Organisational **questions**.
5. Substantive **questions**:
  - (a) Promotion of the establishment of a new, **more just** and more effective world information and communication **order** intended to strengthen **peace** and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced **dissemination** of **information**;
  - (b) **Continuation of the** examination of United **Nations** public information policies and activities **in** the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, **and** of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international **economic order** and of a new world information and communication order;

Consideration of **sub-items** in this area would include:

- (i) Report on the feasibility and financial implications of **applying modern** technologies for the collection, production, storage, **dissemination** and distribution of information materials, including the **use** of satellite facilities (**A/AC.198/1988/2**);
- (ii) Report on the enhancement of co-operation with Member States in short-wave broadcast of radio programmes of the Department of Public Information (**A/AC.198/1988/3**);
- (iii) Report on the coverage of United Nations activities pertaining to the **situation** in the Middle East and the question of Palestine (**A/AC.198/1988/4**);
- (iv) Report on the situation regarding the staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution (**A/AC.198/1988/5**);



- (v) Report on the improvement in the distribution of taped radio programmes and curtailment of radio programmes of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/1988/6);
- (vi) Report on the **reassessment** of the effectiveness of the **UN Chronicle** (A/AC.198/1988/7);
- (vii) Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (A/43/6) (chap. 9);
- (viii) Revised programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 (A/C.5/43/1/Add.6) (sect. 27) ;
- (ix) Report on the feasibility of consolidating and co-ordinating all public information activities within the United Nations with specific **reference** to the financial implications **as** well as to the effectiveness of the Department of Public Information **as** the focal point for public information activities (to be issued) ;
- (x) Maintenance and enhancement of the role **of** all regional units;
- (a) **Evaluation and** follow-up on the efforts **made** and the progress achieved by the United Nations **system** in the field of information and **communication**;
- (xi) Report on the programme and **activities** of the Joint United Nations Information Committee: report of the Joint United Nations Information Committee at its fifteenth **session** (A/AC.198/1988/8);
- (xii) Implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-sixth **session** on the work **of** the Department of Public Informations report of the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1988/11).

6. Adoption of the report of the Committee to the General **Assembly** at its forty-third session.

14. The Committee on Information decided to establish a Working Group and to conduct further informal consultations through the spokesmen for the regional groups (Group of 77, Socialist States of Eastern Europe, Western Group and Japan) and China.

15. **Member States** that took part in the session as observers **were**: Austria, **Byelorussian** Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Czechoslovakia, **Gabon**, Hungary, Ireland, Jamaica, Sweden and Zimbabwe. A representative of the Holy See also participated as observer.

16. Representatives **of** the following United Nations **specialized agencies** were present: International Labour Organisation (**ILO**), Food and Agriculture **Organization** of the United Nations (**FAO**), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural **Organization** (UNESCO) and World Health Organisation (WHO).

17. In addition, a representative **of** the Letgue of Arab **States** and representatives of the following non-governmental organisations were present: Inter-American Press **Associa.ion**, International **Organization** of Journalists and **World** Federation of 'United Nations Associations.

#### **D. Other business**

18. At the **5th**, 10th and 13th meetings of the Committee, the Chairman announced that Hungary, Zimbabwe **and Ireland**, respectively, had requested membership to the Committee. The Committee, supporting those requests, decided to submit the candidacies to the General Assembly for approval.

### III. SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

- (a) Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information

19. Representatives of the following countries made statements in consideration of agenda item 5 (a.): Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belgium (speaking also on behalf of **Denmark**, Finland (on behalf of the Nordic countries), France, **Germany** (Federal Republic of), **Greece**, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom of **Great** Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America), Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ethiopia, **German** Democratic Republic, **Guatemala**, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, **Viet Nam** and Yugoslavia.

20. Many representatives referred to the positive trends of change they saw in the current international political environment and expressed the hope that those trends would contribute to a spirit of co-operation and consensus in the Committee's deliberations. A majority of delegations stressed that the restructuring of the Department of Public Information was to be undertaken in order to enhance information programmes and impart a higher level of efficiency to the Department in carrying out its mandate. At the same time, a large number of representatives regretted that 10 years had passed since the Committee had been charged with finding ways to contribute to the establishment of a new world information and communication order - recognized by the developing countries as the means to ensure free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information - and that little progress had been achieved.

21. Many members of the Committee supported the promotion and establishment of a new world information and communication order. They pointed to the imbalances that existed in the field of information. Advances in communications technology had exacerbated the gap between developed and developing countries. Several delegations emphasized the effects of information and communications in an interdependent world on economy, trade, culture and development, both on the national and international levels. Some delegations deplored the fact that information disseminated about developing countries was perceived from a perspective that was not always fair or accurate. It was reiterated that a new world information and communication order should not be viewed as a restrictive process but rather as a process aimed at enhancing information infrastructures and the flow of information among all countries on an equal basis. A number of delegations said that, in formulating objectives, it was important to take into account the diverse economic, social and cultural realities in developing countries. In supporting a new world information and communication order, several delegations emphasised that information could play an important role in fostering a climate of understanding among peoples of the world. Some delegates pointed out that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially the principle of sovereign equality among nations, should guide all activities in that field.

22. Delegations representing developed countries expressed their readiness to work and co-operate with developing countries to augment their media capacity and restated their commitment to helping those countries achieve economic, social and cultural progress.

23. Almost all the delegations expressed their appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information for her illustrative and comprehensive **statement** and her tireless efforts under admittedly arduous circumstances. One representative observed the precision of focus in the Department's activities as described by the Under-Secretary-General, including the maintenance **of** regional programmes, which reflected a conviction that there was no global audience. Many members of the Committee extended their full co-operation to the Under-Secretary-General in her efforts to fulfil the mandate of the General Assembly in the field of public information: some commended her for the able and dynamic stewardship she was providing to the Department. In that connection, several delegations hailed the informal briefings organised by the Department prior to the session as an effective dialogue on the implementation of the Department's information mandates. They thanked the Under-Secretary-General and the staff of the Department for that initiative, and hoped that such briefings would continue in the future. Several delegations complimented the Department on the attractive design and better readability of ~~the~~ **new** issue of the **UN Chronicle** distributed for their perusal.

24. Several delegations considered the Committee's mandate as very topical and agreed to discuss its fulfilment in the light of the new situation both in the field of international relations and within the United Nations **system**. Regarding its responsibilities, one representative noted that the Committee was at a crossroads, and that it should seek new approaches in reaching general agreement. Another representative proposed that the Committee's recommendations to the Department should be leading to concrete action and should be general **in** nature; the Committee should avoid transforming its documents into a long list of prescriptions difficult to implement. That proposal was supported by several other delegations.

25. One delegation voiced the idea of establishing a world information programme under the United Nations auspices to foster confidence among the peoples by ensuring balanced flows of objective information in all directions. Some representatives supported the idea.

26. Some delegations agreed with the view of the Under-Secretary-General that there was much confusion, misinformation and scepticism **about** the Organisation. Generally it was felt that a more efficient Department **of** Public **Information** would enhance the image of the United Nations. One delegation expressed concern **over** what appeared to be unreasonable criticisms of the United Nations by certain sectors with influence in recommending policy in certain developed countries. That delegation requested DPI to continue consultations with delegations on how to handle such matters. One delegation was intrigued by the attempt of the Department to use the Executive Media Services as a tool to give the United Nations a "human face"; another delegation felt that the continued financial crisis of the United Nations was probably a reflection on how that image had suffered **of** late - and exhorted the Department to play a central role in the restoration of the United Nations image by making better **known** its achievements and its role in creating peace. In that context, the **•** enth anniversary **of** the United Nations Declaration on the Preparation **of** Societies for Life in Peace and the UNESCO Declaration **on** the

Mass Media were mentioned. Some delegations urged the Department to strengthen its practical co-operation with Member States as well as with support groups within those States.

27. Proposals to enhance the image of the United Nations were made by one delegation: an international data bank with information on national mass media coverage of United Nations activities and an "Information Award", which would provide a yearly recognition for the best dissemination of information about the United Nations.

28. **Most** speakers recognized that freedom of information was a fundamental human right, which formed the basis of a just and democratic society and was enshrined in the relevant provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A group of delegations emphasized that this right was an essential principle that should be maintained in the search for a consensus. Freedom of opinion and freedom of expression implied the right to seek, to receive and to disseminate information and ideas, regardless of national frontiers. Many men and women from all continents had suffered and some had died to ensure that that right was recognized and accepted. Everyone should be able to benefit without obstacle or censorship from free information, from the search for knowledge in all its forms and from access to all points of view. In the preamble to the Universal Declaration, a world in which human beings were free to speak and believe had been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of mankind. These delegations had therefore noted with great interest that the Director-General of UNESCO had affirmed the role of that organization in promoting and preserving a free flow of information. Efforts to overcome existing imbalances and differences in the information capacity of developing and developed countries, as well as the efforts of the United Nations in that field, should therefore be based upon the principle of freedom of information. One representative recalled that General Assembly resolution 59 (I) of 14 December 1946, underlined that freedom of information requires, as an indispensable element, the moral obligation against its abuse. Many representatives emphasized that freedom of information and a free flow of information could not be attained until the infrastructure of information and communication in developing countries was built up, especially their news agencies. One delegation would have liked to see a balanced, two-way flow of information that was objective, accurate and reflective of reality, and had diversified sources. Another delegation warned that historically the guise of freedom of information had been used as a tool to aggravate tensions between nations, to promote war, escalate attacks on developing countries and **declare** war on national liberation **movements**, portraying their struggle as terrorism.

29. **Some** representatives pointed to the fact that, in the Committee's discussion of a new world information and communication order, the challenge was to find points that allowed greater co-operation without forcing anyone into unilateral positions unacceptable to the majority. It was therefore time to set the conceptual debate over the definition of the new order to rest. A vast majority of Committee members had acquiesced since 1986 in conceding to demands to amend the definition of the new order with the phrase "evolving and continuous process". This was a major concession by developing countries accorded in the spirit of accommodation and compromise, and it was hoped that reciprocity from the other side would not be found wanting so that a consensus recommendation could be reached. It **was** felt that the consensus reached at the one hundred twenty-ninth session of the Executive Board of UNESCO on the issue of "Communication in the service of humankind" might facilitate the work of the Committee in reaching general agreement.

30. It was pointed out that a **new** information **order** should not be equated with, nor was it synonymous with, news censorship or control **of** the press; and that the word "**order**" **did** not circumscribe freedom of the press and **media**.

31. Optimism was expressed **by some** delegations who **considered** that the United Nations was a natural forum **for** reaching agreements between nations **on** the needs **of** a new information and communication order, and that the issue should be a priority item in the work of **the** Department of Public Information. Its establishment would represent peace and security **for** the world, allowing nations to **know** each other through flows of information that would also contribute to strengthening multilateralism by creating a climate **of** confidence and trust and the understanding **of** each nation **in** the context of its **respective** socio-cultural conditions.

32. An urgent plea to safeguard the professional activities of all journalists - without ties, pressures or censorship - was **made** by one delegation, who also urged **that** journalists be protected against acts **of** terrorism and called for a recommendation to condemn the murder and kidnapping **of** journalists.

33. Many delegations praised the assistance provided to developing countries by UNESCO, which retained the central role in the field of information, and by its International Programme for the Development of **Communication**. They stated their support **for** the co-operation between UNESCO and the **Department of Public Information** and urged them to explore the multifaceted **means** to disseminate information and news, and **to** enable developing countries to gain access to **modern** communication technology. Some delegations underlined the **significance of** further contributions to the International Programme in order to achieve practical results. One delegation **regretted** that the meagre resources available to the Programme would not allow it to aid developing countries in building needed communication infrastructures. That concern was echoed by delegations who **saw in** the current growth and innovation in communication technologies **a** contributory factor to the existing imbalances in the flow of information, which remained under the **control** of a **few** industrialised nations.

34. One representative, favouring all efforts to **create** a freer, **more diversified flow** of information, stated his country's commitment to development co-operation and the establishment of communication networks in developing countries.

35. Another representative called for the need to understand better and demystify the political nature **of** the era of communications - dominated **by satellites**, computers, data banks and integrated networks - to which developing countries had limited access because of costs, lack **of** training and language problems. That made them dependent **on** developed countries for **information**, and a neo-colonial situation was so created. He asked the Committee and the Department not to ignore the implications of that reality and to intensify their work in favour of a better balance **of** information. **A few** delegations reflected that communications media must play a **more** active role in non-confrontation and non-intervention and made references to specific radio broadcasts. One delegation proposed that the Committee analyse the political nature of transborder communications, which he believed, constituted "export" services and as such should be regulated under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the International Telecommunication Union (**ITU**).

36. The expanded co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies was lauded by several delegations. One delegation was happy to see the Under-Secretary-General's participation in the recent meetings of the Broadcasting Organisation of the Non-Aligned Countries and hoped that, with the Department's co-operation, progress would be made in correcting current imbalances in the flow of information. Other delegations underscored the importance of the Department's co-operation with the Pool of Non-Aligned News Agencies and urged the Department to extend it to Eco-pool as well. Regional and subregional communications infrastructures had to be bolstered with a commitment to pragmatic measures, based on collective self-reliance. It was suggested that the Department monitor the meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement and those of its regional organizations since it could lead to a wider and better balanced system of information.

37. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the training programmes for young journalists and broadcasters organised by the Department. They also welcomed the proposed regional seminars, which would contribute to the establishment of communication infrastructure in developing countries - and called for the strengthening of those programmes.

38. Appreciation was also expressed by some delegations for the work of the members of the United Nations Correspondents Association in disseminating information on United Nations activities in their countries. They urged the Department to continue extending its support and all facilities to the Association.

39. Several delegations stated their support for the planned non-governmental organisations (NGO) and media symposium on the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace. One delegation expressed the hope that the anticipated world campaign for human rights, to be launched in 1989, would receive due attention from the Department.

40. The restructuring of the Department was generally viewed with favour by the delegations who saw the process as leading to rationalization, modernisation, heightened efficiency and a further improvement of the Department. Several delegations expressed their support for the efforts and new initiatives of the Under-Secretary-General. One delegation supported the Under-Secretary-General's decision to reorganise the Department within existing resources and urged her to ensure that available resources were used more effectively. The formation of a new United Nations Information Centres Division was seen as instrumental in the improvement of the quality of guidance and the co-ordination of activities of information centres. The new Dissemination Division, it was hoped, would contribute to a more timely distribution of United Nations information products. Recognising and supporting the rationale behind restructuring, one delegation expressed the hope that the issue of elimination of thematic units would be reconsidered by the Department. The Department's authority to cancel programmes, such as those mandated in General Assembly resolution 38/82 B of 15 December 1983, was questioned. One delegation expressed satisfaction that the anti-apartheid section would be retained in the new structure of the Department. Certain delegations expressed the opinion that the elimination of the anti-apartheid section would send the wrong message not only to South Africa but to the world. A few delegations expressed their inability to approve the process of restructuring until they had all information and assurances from the Department that reorganisation would not affect the delivery of mandated programmes. One

delegation said that it was unhelpful for a minority of delegations or regional groups to seek to have the reform process applied selectively or partially.

41. A few delegations questioned the **merger** of the Department's work on human rights with that on development issues in the new structure. They felt that human rights should have been placed with self-determination and racial discrimination. Otherwise, it could lead to an incorrect impression that emphasis would not be put on the coverage of all human rights issues.

42. Concern was expressed by several delegations as to the future of the Department's educational activities. The section previously responsible for those activities did not appear in the new structure, its functions being absorbed in the activities of the Communications and Projects Management Service, its focus and coherence seemingly diminished.

43. Reaction to the proposed multimedia approach for the dissemination of United Nations public information was mixed. **Some** delegations felt the approach could be effective. Others had reservations because many United Nations issues required consistent coverage that was beyond the scope of publicity campaigns.

44. Given the inadequate programmatic responsibilities and authority of the Bureau of Programme Operations in the new structure of the Department, a suggestion was made that the stability of the post of the Director be ensured and that the functions of the Committee Liaison and Evaluation Division be transferred to the Bureau.

45. The Department was exhorted by a number of delegations to take into account an equitable geographic **distribution** of posts in determining its overall activities and it was underscored that restructuring should not affect that basic principle, especially at higher levels. Although **recognizing** that the administrative structures of the United Nations were the prerogative of the Secretary-General, and urging the Committee not to constrict his flexibility to appoint subordinates, one delegation stressed that all regions should be represented at top levels of management, especially in public information, for it was necessary for those who prepared information to understand their audiences.

46. The approval of reforms by **some** delegations was conditioned to the assurance by the Department that restructuring would take into account the global character of the objectives of the United Nations and be consistent with the principles and mandates to which the Committee had committed itself. As one delegation put it, changes **may** be fundamental and far-reaching in their implications. Concerns were expressed regarding the Department's coverage in the field of **decolonization** and the production of audio-visual materials on non-self-governing territories; **some** delegations questioned the elimination of **specialized**, thematically oriented units, such as the Division for Economic and Social Information: others saw unprecedented **cuts** in functions and in programmes; cut-backs on procurement of equipment: post reductions: consolidation of information centres - all of which could undermine the ability of the Department to report on such specific issues as the scourge of apartheid, Namibia, the question of **Palestine**, the role of women in society and other matters relating to social development.

47. A number of delegations urged the Department to redouble its efforts in carrying out General Assembly mandates and to play an organizational and co-ordinating role as focal point of public information tasks of the United Nations



**system.** Several delegations **commended** the initiatives taken by the Department to fulfil those **mandates** under real financial constraints. Others commended the Department's activities on the **Africa** recovery programme **and encouraged** further development of those activities.

48. Most delegations stressed that the Department should continue to maintain editorial independence **and** accuracy in **documentation** and take account of **divergent** opinions where **they existed**. Current **financial** restrictions should not be used as an excuse not to **disseminate** information on main issues. Some delegations underscored the goal of the restructuring as the general improvement of the Department's activities in the interest of the international **community**. They stressed that content should not be abandoned for the sake of form, **nor any** priorities be put aside. One delegation said that what was needed **was** quality not quantity! the Committee should refrain **from giving** the Department too many mandates **that** it could not realistically **carry out**,

49. One delegation urged that resources be found to continue with the **publication** of the **World Newspaper Supplement**. The irreplaceable role played by the publication **Development Forum** in **providing** information focused on social and economic development issues of developing **countries** was underscored. Several delegations emphasised the need for a sound and **stable** financial basis for that publication. A request for explanation on the progress of **timelier** publication of the **UN Yearbook** was made by one representative, stating that **in spite** additional funds provided by a number of **countries**, including his own, to expedite production, the latest **available** issue of the publication was for 1983. He asked to know when problems causing delay would be solved.

50. Most delegations affirmed that the United Nations information centres should continue their crucial role as disseminators of information on the **entire** spectrum of United Nations activities, thus promoting the **image of** the Organisation. The centres played a **major role** in mobilising world public opinion for the **aims** and purposes of the United Nations and had a **major** function to fulfil in the development process. Their **role** and structure should not be reduced. They should intensify their exchanges with local **media**, educational institutions and **NGOs** in an effort to reach broader target groups in promoting better knowledge about the United Nations. One delegation felt that duplication between the functions of the United Nations information **centres** and those of **other** United Nations field **offices** should be avoided.

51. **One** delegation felt that the staff and operating expenses of the information centres were too high in proportion to resources **left** for information activities. It was suggested that directors of United Nations information centres should be interviewed at least once a year on **their** utilisation and need for DPI products and that activities of United Nations information **centres** and services should be evaluated periodically. In this connection, the practice of regional meetings with directors of United Nations information centres was encouraged.

**(b) Continuation Of the examination of United Nations public information policie and activities in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order**

52. The Committee heard the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information at the start of its 8th and 12th meetings, in which agenda items 5 (b) and 5 (c) were discussed. She provided responses to the questions raised on those items by delegations in the course of the debate.

53. The following delegations made statements in the discussion of items 5 (b) and (c): Chile, France, Finland (on behalf of the Nordic countries), German Democratic Republic, Germany (Federal Republic of), Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America and Zimbabwe. A representative of the League of Arab States, and the Director of the Liaison Office of UNESCO also made statements.

**(i) Report on the feasibility and financial implications of applying modern technologies for the collection, production, storage, dissemination and distribution of information materials, including the use of satellite facilities (A/AC.198/1988/2)**

54. Most delegations spoke in favour of introducing new technologies into the Department in order to make its work more efficient and to give users of its information as broad an access to it as possible. Several delegations welcomed the electronic information network that now linked some 80 users of United Nations information world wide.

55. Most delegations stated their support for the Department's efforts to use technology to increase its efficiency and timeliness in dissemination of information materials. Several delegations recommended acceleration in the process of linking information centres to Headquarters by electronic mail, though recognizing at the same time the Department's financial constraints.

**(ii) Report on the enhancement of co-operation with Member States in short-wave broadcast of radio programmes of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/1988/3)**

56. The resumption of some short-wave broadcasts with the co-operation of national broadcasting organizations in developing countries was praised by several delegations. Others questioned the suspension of short-wave radio broadcasts and consequent loss of large audiences.

57. One representative proposed that the Department seriously consider broadcast bridges - both live radio and television broadcasts linking audiences in different regions of the world in a candid discussion of issues of common concern. Such broadcast bridges via satellite had been successfully undertaken by several countries and could be an effective means of disseminating information about the United Nations.

58. The same representative urged the **Committee** to express its gratitude to **Governments** that transmit United **Nations** short-wave broadcasts free of charge. He also felt that the Department would have been more effective in submitting one report on **the increase** in dissemination of radio programmes and the **strengthening** of co-operation with Member States in radio broadcasting instead of the two separate reports (A/AC.198/1988/3 and 6) before the Committee.

**(iii) Report on the coverage of United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine (A/AC.198/1988/4)**

59. Several delegations praised the **work** of the Department in its efforts to disseminate information on the problems **in** the Middle East and **on** the **question** of Palestine. Several expressed their hope that the restructuring of the **Department** would not undermine the ability of the Department to **report** on those issues. One **delegation** felt that the proposed multi-media approach on priority items, such **as** the question of Palestine, could be effective.

60. One delegation was **of** the opinion that the Department's output in the **area** of publications on the question of Palestine could be improved. **For** the **1988-1989** period, only **two** new brochures and two **reprints** were planned and the staff costs projected were higher than those projected for information materials.

61. One observer expressed gratitude for **the** Department's co-operation with the League of Arab States, particularly in its **dissemination** of information on the question of Palestine. The mandates of the Department **were** many, which, he felt, was **a** sign of trust in the Department's ability to contribute to the correction of imbalances in the existing flows of information.

**(iv) Report on the situation regarding the staff of the Department of Public Information in posts subject to geographical distribution (A/AC.198/1988/5)**

62. Several delegations expressed concern about the Department's imbalanced geographical distribution **of** posts, particularly at senior levels, where responsibility lies for policy and substantive inputs in the direction of information programmes. Others stressed that **no** single country or group of countries have the monopoly on talent or expertise.

63. Some delegations noted that their regions - Africa, **Asia** and the Pacific, Eastern Europe - were at a disadvantage as reflected in the Secretariat's document. One representative questioned the merging of North America and the Caribbean as a geographical unity **for** the purpose **of** distribution of pos'. **Various** delegations expressed their hope that the Under-Secretary-General would take steps to correct the current inequities. Talent, creativity, experience **as** well as sensitivity to regional needs should guide her choice among candidates.

64. One delegation cautioned that the efficiency of the Department should not be equated with a smaller Department] another delegate suggested that equitable geographic distribution of posts should be flexible and should refer to the United Nations Secretariat as a whole and not to each department separately. Several delegations called for the Department to consider their national candidates in filling available posts while one delegation felt the Committee should be dealing with programmatic issues first, and concerns about filling vacant Posts in the Department should be relegated to a later stage.

(v) Report on the improvement in the distribution of taped radio programmes and curtailment of radio programmes of the Department of Public Information  
(A/AC.198/1988/6)

65. Delegations from developing countries stressed the fact that radio remained the main information medium in their countries and, considering the potential audiences radio can reach, seriously questioned the wisdom of suppressing such United Nations taped radio programmes as the ones in Hindi, Japanese, Filipino, Portuguese and Urdu. In that connection, concern was expressed by a number of delegations regarding stopping the production of several radio programmes. They felt that budgetary priorities should be reconsidered both in the light of the number of people those programmes were reaching and in terms of the guidelines in the revised medium-term plan for the Department, which clearly stated the objective of reaching a greater number of people in all regions.

66. One representative informed the Committee that the radio organisation in his country was affected by the cessation of the Department's taped radio programmes and had tried local adaptation of the centrally produced programmes. The experience was not successful. He urged the Department to take measures to resume the production of programmes temporarily curtailed.

(vi) Report on the reassessment of the effectiveness of the UN Chronicle  
(A/AC.198/1988/7)

67. Several delegations expressed their satisfaction at the Department's efforts to improve its outputs despite financial constraints and the difficult process of reorganization. The UN Chronicle was mentioned by a number of delegations as having improved in its presentation and readability: the last edition, specifically, was found more attractive, more balanced and impartial. One delegation felt that the new editorial board allowed the publication to reflect local interests and hoped that the language adaptation teams would ensure the continuation of that kind of flexibility and that the publication would be distributed in a timely fashion.

68. A number of delegations regretted that the readership evaluation of the UN Chronicle could not be completed and that time and money were lost in the process. A report based on appropriate methodology was requested for presentation at the Committee's next session.

(vii) Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989  
(A/43/6, chap. 9)

69. The Committee was informed that the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, at the beginning of its twenty-eighth session, had considered, *inter alia*, the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the programme on public information (chap. 9). The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee thereon are contained in paragraph 118 of its report to the General Assembly (A/43/116).

(viii) Revised programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989  
(A/C.5/43/1/Add.6, sect. 27)

70. Several delegations expressed their concern about the financial constraints under which the Department had to operate. One delegation, attributing a political origin to the United Nations financial crisis, warned that efficiency and

**rationalization** alone would not provide comprehensive and durable solutions to the problem. Extrabudgetary **funds had** been **used** by the Department successfully **before** and one delegation called for support **for the Under-Secretary-General** in her attempt to raise **money** for the production of specific information outputs, as long as they **were** consistent with the mandates of the Department.

71. One delegation suggested that **outside sources** could be asked to contribute to the successful programme of bringing young journalists from the developing countries to cover the forty-third **session of the General Assembly**. That programme was being shortened to only the first few plenary meetings **owing to** the lack of funds. It was felt that public and private institutions as well **as Governments** could be found **willing** to contribute to that valuable programme.

72. Another delegation expressed its support **for the Under-Secretary-General's** intention to develop closer co-operation with national **mass** media organisations and other national organisations.

73. A number of delegations, however, cautioned the Department **against joint** ventures with private companies who might use the United Nations prestige to **build a public image** for themselves. **They** voiced their alarm at **linking United Nations information** efforts to advertising programmes of corporations. They noted the assurances given that **private** funding organisations co-operating with the **apartheid régime** of South Africa would not be included among the Department's funders.

74. Several delegations **referred** to the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General that she would seek extrabudgetary resources for United Nations institutional and topical campaigns. They **strongly** advised the Department to exercise caution in dealing with private individuals and **business** institutions, with a view to ensuring strict compliance with the global character of the United Nations and the mandates **of the Department**. Another delegation, concerned with **the** Department's shrinking budget when services needed expansion, called on Member States to address the issue **in a wider** context of the United Nations future.

75. One delegation had no objection to the Department obtaining supplementary external **assistance for** certain projects, provided that the outputs **were in keeping** with the Charter and conformed to the **same** standards of impartiality and objectivity - giving weight to minority and differing points of view.

**(ix) Maintenance and enhancement of the role of all regional units**

76. Some delegations expressed concern **about** plans for a new approach in the Department, which **might** strip heads of regional units of much of their authority regarding the content of programmes produced by the units. The importance of maintaining the **integrity** of the regional units **was emphasized**. One delegation stressed the importance Caribbean States attached to the work of the Caribbean Unit. Another delegation also **emphasized** the importance that Arab States **attached** to the work of the Middle East and Arabic Radio and Television Unit. They **stated** that full programme delivery by the units should **be ensured**.

(c) Evaluation and follow-up on the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communication

(x) Report on the programme and activities of the Joint Nations Information Committee: report of the Joint United Nations Information Committee at its fifteenth session (A/AC.198/1988/8)

77. One delegation called upon the Committee, in its elaboration of recommendations for the Department, to keep in mind the Department's leading role in the Joint United Nations Information Committee,

78. Several delegations urged the Department to develop further its role as a catalyst and co-ordinator of all United Nations information activities. They welcomed increased efforts by the Department to identify and define target audiences more specifically,

79. Several delegations welcomed the Department's participation in international exhibits. One delegation suggested that the Department involve renowned artists and other international creative people in its promotion of United Nations themes. Another delegation felt that a successful design for United Nations participation in an international exhibit could then be economically replicated in other exhibits.

80. One representative defined the focal point role of the Department as an organizational and co-ordinating one, meant to ensure a most efficient use of limited resources in fulfilling General Assembly mandates,

81. One delegation reflected that it was the duty of all Member States to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organisation to alleviate credibility problems and called for the Department to evaluate its output constantly. One delegation commended the Department on some of its new outputs and, specifically, the television news programme UN in Action.

IV. **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-THIRD SESSION**

82. As indicated in paragraph 14, the Committee on Information established a Working Group and conducted further informal consultations through the spokesmen of regional groups and China. For these discussions Tunisia, on behalf of the States members of the Group of 77, presented draft recommendations, which appear in annex III. The Western Group and Japan submitted a working paper, incorporating proposed amendments to the draft recommendations presented by the Group of 77, which appears in annex IV. China proposed amendments to the draft recommendations presented by the Group of 77, which appear in annex V. The German Democratic Republic, on behalf of the Group of Socialist States of Eastern Europe, submitted amendments to the draft recommendations presented by the Group of 77, which appear in annex VI.

83. During the informal consultations conducted by the spokesman of the regional groups and China, a working non-paper was drafted, entitled "Draft recommendations discussed by the spokesmen for the regional groups and China and which could be the basis for agreement;" (see annex VII). A number of issues remained unresolved.

## V. CONCLUSION

84. The Committee on Information decided to submit the documents referred to in paragraphs 82 and 83 above to the **General Assembly** for further consideration.

### **Notes**

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session Supplement No. 21 (A/35/21), annex.

2/ Ibid., Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/36/21); *ibid.*, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/37/21 and Corr.1); *ibid.*, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/38/21 and Corr.1 and 2); *ibid.*, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/39/21); *ibid.*, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/40/21); *ibid.*, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/41/21); and *ibid.*, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/42/21).



## ANNEX I

### Statement by the Chairman of the Committee on Information at the opening of its substantive session

First of all let me say how pleased I am personally to be back among so many friends and colleagues on this difficult and often confrontational Committee, which has nevertheless provided so many of us with a remarkable human and professional experience. There are not many committees like ours in this Organisation, in which discussion and negotiation generate such a wide-ranging debate (covering the entire Organisation from the information standpoint) and in which the depth of our convictions, the wealth of our cultural diversity and the earnestness of our aspirations are so clearly reflected. Within these walls we provide a prime example of that one world with many and diverse voices which we would all like to build in order fully to achieve the universal character of the present international community,

At the opening of this session, I should like to say how delighted I am to have such distinguished fellow officers as Mr. Lagorio, the Vice-Chairman, (Argentina) and the Rapporteur, Mr. Haensel (German Democratic Republic). I sincerely regret that the Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Osman (Egypt) and Mr. Ahmed (Pakistan) are unfortunately unable to be with us. On behalf of the Committee I should like to extend to them our warm regards and gratitude for the vital contribution they have made to our work. However, I am certain that the officers who have replaced them will be able to contribute, as representatives of their respective groups, to the success of the Committee's work,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the new Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Armando Duque, whose broad experience in the Organization and great personal worth are well known to all of us. To his predecessor, Mr. Halim, who was an indefatigable colleague at all times let me express my appreciation and friendship.

On behalf of all of the members of the Committee I should like to welcome our Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, head of the Department of Public Information. She is performing her tasks with dedication, wisdom and energy and we greatly esteem her personal and professional skills. To Mrs. Paquet-Sévigny and to all the members of her Department, we renew our wishes for close and fruitful co-operation.

As in previous years, the Committee faces the major task of drafting a set of recommendations to help guide the Department of Public Information in both its general policy and specific activities,

The importance of the Department's activities for the success of the Organisation at a time such as this when we are witnessing a crisis of credibility and lack of confidence in our Organisation, calls for the careful consideration of all available information possibilities and the pursuit of all initiatives which could help to reflect the Organization's achievements. In that regard, I can point out that in Geneva I witnessed the strong impact which the excellent information provided by the Department on the Afghanistan agreements of 14 April had on public opinion and on the media. The information helped in a powerful way to enhance the image which we would all like the Organization to have in the eyes of the public.

Under the direction of **the** new Under-Secretary-General, the Department **is** in the **final** stages of a restructuring process aimed precisely **at increasing** the **efficiency** and impact **of its services and its information products**. We have all been able to appreciate the fact that, **in** spite of the Department's limited resources and the multiplicity **of** mandates and tasks entrusted to it, a **number of** new initiatives have been implemented with remarkable **success, inter alia**, on information about peace-keeping forces, on television production **through** the weekly magazine "UN in Action", which is **watched** by millions of viewers, and on the strengthening **of** field **off** ices, through the introduction of electronic mail which now links 25 field offices to Headquarters.

All these improvements, which constitute merely a fraction of our aspirations, should be expanded. It is precisely during this session **of** the Committee that we should, **in** close co-operation with the Department, try to improve and extend the scope of the following **initiatives: modernization of** equipment and technology) radio and television **programmes)** assessment of the **UN Chronicle** and **Development Forum**; the possibility of co-production agreements with the media and outside institutions, provided that they are fully **in** agreement with the purposes of the United Nations; and increased opening up to, and dialogue with, the major **media**. In particular, I should also like to invite members of the Committee to **review** the documents entitled "Proposed Revisions to the Medium-Term Plan for the Period **1984-1989**" and Revised Estimates of the Programme Budget for the Biennium 1988-1989, which the Committee is to review before they are referred to the **General Assembly**.

As to the **ongoing** programmes on such specific political questions **as apartheid**, Namibia and Palestine, I should like to reaffirm the relevance of the consideration of these questions by the Committee while at the same time emphasising that the Department must address those topics with all due objectivity and balance.

Within the Department's five major subject areas - peace, security and disarmament, specific political questions, self-determination, human rights and development - reflecting the general activity of the United Nations, I should like to suggest that, without prejudice to the attention those areas deserve, it would be useful at this time for the Committee to support the Department in **selecting and** highlighting those developments which would result in unquestionable success for the Organisation, thus enhancing its prestige among the public at large. I referred earlier to the major information effort regarding Afghanistan. I might now add, by way **of** example, the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development the campaign for the advancement of women and the fight against drugs, which are unanimously supported.

I should not like to conclude these comments on the Department without reaffirming the need for the Committee to emphasise, as it has in previous years, the values of professionalism, objectivity, editorial independence and balanced presentation of all positions, including divergent ones where they occur, which we believe should continue to guide the activities of the Department.

Another general area in which the Committee should also reflect and take action concerns the co-ordination of all the information efforts **of** the United Nations system, which is the specific subject of the reports on the feasibility **of** consolidating and co-ordinating United Nations information activities and the report on the Joint United Nations Information Committee. **My** experience in Geneva

where, **for** one year, I have been following the work of the **Organization**, has shown me the importance **of** such co-ordination, In that **regard**, the ongoing co-ordination efforts should perhaps be intensified in **order to** project an image of our Organisation which includes not only the bustling political atmosphere of New York, but also the valuable activity being carried out by the United Nations in **Geneva** (as well as in **Paris, Rome**, Vienna, Nairobi and Montreal), not only in respect of human rights, **refugees**, trade and development, but also through its specialised agencies such as **ILO, WIPO, WHO, WMO and ITU**, in areas which, while being highly specialised, are nevertheless **sometimes** of the greatest direct interest to the public,

Lastly, I will **refer** to the **major** general topic of international co-operation in information **and** communication, which is the subject **of** the general debate which will take place from 28 June to 1 July, during **which**, as in previous **years**, we will **have** to address the question of a new world information **order**, seen as an evolving **and** continuous process.

I believe that you are all well aware of **my** abiding interest in this subject, which is shared by many of your of **my** deep conviction that the debate focuses on two **fundamental** questions **of our time**, namely, the information inequality between North and South and freedom of information<sup>1</sup> and of my perhaps utopian hope that we will all make a supreme effort **to** replace a strategy which in UNESCO and in the United Nations has led **us** to a sterile and paralysing confrontation, **We** should establish, with the necessary imagination **and** flexibility, a new, fully universal general co-operation scheme, enabling **us** to **devote** ourselves with **renewed vigour** to the building of that one **world with many voices**, as delineated in the **MacBride** report,

The ideological confrontation over the establishment of a **new world** information order, which has continued all these **years has**, unfortunately, resulted - and this is only **one** of a number of profoundly negative consequences - in **obscuring** the **fundamental** truth which we should all be emphasising: that there is an inequality in respect **of information** between North **and** South, that the gap between them continues to widen owing to the rapid technological advances that **characterize** current **communications** development and that there is a pressing need for international action to redress the situation.

At the latest session of the Executive **Board of UNESCO**, which was held recently in Paris, **it was recognized** that, although it **was** not forsaking its part, **UNESCO was embarking on a** path of innovation, and that the **time** might have **come to** heed the lessons of experience and to explore the possibilities for a new strategy facilitating the attainment of the overall **objective** the Organisation had set itself, in conditions which would eliminate any possible misunderstanding.

In **my** opinion, any new strategy should be based upon two main elements! strengthening the current pragmatic approach, by renewed and generous efforts **on** the part of the entire international community so **as** to provide developing countries with human and material resources and technology in the field of information and communication (the logical fulcrum for this would be the International Programme for the Development of Communication of UNESCO); and, breaking with past practice, by reaffirming freedom of information **as** the fundamental value and inspiration for this **major** co-operation programme.

All efforts to preserve the cultural identities of our countries and to make our countries' voices heard in the international arena must go hand in hand with increased intellectual freedom and greater freedom of information, for these have always been closely related to the greatest scientific, artistic and intellectual achievements of mankind in all parts of the world.

Specific activities which the Department could implement in this area would include a number of activities in respect of which a variety of general co-operation arrangements could be worked out with UNESCO, since the latter plays a central role in this area. They would include training of journalists and information specialists in radio and television, regional and international training seminars, co-operation with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries and with the Broadcasting Organisation of the Non-Aligned Countries.

While the goal of reaching a general agreement is a very ambitious one indeed, as Chairman of the Committee on Information, whose work I so esteem and to which I wish all the best, it is my duty to ask all members not to lose sight of the main objective, which is to restore consensus in the Committee, and to show the imagination and flexibility needed to reach that goal or, failing that, to reach the broadest possible agreement which will certainly bring us close to such consensus.

## ANNEX II

### Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information

I would like, first of all, to **welcome you** and all other **members** of the Committee on Information to this tenth **session**. During the next two weeks, you will be **engaged** in important deliberations on a subject area that critically affects the effectiveness of the United Nations, I wish to **assure** you that I and my colleagues in the Department of Public Information will **make every effort** to facilitate the accomplishment of your tasks,

It was about one year ago that I was given the opportunity to appear before this Committee and, at that **time**, I had **just** assumed **my new position** in the United Nations. Since then, I have learned about the mandates given by Member States on the information question, studied **most** of the internal reports and evaluation **reports** prepared since 1953 on the performance of DPI on information related **materials** produced by other departments in the Secretariat. I have also reviewed the structure, functions and approach of the Department of Public Information, and **assessed and** thought much about how the Department could fulfil the enormous tasks **entrusted** to it by Member States, as well as in relation to the information tasks entrusted to other departments by a number of intergovernmental bodies. I have further examined the role of DPI in the whole United Nations family, **as far as** information is concerned.

Let **me** first start from **my** own perception of **some of the** characteristics of the United Nations. Because of its universality, the United Nations is the **most** global international endeavour the United Nations is probably the **most** complex system in the **world**; the United Nations is probably the **most** abstract organization of the **planet**; and the United Nations is probably one of the **most** under-financed organisations (15 cents a year per capita in 1987) and, at the same **time**, it has the **most** mandates in the world. On the other hand, the United Nations is not a supranational **Government**, it has no power except the power to **convince**; to convince the peoples of the world of the value of nourishing a vision of a **more** harmonious **world**; to convince through discreet and public **diplomacy**; and to convince through professional information services and communication campaigns with the goal of reaching **out to** the peoples of the world.

In the last 15 months, following the strong suggestion of the **Secretary-General**, I have talked to a wide spectrum of people from the staff, **delegations, media**, non-governmental organisations, including United Nations associations, educational institutions, parliamentarians and others from many countries and continents. I have visited 12 developing countries and 10 **industrialized** countries, 3 of which were without United Nations information centres. In each location, I **met** with officials from the foreign and information ministries, prominent media officials and journalists, members of non-governmental **organizations** and other United Nations officials. Last December, I met 45 broadcasters from developing countries and in the last 9 months, in 2 separate meetings, I **met** with 38 Directors of United Nations information centres, from Africa, **Asia**, Europe, the Middle East and North America.

As a result, from **my** interaction with these diverse groups of people, I have drawn **some** conclusions regarding the expectations towards the United Nations and its information services, their assessment of information **services** supplied by the

United Nations, and the action of the United Nations in the course of 1988 and beyond. To begin, even though expectations vary from country to country, I can assure you that expectations and curiosity are high and that the real needs are unlimited. Confusion about the United Nations and its role is enormous. Misinformation has proven vicious. Scepticism and doubt are prevalent in many countries, whether developed or developing, among civil servants, prominent media people, journalists and youth. People in the field of communications, international relations and social research conclude that the financial crisis is only a reflection of a credibility crisis. I suspected last year, however, that the credibility issue had not emanated from a challenge to the basic mandates of the United Nations. Now I am sure that this is the case.

Government officials, the media and non-governmental organisations understand that information implies the transmission of daily news and summaries of the week throughout the world by news agencies through the use of satellites, telephone, photographs, video and sound materials, and it is understood that this is essential. They even take it for granted. But they are also quite explicit in their requests for communication campaigns tailored in different formats for different media, delivered in a co-ordinated and timely fashion.

The questions put to me by people in the various countries that I have visited are not very different. Is it not the job of a communications department to make the United Nations involvement in multilateralism understood and perceived to be significant for our peoples? How can you transpose bureaucratic formulas into comprehensive communication programmes for distribution to large audiences? And how can you draw the attention of our population to sustainable development? Repeatedly I was asked! "Why don't you, why don't you? How can you? How can you?"

Many Member States from Africa, Eastern Europe, South America, the Caribbean and Central America even offered to me the use of their national media, and education systems, as testing grounds for integrated multimedia campaigns on political, development or human rights issues.

#### United Nations mandates and information mandates of the Department of Public Information

As I said earlier, I have carefully studied the mandates and I fully realize and appreciate that they encompass, as delineated in the Charter, all important issues of humankind: international peace and security, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, development and human rights. I am fully convinced that, in dealing with all these important issues, the United Nations plays a significant role in the quest of every human being to live in peace with freedom and dignity and to improve his or her life. It should be the objective of our information programme to inform as many people as possible of this important United Nations role and how it benefits the world.

I understand therefore that, as a result of the wide range of important issues dealt with by the United Nations, there is a multiplicity of mandates that Member States have adopted on the question of information. I also understand that Member States have established different subsidiary bodies to the principal organs of the United Nations to deal with issues. Examples include the Disarmament Commission, the Special Committee against Apartheid, the United Nations Council for Namibia, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,

the Special Committee **on the Situation** with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of **Independence** to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the **Committee on the Status of Women**, the **Commission on Human Rights** and the Committee on Information, which acts as the focal point that identifies all those issues which require an information component to be implemented by DPI.

There are **about 30** public **information mandates** adopted by the General Assembly every year, some of which are recurrent while others provide finite tasks to DPI. My Department incorporates them into our biennium budget **proposals**. Not all information programmes are, however, entrusted to DPI for implementation, but the Department will **maintain consistency in its work** with those implemented by the substantive offices dealing with the issues. Information programmes and budgets associated with these mandates are **scrutinized**, debated and agreed upon in the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination and the expert body **on budgetary matters**, the Advisory Committee on **Administrative and Budgetary Questions**, before being considered by ~~the~~ Special Political Committee and the Fifth Committee. I therefore take very seriously mandates that have been decided upon by the General Assembly and the **task** of the Department of Public Information, which is, with the collaboration **of** the substantive offices dealing with the issues, to implement the mandates entrusted to it as effectively **as possible**.

**When** one proceeds to think about the ways and means for implementing these mandates one realises the complexity of the task. The 30 **or so** themes imply more than 10,000 different activities to be prepared in New York and world wide, requiring an average of close to 4,000 hours of coverage of meetings, over 1,000 **hours** of video coverage, **servicing hundreds** of visiting broadcasters and hundreds of **NGO** briefings around the world, and, in many locations, millions of words written and adapted.

### **Financial resources**

**This** is a tall order **for** a department with such limited resources. In the communications **industry**, the proportion of resources that an organisation allocates to inform the public of its products and services - which are normally much less than ours -- is much higher than that provided to my Department. In the course of the last 40 years, the annual proportion of the budget of the **Department** to the total United Nations net budget has decreased from 12.7 per cent to 5.3 per cent. The financial difficulties faced by the United Nations should **not** obscure the fact that, with the existing staff, the Department needs greater operating funds to communicate **more** effectively with the peoples of the world. This, in **my** opinion, is not a minor issue because if **we** fail to increase the effectiveness of our information programme, we will **not** be able to strengthen support for the United Nations,

After studying the structure and the budget of the Department in 1987, I concluded that 75 to 80 per cent of the resources are being used to undertake generic programmes, and this includes about one half the budget **of** the field offices, while the total resources devoted to the four major groups of **issues** delineated in the Charter constituted only 20-25 per cent.

I would like to define the generic programmes to include the following<sup>8</sup>

**(a) Coverage of meetings:**

- (i)** Through print (daily **and** weekly summary records in **two languages**);
- (ii)** Through radio news (nine languages) via radio and telephone circuits and on tapes or **cassettes**;
- (iii)** Television **news**;
- (iv)** Television summaries in seven languages<sup>r</sup>
- (v)** Photos **of** meetings **and** events in **three** locations<sup>a</sup> Headquarters, **Geneva** and **Vienna**;

**(b) Institutional promotion<sup>8</sup>**

- (i)** Reports of the **Secretary-General**;
- (ii)** Speeches of the **Secretary-General**;
- (iii)** **Activities** of the President **of** the **General Assembly**;

**(c)** Institutional reference publications, including the **UN Yearbook** and **UN Chronicle**;

**(d) Services:**

- (i)** Servicing of meetings!
- (ii)** Co-ordination **of meetings**;
- (iii)** Distribution (pouch, mail, catalogues);
- (iv)** Services for **broadcasters**;
- (v)** Service<sup>6</sup> for **correspondents**;
- (vi)** **NGO** centres, **accreditations** of journalists and broadcasters, training programmes and workshops;
- (vii)** Co-operation with publishers!
- viii)** Co-operation with electronic medial
- (ix)** Visitors and public services;
- (x)** Public inquiries;
- (xi)** Internships.



These are, **as you know**, what specialists would call "**built-in overhead**". In producing coverage **materials**, which are important and **closely** linked to the activities of the **Organization**, we still do not control the final usage or its distribution. Furthermore, we **may not** be able to realise the Pull value of what the 25 per cent **could** produce on the topical programmes unless they are integrated into the programmes of the Department. For if we do not find a way to focus, design and deliver timely **topical campaigns**, using different **media** with different formats simultaneously, we will continue not being heard **on** specific topics that the United Nations stands for, whether it be **anti-apartheid** activities, development issues or human **rights**. An integrated approach to such issues **would maximize** the impact of the use of available **resources**.

In the autumn of 1987, I felt that there **were** three options that I could propose: the first was to withdraw **from** the **field**, and **in** this way we could **divert** 12 to 13 million dollars **in** order **to** build **on** the **mandated** topical issues and pay the full costs **of** modern delivery systems for our materials to reach a wider **range** of **countries**; the second **was** to seek an **increase** of 10 to 15 million dollars in the DPI budget to compensate for the lack **of** operational budgets **in** the field and to build up our mandated topical **programmes**; and the third was, within existing resources, to reorganize the Department so as to enhance the way in which the United Nations communicates with the world.

I have chosen the third option, **namely**, to **reorganize** the Department so as to enhance our **communications** with the world. The reorganisation seeks to achieve progressively the following goals!

(a) Establishing a multidisciplinary approach **among divisions** and **services** in order to enhance the intrinsic values of planning, execution and distribution of topical campaigns in all media, in a more coherent and integrated manner.

(b) Achieving a better equilibrium between news coverage, institutional public services and publications, on the **one** hand, and topical promotional campaigns, **publications** and electronic magazines on the other **hand**;

(c) **Standardizing** our **news** operation, coverage and delivery, **so** that **our** story becomes **one** coherent **message**, keeping regional unite for specially targeted accesses;

(d) Multiplying our audio and video formats, within the framework of **a** distribution plan related to a wider variety of broadcasters, **in** order to exploit to the **maximum** the use of the **basic** existing materials produced for **news**;

(e) Regrouping and streamlining **Rome** of the institutional projects, **so** that, with the same investment, we could multiply the formats and **usage of** print, slides and video materials;

(f) **Modernizing**, through **computerization**, the DPI communications management and systems at Headquarters and in the field, so that savings can **be** made and redirected to **DPI budgets**;

(g) Developing the capacity to arrange for fast graphic art work and printing, and gaining better control of our distribution system;

(h) **Strengthening the field through several measures, including evaluation, rotation and, if necessary, replacement of United Nations directors** of information centres, redefinition of field office **tasks, more stress on professional activities, closer communication with Headquarters and better co-ordination with UNDP and other United Nations agencies, as well as closer co-operation with national media and NGOs.** In this way our field plans become an integral part of the overall DPI plan and **programmes;**

(i) Integrating **extrabudgetarily funded activities** under **existing mandates** so that **eventually** all externally reported projects would become an integral part of our overall plans.

In **selecting** the last option, **which is the most demanding for management and for staff, I counted on the support of strong professional and experienced leadership at the senior levels.** This approach would help us increase credibility, internally and **externally, and provide the leadership to proceed through a difficult transitional process.** Let me, however, come back to this later.

In order to succeed in implementing this third option, which assumes no increase in regular **budgetary resources,** we will need to seek supplementary external assistance for institutional projects and for topical campaigns. This will **only be done upon the condition that it is consistent with our information programme and that it provides for a larger distribution capacity.** I am therefore planning to explore with **Governments, public or private institutions, or non-governmental organizations, ways and means to collaborate with them.** Let me cite **two such examples.** Firstly, we have **finalized** a co-sponsorship and **co-financing arrangement with a major newspaper agency to organize a symposium on the role of the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of world peace.** Secondly, we are finalising an agreement with a **Government for financing the production of video documentaries on United Nations peace-keeping and peace-making activities.** I would like to emphasise that any such support should be fully consistent and compatible with the **information mandates** laid down by **this Committee** and the General Assembly and should not compromise the United Nations as **the** multilateral institution of this world.

Institutional projects for which additional support is needed include the reorganisation of the guided tours, for adults and children, with specialised auditoriums employing modern **presentation techniques.** This would help to explain the United Nations and its **system, its mandates, financing, and its successes.** Our United Nations education programme, which would need to be greatly expanded to reach thousands of schools and public television **networks,** is another project that needs support. Our present budget is not able to cover the costs of these projects. Is it a reason for not doing them? **The world** is expecting it from us.

In the **same** context, I also feel very strongly about the critically important training **programme** for broadcasters and journalists from developing **countries.** Our proposed biennial budget **includes two 6-week programmes** for 16 participants at United Nations Headquarters. It is not enough. We also need to hold a series of regional seminars to respond to the compelling needs of **so many** developing countries in establishing more **effective** communication **infrastructures.** This would be one step to stimulate a better balance in the free circulation of information.

### New approaches

In line with the DPI restructuring plan, which was approved by the Secretary-General last autumn, I intend to adopt a number of new approaches and principles, some of which are expected to effect savings. Allow me to provide you with some examples. Since the Secretariat has two working languages, press releases have to be issued simultaneously in English and French, reflecting the exact same version. This requires only one language team of press officers to cover each meeting and have their work adapted into the other working language. This will ensure that the contents of the two language versions are similar. The organisational ramification of this is that we do not need to establish two full language teams, each of which is expected to cover every meeting. Instead, we need to establish two more or less equally equipped language teams, with only one covering a meeting. This would be complemented by smaller English to French and French to English adaptation teams. Furthermore, since the meetings of intergovernmental bodies generally have a cyclical pattern, the language adaptation teams could be requested to translate publications, such as the UN Chronicle and Development Forum. This arrangement would lead to savings, provided the scheduling problem could be resolved.

Another principle that I am introducing is to have our information materials adapted into many more languages than we have done so far, in order to reach a much larger portion of the peoples of the world. This requires, as one alternative, the building up of a language adaptation unit at Headquarters to produce materials in these many languages. Since there are many more important languages spoken in this world besides the six official languages of the United Nations, this clearly is not a feasible option. Another alternative would be to have adaptation done at the national level, and in this way we would be able to reach many more people without incurring the fixed staff cost. This would enable us to stretch our meagre resources to cover a much wider geographical area. We have already started doing this in some countries and will be testing it in other countries this year. We have found, however, from our limited experience that we are not able to proceed quickly since we have to adapt our programmes taking into consideration different audience interests and languages used in the regions.

What I consider to be the most important change in DPI will be our approach in formulating and implementing an effective communication and information programme. This new approach takes as a basis, firstly, that the issues dealt with by the United Nations are global in nature, and thus there are different target audiences in various parts of the world that have to be reached, and, secondly, that the different components of the information programme should be co-ordinated, not only in substance or content but also in timing, in order to achieve maximum impact. The aim therefore is to formulate and implement a comprehensive, integrated and co-ordinated programme aimed at as many target audiences as deemed necessary. This requires, in principle, a multi-media approach.

Let me illustrate this by using the example of our activity with the Centre against Apartheid in the formulation of the anti-apartheid information programme for the rest of the year. We all know that the repugnant system of apartheid violates all principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, thereby endangering international peace and security. We all agree with numerous General Assembly resolutions that this system should be abolished. The information programme on this issue therefore must be directed at several target audiences: the people in South Africa and southern Africa, people in other countries, people

in Africa and other developing countries, as well as people in the industrialised countries. As you can see, this requires a multi-media approach since different groups of target audiences need to be appropriately reached through different media. The languages used, besides those spoken and understood in the area of struggle, need to be broadened and multiplied in order to reach as wide an audience as possible in other countries to increase the level of international support for the struggle against apartheid. The contents of the different components of the programme should be adapted to the characteristics of the different groups of peoples, even though the theme should be strictly consistent with the mandates laid down by Member States. Finally, we need to multiply the ways that we can attract the attention of the public by creating media events, such as by using artists and other known personalities; radio and visual materials in different formats; joint efforts with other international organisations and institutions, and by working together with national media on adapting existing materials and developing new and appropriate approaches and formats,

This new approach requires a project manager as a focal point. This person would, in proposing a draft programme, continuously follow all developments pertaining to the issue, co-ordinate activities with colleagues from other substantive offices and DPI, take initiatives to identify the specific target audiences that have to be reached and the appropriate media to be used and follow closely the implementation of each activity of the programme,

Strategy planning or programming sessions will have to be undertaken to formulate an information programme. Colleagues from the different units such as the News Coverage Service, Publications Service and Electronic Magazines and Features Service of the Information Products Division; from the Information Dissemination Services and Institutional Relations and NGO Section of the Dissemination Division; and colleagues from the United Nations Information Centres Division would be assembled together to discuss and agree on the products and services to be produced and the schedules of production and distribution to specific target audiences. If the programme requires the contribution of senior officials of the United Nations, including the Secretary-General, colleagues from the Executive Media Service would also be included in the programming sessions,

The co-ordination in the programme formulation process could be done either by the Director of Programme Operations, who is also Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General, or by myself. Such decisions would depend on the extent to which the various divisions and services in the Department are involved. The Director of the Bureau of Programme Operations, as Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General, will have to ensure, however, that the programme is implemented as planned on a day-to-day basis. Should problems arise during this phase, he or she should take corrective actions in a decisive way. It should be clarified, in this context, that the project manager, who is organisationally located in the Communications and Project Management Service, is the manager of the project but not the manager of the different colleagues who contribute to the project. They are to be supervised by their respective directors. It should be further noted that each director has specialised tasks and no programme can be executed by one director alone. It therefore requires a collective - rather than an individual - approach among the various units within the Department.

As you know, professionals in communications are at the service of the mandates and not the reverse. In short, this is an operation that has to be carried out with precision and purpose. What use would a press kit have if it is

delivered to the media long after the event has taken place? What value would radio cassettes have if they reach broadcasters two months after production?

But the timely delivery of the materials to the users does not always mean the success of the information programme. We should measure its actual impact. These are consistent with the views of this Committee, expressed in the last few years. To maximize impact, we should identify the needs of the target audiences and tailor our products to their needs. This is a difficult endeavour and it will take some time before the Department can do this. The advantages are, however, clear. This should cut waste and increase the effectiveness of our programmes.

In summary, the new approach is meant to introduce a management system to deal with the international issues in accordance with the mandates. The approach should be able to resolve the questions of what to produce, to whom they are directed, when the materials should reach them and how much they would cost. It also requires DPI to work very closely with the substantive departments and offices entrusted with the issues and it provides the framework of using as many means as possible to reach different groups, timed in such a way as to maximize impact.

#### New organizational structure of the Department of Public Information

The new approaches and principles require a different organizational structure. The most significant addition is the creation of the Communications and Project Management Service, which assumes the crucial role of being the focal point of all the issues dealt with by DPI. As mentioned earlier, the project manager should initiate the formulation of the information programme pertaining to the issue entrusted to him or her, follow its implementation and all other relevant developments. It is a full-time preoccupation. In this connection, the project manager should be in close touch with the substantive offices within the Secretariat entrusted by Member States to deal with the issue concerned. Since I have been repeatedly asked to make a comparison with the past structure, I will do so. In the past DPI structure these focal points were located in different divisions: economic and social in the Division of Economic and Social Information, Palestine in the Press and Publications Division, anti-apartheid in the Radio and Visual Services Division, and Namibia in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General. But, more importantly, the focal points were not really the project managers. They did not have the responsibility of following through on the implementation of the various components of the programme, including the distribution of the materials, the timing of the various phases, the budgetary allotment and expenditures, media access and audience responsiveness.

A new function has been introduced in the Communications and Project Management Service, and this is the Communications Services, which is entrusted with the task of formulating, together with the project managers, an appropriate strategy for a programme. This includes the provision of writers and art direction. The close co-operation between the project managers and the communications experts is essential for the formulation of the plan of an effective information programme.

In the context of a multi-media approach, there needs to be co-ordination in the production of the various information materials. This was the underlying reason for combining what was formerly called the Press and Publications Division and the Radio and Visual Services Division into the Information Products Division.

I felt that the distribution functions, which were located in almost all Divisions in the past, should be consolidated in the Dissemination Division. Since this Division is also the departmental gateway to the public, it includes the Public Services and NGO and other institutional relations from the former External Relations Division and the services to the media, which were located in the Press and Publications Division and the Radio and Visual Services Division.

Since project formulation, the production of information materials and the timely distribution of these materials are all closely and tightly linked with each other in any information programme, this linkage has to be ensured through the co-ordination and monitoring by the Director of the Bureau of Programme Operations. This role is another new function in the new DPI structure.

As I mentioned earlier, the planned expansion of the functions of our information centres beyond the essential distribution and public service functions that they had before, necessitated the separation of the management of the Centres from the distribution and public services management functions. Since the centres are expected to be involved in the formulation, production and distribution of information materials in the field, the Information Centres Division is parallel to the Communications and Project Management Service, the Information Products Division and the Dissemination Division, but since it is not always involved in every information programme, it is not part of the Bureau of Programme Operations. Another reason why the Division reports directly to me is because we have to meet the requests of Member States to strengthen the role of the field offices, and there are many management systems that have to be put in place for the redefinition of tasks, regional planning, mechanisation, standardisation of guidelines as well as project development capacity. The Centres Division also needs to be considered as a focal point for Member States when national actions are required.

The amalgamation of the functions of the Executive Office, dealing with staff and budgetary resources, programme planning and evaluation functions, formerly performed by the Programme Planning and Evaluation Unit, and the servicing of the Committee on Information - all of which were performed by separate entities within the Office of the Under-Secretary-General - was considered necessary in order to assure adequate co-ordination and complementarity. Yet these are essential management tools for the head of the Department, and therefore they are all put together in the Division for Committee Liaison and Administrative Services to ensure the consistency between programmes and budget with the mandates conferred by Member States.

Finally, I believe very strongly that members of the Secretariat, including the Secretary-General and other senior officials are in the best position to explain to the peoples of the world the complexities of the issues before the United Nations, the potential role the Organisation can play in resolving these issues and its limitations. A full and objective discussion with interested audiences should enhance their understanding of the purposes and the role of the United Nations in contributing to the resolution of problems. Cognizant of this potential, I am establishing a system that would maximize the contribution of senior officials of the United Nations to the Speakers Bureau through the use of

the **Executive** Media Service, and the Public Service **Section** of the Dissemination **Division**. We need to **give** a human face to the United Nations,

In this context, I wish to recall certain developments that took place at the Committee of Programme and Co-ordination meeting a few weeks ago. In that Committee a major **concern** was expressed by a number of delegations and supported by the Committee as included in its conclusions and recommendations, that it would be essential to give prominence to three priority **activities** of the Organisation, namely, the anti-**apartheid** struggle, Namibia and Palestine. In accordance with the **Secretary-General's** intention that the new administrative structure of DPI be implemented with flexibility, as stated in **A/C.5/42/L.22**, and sharing the objective of highlighting the above-mentioned priority areas in an appropriate **manner in the organizational structure** of the Department of Public Information, he is formulating appropriate measures to meet this concern.

If one compares objectively the new and the old structures- of DPI, one would not see a radical difference. In the new structure we still have the functions **and** set-up of press and publications, radio, visual, distribution, **NGOs**, public **services**, information centres, evaluation, committee servicing **and** administration. There are **indeed** new functions that **have** been created and old functions that have been abolished. **However**, the major difference is the new approaches and principles that I am introducing with the belief that the United Nations information **programmes** can be more effectively carried out than they were before. The new DPI organisational structure reflects this,

**Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan and programme  
budget for the biennium 1988-1989 for the Department of  
Public Information**

It should be clear by now that the present approach of DPI requires that focus should not only be on what information **materials and services** the Department **should** produce, but also on how, by using an appropriate communication strategy, these materials are brought to **the** attention of the potential users. This **is** the **raison d'être** of the new programme structure that has now been **approved** by the Committee of Programme and Co-ordination. The objective of the sub-programme that deals with promotional services (sub-programme 1) is to promote greater media coverage and public awareness of its role in the **resolution** of the major issues before the United Nations. This should also increase **the** profile and **visibility** of the **United Nations** around the world.

The information materials and services (sub-programmes 2 and 3), which in the previous programme structure had been produced under the sub-programmes of coverage, information-in-depth, dissemination through interpersonal communication and **system-wide** co-operation, would still be produced. In addition, by **using** a more focused and coherent approach, we can achieve greater media **coverage** and public awareness of the United Nations activities, particularly with respect to the major issues.

The pace of the information and communication technological change, as you know, has been brisk and accelerating in the last few years. The capacity to generate **and** the speed in transmission of large quantities of information have been multiplied enormously during this period. This has enhanced considerably the power of information and ideas. In addition, this permit.6 co-ordinated promotional

**campaigns**, involving radio, visual and print materials, to be **more** feasible and effective. It seems to me, therefore, that *in the context of the revitalisation of the Department of Public Information*, we have to take full advantage of the potential available to us. This has accordingly been incorporated as an important objective in our proposed medium-term plan for the period 1988-1991.

Changes in information and communication technologies have also resulted in the possibility of reaching not only larger but also more specialized audiences. Another important objective indicated in our proposed plan is to define more fully the characteristics associated with our target audiences through communications research in order to be able to reach them more effectively.

Finally, effort will be made to increase the number of people we could reach by working more closely with members of the United Nations system: producing and distributing more information materials and services and increasing our presence in many more countries through other United Nations offices and by effectively utilising other media outlets.

I am happy to inform this Committee that, at its recent session, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination has considered and recommended approval by the General Assembly of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, with certain amendments.

The proposed activities in the programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 include the first building blocks of the progressive transformation processes outlined earlier and indicated in the medium-term plan. It includes the acquisition of one part of the necessary equipment and related costs and the strengthening of the links with the media and other disseminators. It has not, as mentioned earlier, included all requirements to obtain more modern equipment for the planning, production and dissemination of information materials and services.

Since the total appropriation for my Department is the same as it was for the last biennium, and since I am proposing to allocate resources for the establishment of the first building blocks I mentioned earlier, there needs to be a re-allocation of resources. I am determined, however, that the allocation of resources for topical or thematic projects should be assigned an increasingly higher proportion of our resources, whether from the regular budget or extrabudgetary. In the present set of proposals, my intention is to, at least, maintain the level of resources allocated to the topical issues during the present biennium.

After re-evaluating the proposals submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-second session, we have decided to propose the deletion of a number of outputs for the following reasons with some examples:

(a) Withdrawn by the co-producers for lack of support by participating organizations: two films on energy and mega-cities (2.12 (vi)) and the World Newspaper Supplement (2.17 (v));

(b) Obsolete technology: slide carousel with cassette tapes on the Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (2.7 (xi)) and on Africa recovery (2.12 (viii));



(C) No **positive** response from **redisseminators**; the **15-minute radio news programmes** in French Creole (1.3 (xviii)), Hindi (1.3 (xix)), Indonesian (1.3 (XX)), Japanese (1.3 (xxi)), Malay (1.3 (xxiii)), Portuguese for Africa and Latin America (1.3 (xxiv) and 1.3 (xxvi)), Somali (1.3 (xxix) ) and Urdu (1.3 (xxxii));

(d) **Adapted into** national or local languages in the field, such as Lingala (2.17 (ix) (22)), Thai (2.17 (ix) (32)) and Urdu (2.17 (ix) (34));

(e) Resources **redirected** to produce outputs in similar area: photo sheet on the latest development in South Africa (2.10 (v)) to be replaced by programme of cultural boycott in support of **anti-apartheid** (new 1.4 (ix)); photo display set on Africa **recovery** (2.12 (vii)) to be substituted by **publicity** for the **Secretary-General's** Advisory Group on Financial Plans for Africa (new 1.6 (xii)) and information kit on the **Secretary-General's** report on the mid-term evaluation of the Africa Recovery Programme (new 1.6 (xi));

(f) Outputs incorporated into existing programmes: the **15-minute radio news** programme in English entitled "**The World** in Review" into **Scope** (1.3 (xii)) and the **30-minute** French radio program "**Tour d'horizon**" into **Perspectives internationales** (2.17 (ix) (15));

(g) Outputs **not** considered cost-effective; the photo wall-sheets on Energy (2.12 (x)), World Weather Watch (2.12 (xii)) and International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (2.16 (x));

(h) Deleted in order to redirect resources for **new activities**: 5-minute video games on Africa recovery and development (2.12 (ix)) and energy (2.12 (xi)); **30-minute** video disks on the Law of the Sea (2.14 (iii)) and Transport and Communication Decade (2.10 (xiii)); and the **16-page pamphlet** on the results of the 1987 **Conference** for the Promotion of International **Co-operation** in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (2.16 (i)).

It is proposed that the deleted outputs be replaced by new activities. Some of the **new** outputs proposed are an information kit on the work of the United Nations in the field of peace-keeping and peace-making (new 1.3 (vi)); one-hour video-docu-drama about Namibia (new 1.4 (xiii)); a short video or a public service announcement using **puppets illustrating** the theme of racial discrimination (new 1.5 (xi)); **publicity** programme for the International Day for Fight against Drugs (new 1.6 (x)); **media** events to be organised by the global network of United Nations information centres and **services** to highlight the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (new 1.6 (xiv)); co-production of a prime-time television series for children (new 1.6 (xxiii)); **Southern Africa News**, which is a weekly 3-5 minutes radio news programme (new 2.3 (iii)); **UN in Action**, which is a weekly 3-5 minute television magazine (new 2.4 (ii)) **Development Magazine**, which is a series of 30-minute television programmes (new 2.4 (iii)) and a 15-minute television **programme** summarising the activities of the United Nations for the years 1988 and 1989 (new 2.4 (v)).

Besides the final outputs, new intermediate **activities** are **proposed**, for example, the comprehensive campaigns for major issues (new 1.1 (ii)); communications support to the **activities** of the Secretary-General and senior staff and to increase awareness of the role of the United Nations in multilateral diplomacy (new 1.2 (i)) ; **developing** a system that would ensure consistency of style

and signatures on United Nations products (new 1.2 (ii)); developing parameters for systematic assessment of audience perceptions and needs (new 1.2 (iii)); revitalizing the Speakers Bureau (new 3.4 (iii)); and establishing a briefing programme for newly appointed UNDP resident representatives who are to assume a director's position at a United Nations information centre at the same time and place (new 3.5 (iii)),

If the Committee finds it useful, I shall be very glad to provide a set of tables containing more comprehensive information on the proposed activities that would remain unchanged, be reformulated and deleted, and those that would be new.

In the course of the next 12 months, I plan to undertake an evaluation of our institutional products and services, such as our publications (UN Yearbook, UN Chronicle, Development Forum, Africa Recovery), guided tours, the distribution and media access and the data bank services, with a view of improving their quality further and reaching a wider audience. I hope the Committee could provide further guidance next year based on the evaluation studies we will have conducted at that time. We shall constantly endeavour to extend our outreach to acquaint more and more people with the role of the United Nations in the resolution of the major world problems.

Let me at this point first enumerate to you some of the programmes that we have started in the last 12 months, despite the fact that the reorganisation of the Department has not been completed:

(a) In collaboration with the Secretary-General's Office, we have started to formulate information programmes to provide better international focus on the role of the United Nations in the peace-making and peace-keeping area. It began with the Secretary-General's speech before the Institut Universitaire des Hautes Etudes Internationales at Geneva, and was followed by pre- and post-meeting coverage of the signing of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan. This important event helped the Organisation gain broad exposure and, under the new DPI structure, we were better prepared to maximise its informational importance. As mentioned earlier, we are, with external support, in the process of organising a major symposium on the role of the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of world peace, to be held in September, and the production of two documentaries on peace-making and peace-keeping, to be ready for the occasion. The projects include the production of video cassettes for international distribution to media and centres, and world-wide coverage of the symposium before and during the event. Pre-launch promotion and screenings for the press are being considered. It will mark the first time that the United Nations goes public with peace-making and peace-keeping videos. On the same theme, we are planning, with the co-operation of the DPI Non-Governmental Organisation Executive Committee, the annual DPI conference for NGOs in September before the opening of the forty-third session of the General Assembly. The conference will also concentrate on the topic of conflict resolution, peace-keeping and global security. Eight hundred NGOs are expected to attend.

(b) Besides the regular audio and visual materials normally produced, we have had planning sessions with colleagues from the Centre against Apartheid to formulate campaign programmes. We have gained access to very prestigious television shows, where our story was seen by hundreds of millions of viewers. We have assisted in the planning of such projects as the Art against Apartheid exhibit; the participation of the cast of the musical "Sarafina" in the

**commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;** preparation of a film vignette for the twenty-fifth anniversary meeting of the Committee against **Apartheid;** and **press,** radio and television **coverage of numerous** events at Headquarters and abroad, including the Latin American seminar on the role of the **mass** media at Lima, **Activities ongoing or** planned in **conjunction with** the Centre and the Council, include **organization** of a travelling exhibit on **apartheid,** preparations for the meeting on the cultural **boycott** of South **Africa** and coverage of the Regional Conference of African Students against **Apartheid.** Once the new DPI organisation is in place, we will formulate a more complete audio-visual programme, including activities in the field, for the rest of the biennium. I must admit that at this point we are still having difficulties in the production and distribution of our **anti-apartheid** radio magazines, but we shall renew our attempts to obtain the **co-operation of more radio** stations to **air** our programmes, particularly with regard to short-wave **broadcasts.**

In this context, since the start of 1988, the free-of-charge short-wave broadcast **has been** expanded to include news in **English** to North America **and** the **Caribbean region** by Radio for Peace International in Costa Rica, and news in Spanish to Latin America and to Europe by La Voz de los Andes in Ecuador. A daily dispatch and weekly programme in Spanish is sent to Costa Rica and neighbouring countries by Radio **Nacional** of Costa Rica. **Weekly news** is sent in Spanish to the Americas and Caribbean by Organisation of American States Radio and Radio for Peace International.

(c) A co-ordinated, multi-media campaign, with a project manager in the Communication and Project Management Service as a focal point working closely with the Council for **Namibia,** is being implemented. Some elements includes radio and **press** coverage of the seminar at Istanbul on Namibian **independence;** writing, revising and updating numerous **publications,** including **Namibia Trust Betrayed;** and **negotiating with the** British Broadcasting Corporation about a documentary on the **Namibian** struggle for independence.

(d) In line with the major priority assigned to Africa's economic crisis both by the Secretary-General and the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, DPI, with support from other agencies, **launched** a major effort in the beginning of 1987 to keep Africa's economic crisis in full view of the **media and** therefore the international community. Despite the many constraints of the last **year,** we carried out an intense campaign on the multi-media front, producing **publications,** press kits, pamphlets, television and radio programmes, and undertaking a host of other activities. I would like to mention here three of our projects, among others, that have been particularly **successful.** DPI has produced the bi-monthly **Africa Recovery** publication, which became the first United Nations publication to **receive** the prestigious World Hunger Media Award in December. It reports on major developments on the economic and social front, and provides background material on key issues. Among its recipients are 3,000 print and **broadcast journalists** in Africa and donor countries. We have also produced two multi-media press kits, which included **electronic video** press releases and graphic materials ready for reproduction by the print media. **A third one is planned** for the Secretary-General's mid-term report to the General Assembly on the United Nations **Programme** of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. Finally, in the last 11 months we have taken the responsibility for **organizing media** coverage, including attendance by international journalists, for the two international conferences organized by the Economic Commission for Africa at Abuja, Nigeria, and at Khartoum. A staff member was also sent to the

conferences to act as conference spokesmen. The results **speak** for themselves1 the **coverage in the major** international media resulting directly from the **efforts listed above has been exceptional and has** played a **central** role in keeping **alive** international concern about the African **economic crisis**,

(e) The Department **is** in the process of developing a comprehensive information strategy **on** issues related to **women**. Nevertheless, some **new activities** that have been undertaken in the last few months have **been** well received. In particular, the world-wide **distribution of a** bulletin and flier on 8 March, International Women's Day, coupled with **a release from the Secretary-General** calling for action on women's issues, **received** favourable **NGO response and press coverage**. **In addition, some of** the Department's more successful **activities** developed during the United Nations Decade for Women, which **ended** in 1985, such as the weekly **radio programme** on women, have been continued. The Department will follow up on the initial consultations that **have** been held with the **Branch** for the Advancement of Women at Vienna to **develop** a more comprehensive strategy, **better to** encompass the priority themes of the Commission on the Status of Women until the year 1990.

(f) **During the past eight months, and** for the first time, a multi-media public information **programme on human rights** has **been** developed by the Department, in **co-operation with the Centre for Human Rights at Geneva**. Taking **advantage of the opportunity** offered by this year's fortieth anniversary **of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, the Department's programme focuses **on** the importance of the Universal Declaration as the international standard by which the achievement of human rights is measured, **and the need** for all people to recommit themselves to its principles. Its unifying theme is "People only live full lives **in** the light of human rights".

This multi-media **campaign was** launched last year on 10 **December, Human Rights Day**. It **seeks** to mobilise non-governmental organisations in support **of** the fortieth anniversary, and to alert the news media to United Nations activities in the field of human rights. The information strategy has **been designed** to extend beyond the fortieth anniversary **year** and should the **General Assembly** endorse the idea of a World Human Rights Campaign to be launched in 1989, the Department's public information campaign would **encompass this**,

(g) **We have** started the process **of** strengthening the field **offices** by linking 25 of them through electronic mail with Headquarters. **We** should accelerate the process. I am sure that **Governments** could help **us** not only with better **rates for** the lines but also in our attempt to accelerate the **modernization** of the field offices to enable them to serve the host countries better. In addition, we have **established** a system of rotation **among** centre directors and formulated, together with the Office of Human Resources Management, clear guidelines **for** their appointment. In the next 12 months, 21 **more Directors will** be due **for reassignment**.

(h) Our training **programme** in public speaking, undertaken with the support **of** the Office of Human Resources Management, **has** been extremely well received by 30 senior officials, including 20 Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant **Secretaries-General**, and 50 middle managers. With over 200 more registered for future sessions and consistently **positive** feedback from senior officials and staff, **this programme** has also stimulated interest from outside organisations and **institutions** in speaking engagements for United Nations officials. In this regard, **we are launching a monthly** calendar of speakers' engagements and preparing a **number**

of core texts for speakers, As well as audio-visual Aids And guidelines for television presentation,

The entire United Nations system is benefiting from the speakers' training programme, which DPI is sponsoring with co-operation from the Office of Human Resource Management. There is also a need to organize programmes at other United Nations offices and for field staff, who are frequently called upon to speak to the public.

(i) We have changed the UN Chronicle significantly. I would still need to have access, for a few months, to special expertise in establishing a mid-term editorial strategy for the whole portfolio of publications, so as to increase readership And reduce production and promotion costs.

(j) Since September we have launched a new weekly television magazine of 3 to 5 minutes duration on different United Nations topics, which is shown in 100 countries every week, reaching hundreds of millions of viewers.

(k) Recently, with the assistance of a number of national radio and non-governmental organizations we have been able to expand the existing adaptations of United Nations radio programmes in local languages. Examples include: Urdu by the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation! Norwegian by the United Nations Association of Norway and Dari and Pashtu by Radio Afghanistan.

(l) We have introduced a video summary of the year, The 14-minute video was presented to the correspondents in mid-December And was shown in 86 countries after 28 December, again reaching hundreds of millions of viewers.

(m) We should be able to develop Another series of television programmes on development issues; one on external debt and another on African development are projected as pilots. We know that we can achieve this, with a comparable success.

(n) In order to bring a better comprehension of the world media environment, we are completing media profiles of: All countries where we have information centres. This should be ready at the end of June, to be followed by a cross-check of all data with the field. We could perhaps publish it this year And make provisions for its periodic updating. This information would, Among other things, help us to identify countries that could benefit the most from training programmes in broadcasting.

There remain three areas of important DPI related activities that will require careful thought And examination. Those are training of DPI staff, An electronic data bank service and the question of the involvement of DPI and other agencies and programmes of the United Nations system in international exhibitions. It is my hope, in the coming months, with the guidance of the appropriate intergovernmental and inter-agency bodies, to address those issues and to reach solutions that will result in more effective communication abilities for the Organization.

It is essential for me to elaborate, as comprehensively as possible, the perspectives I have gained in the past 12 months on the role of information in the reform of the United Nations And how I propose to maximize the contribution of DPI to achieve its objectives.

Since DPI is establishing its news programmes and evaluating the programmes that are being continued, such as publications, radio programmes and visitors service, guidance that this Committee could provide my Department would be very much appreciated. I should also be very happy to report and make proposals to the Committee next year on issues of interest in the continuing dialogue between the Committee and DPI.

In conclusion, I would like to apologize for the length of my statement today. However, I thought that it was essential to present, as precisely as possible, the activities of DPI during the last year and my views as to how we can maximise the Organization's information activities.

Please accept my very best wishes for a fruitful and productive session of the Committee. With your support, and that of DPI staff, I am confident that we have all the elements needed to promote a better awareness of the aims and activities of the Organization.

Draft ~~recommendat~~behalproposed by Tunisia on \_\_\_\_\_ f  
of the States members of the Group of 77

The Committee on Information, in coherence with previous resolutions of the General Assembly relating to information and based upon its mandate as contained in resolution **34/182** of 18 December 1979, submits the following recommendations to the General Assembly:

1. All countries, the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned should co-operate in the establishment of a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process, and based, inter alia, on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information guaranteeing diversity of sources of information and free access to information and, in particular, the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communication, as the principle of sovereign equality among nations extends also to this field, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding, enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life and promoting human rights, understanding and friendship among all nations. The ongoing efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural **Organization**, which retains the central role in this field, to eliminate gradually the existing imbalances in the field of information and communication and to encourage a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information in accordance with the relevant consensus resolution of that organisation should be reaffirmed.

2. Fully aware of the important role that the media world wide can freely play, particularly under the present situation, it is recommended that:

(a) The mass media should be encouraged to give wider coverage to the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, the efforts of the developing countries to achieve economic, social and cultural progress;

(b) The United Nations system as a whole should co-operate in a concerted manner, through its information services, in promoting a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system in all its endeavours, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the General Assembly resolutions with particular emphasis on the right of self-determination, the elimination of all forms of racism, aggression, foreign domination and occupation in order to create a climate of **confidence**, the strengthening of multilateralism and the promotion of the development activities in the United Nations system;

(c) All countries should be urged to extend assistance to journalists for the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and to ensure respect **for** their physical integrity.

3. Aware of the **existing imbalances in the international distribution of news**, particularly that affecting the **developing countries**, it is recommended that **urgent attention should be given to the elimination of existing imbalances by, inter alia, diversifying the sources of information and respecting the interests, aspirations and socio-cultural values of all peoples.**

4. The United Nations **system as a whole**, particularly the United Nations **Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**, and the developed countries should be urged to co-operate in a concerted manner with the **developing countries** towards **strengthening the information and communication infrastructure in the latter countries and promoting their access to advanced communication technology, in accordance with the priorities attached to such areas by the developing countries, with a view to enabling them to develop their own information and communications policies freely and independently and in the light of their social and cultural values**, taking into account the principle of **freedom of the press and information**. In this regard, support for the continuation and **strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries** should be provided.

5. The Committee on Information takes note with appreciation of regional efforts, especially *among* the developing countries **as well as** co-operation between developed and developing countries to develop further the **media infrastructure in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information, with a view to encouraging a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information**.

6. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, **which provides that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and article 19, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, should be recalled.**

7. The **relevant paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 59 (1) of 14 December 1946, in which the Assembly stated, inter alia, that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, must be reiterated.**

8. Reaffirming the **primary role that the General Assembly is to play in elaborating, co-ordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and activities in the field of information, the Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that the activities of the Department of Public Information, as the focal point of the public information tasks of the United Nations, are strengthened and improved, keeping in view the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the priority areas such as those stated in section III, paragraph 1, of General Assembly resolution 35/201 of 16 December 1980 and other pertinent resolutions of the Assembly and the recommendations of the Committee on Information, so as to ensure an objective and more coherent coverage of, as well as better knowledge about the United Nations and its work. It is recommended that the Secretary-General ensure that the Department of Public Information!**

(a) Co-operate **more regularly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, especially at the working level, with a view to maximizing the contribution of the Department to the efforts of that Organization**



in further promoting the attainment of a **free** flow and a wider and better balanced **dissemination of information**)

(b) Strengthen its co-operation with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, with the News **Agencies Pool** of Non-Aligned Countries, **Eco-pool** and the **Broadcasting Organisation** of Non-Aligned Countries as well as with **intergovernmental** and regional organisations and with the news **agencies** of the developing **countries**. In this regard, the Department of Public Information **should monitor, as appropriate,** important meetings of the Movement, **in** particular its summit meetings, as well as of **intergovernmental** and regional organisations, **as this constitutes a concrete step towards the promotion of a wider and better balanced dissemination of information;**

(c) Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities in the field of human rights, decolonisation, the **elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and foreign occupation**)

(d) **Give** the widest **possible** dissemination of information pertaining to **acute** world economic problems in general, and in particular, to the severe economic **difficulties** of the least developed countries and the need for **strengthening** the international **economic** co-operation **aimed** at resolving external debt problems of **developing countries;**

(e) Do its utmost to disseminate widely **and publicise** the United Nations Programme of Action for **African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990** and the tremendous **efforts of** the **African** countries **towards recovery and development as well as** the positive response by the international community to **alleviate** the serious economic situation prevailing in **Africa;**

(f) **Continue** adequate coverage **of** the **World Disarmament Campaign;**

(g) **Disseminate** adequately **and** accurately, in conformity with relevant United Nations **resolutions** on the question of Palestine and the situation in **the** Middle East, information relating to the struggle of the Palestinian people, **particularly** its current uprising, and of the Arab population in the Palestinian **and other Arab** territories **occupied** by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, for the attainment and exercise **of** the their inalienable national rights, and to report **thereon** to the Committee **on** Information at its substantive session in **1989;**

(h) Strengthen its activities **and** dissemination **of information on** the policies and practices of **apartheid,** giving due attention **to** the unilateral **measures and official** censorship imposed on the local and international **media** with regard **to** all aspects of **this issue** and to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in **1989;**

(i) Further intensify its efforts in order to alert **world** public opinion to **the** illegal occupation of Namibia and to continue to disseminate adequately **and** accurately, with the full **assistance** of the United Nations Council for Namibia, and the United Nations **system as a whole,** information relating to the struggle of the oppressed people **of Namibia** for self-determination, national independence and **freedom** as well as to the need for the full and speedy implementation of the United Nations Plan for Namibia;

(j) **Continue** adequate coverage **of** the United Nations activities pertaining to the **situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories]**

(k) Further **cover** adequately and with impartiality the **activities** of all **United Nations** **peace-keeping operations**, in view of the **paramount** importance of such operations for the **maintenance** of international **peace** and **security**;

(l) Continue to **disseminate** information **concerning** the **United Nations** **resolutions** on terrorism in all **its** forms, including resolutions **40/16** and **42/159**;

(m) **Strengthen its** informative programmes relating to women and their role in **society**;

(n) **Strengthen its coverage of** the **efforts** made by the **United Nations system** and Member **States** in their **campaign against illicit** trafficking of narcotics and drug abuse.

9. Taking into **account the present** international situation, the Department of Public Information should **continue its efforts** in promoting **an** informed understanding **of the work and purposes** of the **United Nations system among the** peoples of the world **and to strengthen the image of the United Nations system as a whole**. In **this connection, it is** recommended that the Secretary-General **ensure** that the **Department of Public Information**

(a) Continue to maintain **consistent** editorial independence and **accuracy** in **reporting** all material it **produces, taking necessary** measures to **ensure** that its output **contains objective** and equitable information about issues before the **Organization, reflecting** divergent opinions where they occur)

(b) **In the context of the review of its role, performance and method of work, continue** to explore the **feasibility** of applying modern **technologies** for the **collection, production, storage, dissemination and distribution** of information materials, including the **use** of satellite facilities and report to the Committee on **Information at its subsequent session in 1989 with regard to its effects on prevailing arrangements**;

(c) **Consider** expanding the programme of telephone **news** bulletin6 that **are paid for by its users**;

(d) Continue **its co-operation with those countries that have expressed readiness to assist** the **United Nations** in **resuming** the short-wave **broadcasts** through their **respective** national networks **free** of charge and to encourage expansion of such a type of co-operation with those developed and developing countries with **recognized** capabilities in this **field**;

(e) Take **adequate measures** to resume the taped radio **programmes**, which it temporarily curtailed, **bearing** in mind the objective of their effective utilisation and maximum audience impact and report on this matter to the **General Assembly** at **its forty-third session**;

(f) Continue **its** annual training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries!

(g) Extend all **assistance** to educational **institutions** of Member States and continue to **organize seminars** for educators and education policy makers;

(h) In view of the proposals of the Department of Public Information to eliminate certain programmes, the Secretary-General is requested to stop any action on the proposed elimination and to submit a comprehensive report on the matter to the General Assembly at its forty-third session;

(i) The Department of Public Information should guarantee daily coverage of all United Nations meetings through issuance of daily press releases and weekly news digests in the working languages, reflecting the views of all delegations with accuracy and objectivity. It should also continue to co-operate closely with and provide assistance to members of the United Nations Correspondents Association, taking into account their needs and requirements, especially in the areas of press releases, which provide them with necessary raw material for adequate reporting and also through press conferences and briefings;

(j) The Department of Public Information should be requested to use the official languages of the United Nations adequately in its documents and audio-visual documentation and to make balanced use of the two working languages of the Secretariat;

(k) The Department of Public Information should ensure timely distribution of its material to subscribers and to United Nations information centres.

10. The Secretary-General is urged to continue his efforts to secure sound and stable financial basis for the Department of Public Information to produce timely its publications, particularly Development Forum, United Nations Yearbook, UN Chronicle, Africa Recovery Report and World Newspaper Supplement, and to ensure that they retain their editorial policy of intellectual independence and reflect adequately the United Nations activities, and to submit a report thereon to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1989,

11. The unique function of the United Nations information centres, recognised as one of the most important means of disseminating information about the United Nations among the peoples of the world, should be enhanced. In this regard, United Nations information centres should intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local media information and educational institutions and non-governmental organizations recognised by the Economic and Social Council in a mutually beneficial way and arrange for constant evaluation of its activities in this regard. Every effort should be made to establish close co-ordination with other field offices of the United Nations system, particularly those of the United Nations Development Programme, in order to avoid duplication of work, taking into account the functional autonomy of the United Nations information centres. The Department should ensure open and unhindered access by all people to all United Nations information centres and to all materials distributed through the centres. It is also urged to accelerate the process of linking the remaining United Nations information centres that have not been linked with electronic mail.

12. Stressing the need for co-ordinating information activities of the United Nations system and recognising the important role that the Joint United Nations Information Committee plays in this regard, the Department of Public Information is encouraged to continue its active participation in the work of that Committee.

13, It is **recognized** that free distribution of materials is necessary in the public information activities **of** the United Nations. However, as demands increase, and whenever it is desirable and possible, the Department of Public Information should actively encourage the sale of its materials.

14. The Secretary-General is requested to ensure that the reorganisation and restructuring of the Department of Public Information strengthen and improve the output **of** the mandated programmes and activities of the Department of Public Information, taking into account the need for equitable geographical distribution of posts.

15. The Secretary-General should take effective steps to increase in the Department of Public Information the representation of underrepresented developing countries and of other underrepresented groups of countries, especially at the senior levels, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and to submit a report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1989.

16. The Secretary-General should be requested to ensure full programme delivery by the Caribbean Unit, including implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution **38/82** B and to submit a report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1989 on the measures taken in implementation of this recommendation.

17. The Secretary-General should be requested to maintain the functions of the Middle East and the Arabic Unit as the producer of Arabic television and radio programmes, to strengthen and expand this Unit to enable it to function in an effective manner and to report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1989 on the implementation of this recommendation.

18. The United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, should aim at providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including, in particular:

(a) Development of human resources as indispensable for the improvement of information and communication systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(b) Creation of **conditions** that will gradually enable the developing countries to produce, by using their own resources, the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, specifically for radio and television broadcasting:

(c) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries.

**19. In this regard, full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which constitutes an important step in the development of these infrastructure, should always be provided.**

**20. It is requested that the recommendations relating to the activities of the Department of Public Information be implemented within existing resources, taking into account the priorities set by the General Assembly.**

Proposed amendments by the Western Group and Japan to the draft  
recommendations submitted by the Group of 77

The Committee on Information **submits** the following **recommendations** to the **General Assembly**:

1. The Committee on Information reiterates that the freedom of information is a fundamental human right and is the touchstone of all freedoms to which the **United Nations** is consecrated. **All countries**, the **United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned**, are encouraged to support a new world information and communication order, **seen as an evolving and continuous process**, which means that all countries should work together to increase the communication capacity of all, with special emphasis on the media in developing countries; and which in no way means restrictions on the free and uninhibited flow of information or on freedom of the press. Efforts to expand media capacity, which should focus also on the needs of independent, private media, aim at enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life and promoting human rights and friendly relations among nations. The ongoing efforts of the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation**, which retain the central United Nations role in this field, to reduce gradually the existing differences in capacity in the field of information and communication, should be reaffirmed. These efforts aim at reducing existing imbalances in this field and at encouraging a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information.

2. Fully aware of the important role that the media world wide can freely play, it is recommended that:

(a) The mass media should be encouraged to give wider coverage to the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, the efforts of the developing countries to achieve economic, social and cultural progress ;

(b) The United Nations system as a whole should co-operate in a concerted manner through its information services, in promoting a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system in all its endeavours, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. The Committee urges all countries to assure to journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and resolutely condemns all physical attacks on them,

4. Aware of the existing imbalance in the international distribution of news, particularly that affecting the developing countries, it is recommended that attention should be given to the elimination of existing inequalities and all other obstacles, both internal and external, to the free flow and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, ideas and knowledge by diversifying the sources of information and respecting the interests, aspirations and socio-cultural values of all peoples, as a step towards the attainment of a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information.

5. The United Nations system as a whole, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, and the developed countries should be urged to co-operate in a concerted manner with the media in the developing countries towards strengthening the information and communication infrastructures in the latter countries and promoting their access to advanced communication technology, in accordance with their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by the developing countries, with a view to enabling them and their media to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and in the light of their social and cultural values, based upon the principle of freedom of information and freedom of the press. In this regard, support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries should be provided.

6. The Committee on Information takes note with appreciation of regional efforts, especially among the developing countries as well as co-operation between developed and developing countries to develop further the media infrastructure in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information, to achieve a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information.

7. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, and article 29, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, should be recalled.

8. The Department of Public Information should continue its efforts to promote an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the people of the world. The Department in conducting its mandate should also contribute, within its field of competence, to strengthen the image of the United Nations system as a whole. To that aim the Department is requested to ensure an objective and more coherent coverage of, as well as a better knowledge about the United Nations activities in such fields as international peace and security, disarmament, peace-keeping and peace-making, the situation in the Middle East, the question of Palestine, self-determination, Namibia, human rights, elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and apartheid, the advancement of the status of women, economic and social development, external debt, African economic recovery and development, illicit trafficking in narcotics and drug abuse, Afghanistan, Cambodia and terrorism.

9. The Committee fully supports the Secretary-General in his continuing efforts, in line with the recommendations of the Group of 18, to restructure and revitalize the Department.

10. The Committee recommends that the Secretary-General ensure that within existing resources the Department of Public Information:

(a) Continue to maintain consistent editorial independence and accuracy in reporting all material it produces, taking necessary measures to ensure that its output contains objective and equitable information about issues before the Organization, reflecting divergent opinions where they occur:

(b) In the context of the review of its role, performance and method of work, continue to explore the feasibility of applying modern technologies for the collection, production, storage, dissemination and distribution of information materials, including the use of satellite facilities and report to the Committee on Information at its next session;

(c) Consider expanding the programme of telephone news bulletins that are paid for by its users;

(d) Continue its co-operation with those countries that have **expressed** readiness to assist the United Nations in resuming the short-wave **broadcasts** through their respective national networks free of charge and to encourage expansion of such a type of co-operation with those developed and developing countries and all their media with **recognized** capabilities in this **field**;

(e) Guarantee daily coverage of all United Nations meetings in the working languages, reflecting the views of all delegations with accuracy and objectivity. It should also continue to co-operate closely with and provide assistance to members of the United Nations Correspondents Association, taking into account their needs and requirements, **especially** in the area of press releases, press conferences and briefings, which provide them with basic information for reporting;

(f) Use the official languages of the United Nations adequately in its documents and audio-visual documentation and to make balanced use of the two working languages;

(g) Ensure timely distribution **of** its material to subscribers and to United Nations information centres;

(h) Continue its annual training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries focused on United Nations related issues;

(i) Extend assistance to educational institutions of Member States.

11. Future reports of the Department of Public Information to the Committee on Information and to the General Assembly, in particular on new programmes or on the expansion of existing programmes, should contain:

(a) More adequate information on the output of the Department on each topic included in its work programme, which forms the basis of its programme budget;

(b) The costs **of** the activities undertaken on each topic;

(c) More adequate information on target audiences, end-use of the Department's products and analysis of feedback data received by the Department;

(d) A statement detailing the priority level that the Secretary-General has attached to current or future activities of the Department in documents dealing with such activities;

(e) The Department's evaluation of the effectiveness of its different programmes and activities, with particular reference to the need constantly to review internal programme elements and activities.



12. The Committee urges the Department of Public Information to produce and distribute its publications in a timely manner. The Department of Public Information should continue to maintain editorial independence, to assure accuracy in all the documentation it produces, and to assure that its documentation provides objective and equitable information about the problems which concern the United Nations Organisation, and takes account of divergent opinions where they occur.

13. The Committee urges the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to secure a sound and stable financial basis, including adequate staff, for Development Forum, which should be distributed by the Department.

14. The Committee recognises that United Nations information centres constitute an important means of disseminating information about the United Nations among the people of the world. In this regard, United Nations information centres should intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local media information and educational institutions and non-governmental organisations. The Department should arrange for periodic evaluation of their activities in this regard. Every effort should be made to establish close co-ordination with other field offices of the United Nations system, particularly those of the United Nations Development Programme, in order to avoid duplication of work, taking into account the functional autonomy of the United Nations information centres. The Department should ensure open and unhindered access by all people to all United Nations information centres and to all materials distributed through the centres. It is also urged to accelerate the process of linking the remaining United Nations information centres that have not been linked with electronic mail.

15. Stressing the need to co-ordinate information activities of the United Nations system and recognising the important role that the Joint United Nations Information Committee plays in this regard, the Department of Public Information is encouraged to continue its active participation in the work of that Committee.

16. It is recognised that free distribution of materials is necessary in the public information activities of the United Nations. However, an increase, and whenever it is desirable and possible, the Department of Public Information should actively encourage the sale of its materials.

17. The Secretary-General should be requested to ensure full programme delivery by all regional radio units.

18. In addition to bilateral co-operation, the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, should aim to provide all possible support and assistance to the media in the developing countries with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including in particular a

(a) Development of human resources as indispensable for the improvement of information and communication systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(b) Creation of conditions that will enable the media in the developing countries to produce, by using their own resources, the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting)

(c) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries.

19. In this regard, full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation, which should support both public and private media, should be provided.

20. The Committee requests that the recommendations relating to the activities of the Department of Public Information be implemented within existing resources.

ANNEX V

Proposed amendments by China to the draft recommendations  
submitted by the Group of 77

1. Replace paragraph 10 with the following:

The Secretary-General should be requested to make further efforts to expedite the elimination of the backlog of the United Nations Yearbook or to suggest an alternative to make the publication normal. The improvement in format and printing of the UN Chronicle is welcome. The Department of Public Information is encouraged to continue to combine the editorial policies with the interests of the specific target audience. The Secretary-general should be requested to submit a report in this regard to the substantive meeting of the Committee on Information in 1989.

2. Replace paragraph 16 with the following:

In view of the importance of radio programmes in developing countries, the Secretary-General should be requested to ensure full programme delivery by the Caribbean Unit, including implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 38/28 B. The functions of the Middle East/Arabic Unit and the Asian Unit should also be strengthened and expanded.

3. Delete paragraph 17.

ANNEX VI

Amendments submitted by the German Democratic Republic on behalf  
of the Group of Socialist States of Eastern Europe to the draft  
recommendations by the Group of 77

1. Replace introduction to paragraph 2 with the following:

Fully aware of the important role that the media world wide *can* play in contributing to the further improvement of international relations, especially in enhancing and strengthening peace, deepening international understanding, promoting justice, equality, national independence, development, the exercise of human rights and, inseparably linked, the establishment of a new international information and communication order, recommends that the General Assembly address appeals to the following:

2. Insert at the end of paragraph 6:

... the provisions of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, in which the General Assembly, inter alia, recognised the essential role of the mass media in promoting the ideas of peace and understanding among nations, should also be recalled.

3. Insert new paragraph 8 (c):

Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities in the field of international peace and security, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, development and human rights in accordance with the purposes and principle6 enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

4. Replace paragraph 8 (f) b v the following:

Give the widest possible dissemination of information within the World Disarmament Campaign, aimed at informing, educating and generating public understanding and support for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of arms limitation and disarmament and make every effort to ensure an equitable and timely distribution of materials in accordance with the principle of conducting the Campaign on a universal basis;

5. Replace paragraph 8 (k) with the following:

Further cover adequately and with impartiality all the activities of the United Nations directed at a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of international conflicts, by exclusively peaceful means, as well as the prevention of such conflicts, including the important role played by United Nations peace-keeping operations, as an essential contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security;

**Draft recommendations discussed by the spokesmen for the regional groups and China and which could be the basis for agreement**

**\*1. All countries, the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned should, taking into account the principle of freedom of the press and information, co-operate towards the attainment of a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process and based, *inter alia*, on the elimination of existing imbalances in the field of information and communication and on the enhancement of the media infrastructure of the developing countries, on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information, guaranteeing the diversity of sources of information and free access to information and, in particular, the urgent need to change the dependent status of the developing countries in the field of information and communication, as the principle of sovereign equality among nations extends also to this field, and intended also to strengthen peace and international understanding, enabling all persons to participate effectively in political, economic, social and cultural life and promoting human rights, understanding and friendship among all nations; and which in no way means restrictions on the free and uninhibited flow of information or on freedom of the press. The ongoing efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, which retains the central role in this field, to eliminate gradually the existing imbalances in the field of information and communication and to encourage a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information in accordance with the relevant consensus resolution of that organisation, should be reaffirmed. The Committee on Information reiterates that the freedom of information is a fundamental human right and is the touchstone of all freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated.**

**2. Fully aware of the important role that the media world wide can freely play, particularly under the present situation, it is recommended that:**

**(a) The mass media should be encouraged to give wider coverage to the efforts of the international community towards global development and, in particular, the efforts of the developing countries to achieve economic, social and cultural progress;**

**(b) The United Nations system as a whole should co-operate in a concerted manner, through its information services, in promoting a more comprehensive and realistic image of the activities and potential of the United Nations system in all its endeavours, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations with particular emphasis on the creation of a climate of confidence, the strengthening of multilateralism and the promotion of the development activities in the United Nations system.**

**3. The Committee urges all countries to assure to journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and resolutely condemns all physical attacks on them.**

**4. Aware of the existing imbalances in the international distribution of news, particularly that affecting the developing countries, it is recommended that urgent attention should be given to the elimination of existing inequalities and all other obstacles, both internal and external, to the free flow and wider and better**

**balanced dissemination of information, ideas and knowledge by diversifying the sources of information and respecting the interests, aspirations and socio-cultural values of all peoples, as a step towards the attainment of a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information.**

5. The United Nations system as a whole, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, and the developed countries should be urged to co-operate in a concerted manner with the developing countries and their media towards strengthening the information and communication infrastructure in the latter countries and promoting their access to advanced communication technology, in accordance with their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by the developing countries, with a view to enabling them and their media to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and in the light of their social and cultural values, taking into account [ , above all, ] the principle of freedom of information and freedom of the press. In this regard, support for the continuation and strengthening of practice training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries should be provided.

6. The Committee on Information takes note with appreciation of regional efforts especially among the developing countries as well as co-operation between developed and developing countries to develop further the media infrastructure in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information, to achieve a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information.

7. In this regard, full support for the International Programmes for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation, which should support both public and private media, should be provided.

8. The United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, in addition to bilateral co-operation, should aim at providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including in particular:

(a) Development of human resources as indispensable for the improvement of information and communication systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

\*(b) Creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media to produce, by using their own resources, the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(c) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries.

\*9. Article 19 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which provides that **everyone has the right to** freedom of opinion and expression and that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without **interference** and **to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and** regardless of frontiers, and **article 29, which stipulates that these rights and freedoms may** *in no* case be exercised contrary to the **purposes and principles** of the United Nations, should be recalled.

\*10. Reaffirming the **primary role** that the General Assembly is to play in elaborating, co-ordinating *and* harmonising United Nations **policies and activities** in the field of **information**, the **Secretary-General** should be requested to ensure that the activities of the Department of Public Information, **as the focal point** of the public information tasks of the United Nations, are strengthened and improved, **keeping in view** the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the priority areas set by the General Assembly and the recommendations of the **Committee on Information**, so as to ensure an objective and more coherent coverage of, as well as better knowledge about, the United Nations and its work. It is recommended that the **Secretary-General** ensure that the Department of Public Information;

(a) Co-operate more regularly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural **Organization**, especially at the working level, with a view to **maximizing** the contribution of the Department to the efforts of that organization in **further** promoting the attainment of a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information;

[(b) Continue its co-operation with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, Eco-pool and the **Broadcasting Organization** of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as with intergovernmental organisations and regional organisations and with the news agencies of the developing countries, and should monitor, as appropriate, important meetings of that Movement, as well as of intergovernmental and regional organisations, with a view to promoting a free flow and a wider and better balanced dissemination of information;]

(c) Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities in the field of human rights;

(d) Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities in the field of decolonization;

(e) Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities related to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination;

(f) Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities related to the elimination of foreign occupation;

(g) Continue to disseminate information about the United Nations activities related to international peace and security;

(h) Give the widest possible dissemination to information pertaining to the problem of economic and social development as well as to international economic co-operation aimed at resolving external debt problems;

**(i) Do its utmost to disseminate widely and publicise the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 and the tremendous efforts of the African countries towards recovery and development as well as the positive response by the international community to alleviate the serious economic situation prevailing in Africa;**

**(j) Give the widest possible dissemination of information to activities within the World Disarmament Campaign and make every effort to conduct it on a universal basis;**

**(k) Continue to cover adequately and accurately all United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine, in particular its current developments, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, and to report to the Committee on Information thereon at its eleventh session, in 1989;**

**(l) Strengthen its activities and dissemination of information on the policies and practices of apartheid, giving due attention to the unilateral measures and official censorship imposed on the local and international media with regard to all aspects of this issue and to report to the Committee on Information thereon at its eleventh session, in 1989;**

**(m) Continue to disseminate information related to the illegal occupation of Namibia, to the struggle of its oppressed people for self-determination, national independence and freedom as well as to the need for the full and speedy implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia;**

**(n) Continue adequate coverage of the United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories;**

**(o) Further cover adequately and with impartiality the activities of all United Nations peace-keeping operations;**

**(p) Continue to disseminate information concerning the United Nations resolutions on terrorism in all its forms, including resolution 40/61;**

**(q) Strengthen its information programmes relating to the advancement of the status of women and their role in society;**

**(r) Strengthen its coverage of the efforts made by the United Nations system and Member States in their campaign against illicit trafficking of narcotics and drug abuse;**

**[(s) Cover adequately and with impartiality all the activities of the United Nations directed at a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of international conflicts by exclusively peaceful means, with special emphasis on the situation in and around Afghanistan and Cambodia.] a/**

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**a/ This wording was proposed for consideration by the spokesmen of two regional groups, and was not discussed.**



11. Taking into account the present international situation, the Department of Public Information should continue its efforts in promoting an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations system among the peoples of the world and to strengthen the image of the United Nations system as a whole. In this connection, it is recommended that the Secretary-General ensure that the Department of Public Information:

(a) Continue to maintain consistent editorial independence and accuracy in reporting all material it produces, taking necessary measures to ensure that its output contains objective and equitable information about issues before the Organisation, reflecting divergent opinions where they occur;

(b) In the context of the review of its role, performance and method of work, continue to explore the feasibility of applying modern technologies for the collection, production, storage, dissemination and distribution of information materials, including the use of satellite facilities and report to the Committee on Information at its substantive session in 1989 with regard to its effect on prevailing arrangements;

(c) Consider expanding the programme of telephone news bulletins that are paid for by its users;

(d) Continue its co-operation with those countries that have expressed readiness to assist the United Nations in resuming the short-wave broadcast through their respective national networks free of charge and to encourage expansion of such a type of co-operation with those developed and developing countries with recognized capabilities in this field;

(e) Take adequate measures to resume the taped radio programmes, which it temporarily curtailed, bearing in mind the objective of their effective utilisation and maximum audience impact and report on this matter to the Committee on Information at its eleventh session;

(f) Continue its annual training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries focused on United Nations related issues;

(g) Extend all assistance to educational institutions of Member States and organize seminars for educators and education policy makers;

(h) Guarantee daily coverage of all United Nations meetings in the two working languages, reflecting the views of all delegations with accuracy and objectivity. It should also continue to co-operate closely with and provide assistance to members of the United Nations Correspondents Association, taking into account their needs and requirements, especially in the area of press releases, press conferences and briefings, which provide them with basic information for reporting;

(i) Use the official languages of the United Nations adequately in its documents and audio-visual documentation and to make balanced use of the two working languages;

(j) Ensure timely distribution of its material to subscribers and to United Nations information centres.

12. The Committee urges the Department of Public Information to produce and distribute its publications in a timely manner. The Department of Public Information should continue to maintain editorial independence, to assure accuracy in all the documentation it produces, and to assure that its documentation provides objective information about the issues which concern the United Nations Organisation, and takes account of divergent opinions where they occur. In particular, the Secretary-General should be requested to make further efforts regarding the timely appearance of the United Nations Yearbook improvement in format and printing of the UN Chronicle is welcome, [The Department of Public Information is encouraged to continue to combine the editorial policies with the interests of the specific target audience.]

13. The Committee urges the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to secure a sound and stable financial basis for the publications Development Forum and Africa Recovery.

14. The Committee recognises that United Nations information centres constitute an important means of disseminating information about the United Nations among the people of the world. In this regard, United Nations information centres should intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local media information and educational institutions and non-governmental organisations. The Department should arrange for periodic evaluation of their activities in this regard. Every effort should be made to establish close co-ordination with other field offices of the United Nations system, particularly those of the United Nations Development Programme, in order to avoid duplication of work, taking into account the functional autonomy of the United Nations information centres. The Department should ensure open and unhindered access by all people to all United Nations information centres and to all materials distributed through the centres. It is also urged to accelerate the process of linking the remaining United Nations information centres that have not been linked with electronic mail.

15. Stressing the need for co-ordinating information activities of the United Nations system and recognising the important role that the Joint United Nations Information Committee plays in this regard, the Department of Public Information is encouraged to continue its active participation in the work of that Committee.

16. It is recognised that free distribution of materials is necessary in the public information activities of the United Nations. However, as demands increase, and whenever it is desirable and possible, the Department of Public Information should actively encourage the sale of its materials.

17. The Secretary-General is requested to ensure that the reorganization and restructuring of the Department of Public Information strengthen and improve the output of the mandated programmes and activities of the Department of Public Information, taking into account the need for equitable geographical distribution of posts, [especially at the senior levels,] in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of General Assembly resolution 41/213.

18. In view of the importance of radio programmes in developing countries, the Secretary-General should be requested to enhance the efficiency of and to ensure full programme delivery by all regional radio units, namely, the African, Asian, Caribbean, European, Latin American and Middle Eastern (\*) Units and the

Anti-w **Radio Unit, including** implementation of the provisions of the General Assembly **resolution 38/82 B.**

19. Future **reports** of the Department of Public **Information** to the Committee on Information and to the General Assembly, in particular on new programmes **or on the expansion of existing programmes, should contain:**

(a) More adequate information on the output of the Department on each topic included in **its** work **programme**, which forms the basis of its programme **budget;**

**(b) The costs of the activities undertaken on each topic;**

**(c) More adequate** information on target audiences, end-use **of** the Department's products and analysis of feedback data received **by the** Department;

**(d) A statement** detailing the priority level that the Secretary-General has **attached to current or future activities of the** Department in documents dealing with such activities)

**(e) The** Department's evaluation of the effectiveness of its different programmes and activities, with particular reference to the **need** constantly to **review internal programme elements and activities.**

20. It is requested **that the recommendations relating** to the activities of the Department of Public Information be implemented within existing resources, taking into account [the] priorities set by the General Assembly.

**\*21.** The Committee on Information fully supports the Secretary-General in his continuing **efforts to** restructure and **revitalize** the Department of Public Information, based on the relevant provisions of General **Assembly** resolution **41/213**. The Committee **requests the** Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session on the implementation of **its** resolution **41/213, which stipulates** that the restructuring plan should **avoid, inter alia,** negative impact on programmes and bearing in mind the necessity of securing the highest standards **of** efficiency. **Pending** action by the **General** Assembly **on this** report, any modifications or **elimination** of programmes which are not in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution **41/213** should be prevented.

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**\*** Subject to further consultations.

[ ] Words or phrases subject to further **consultations.**

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